

PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK (NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES OF BIKAR AND BOKAK) REGULATIONS, 2024

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PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK (NATIONAL SANCTUARIES OF BIKAR AND BOKAK) REGULATIONS, 2024

Coming into Operation:

The Minister for Natural Resources and Commerce makes the following Regulations under Section 504A of the Protected Areas Network Act of 2015.

§101. Short Title.

These Regulations may be cited as the Protected Areas Network (National Sanctuaries of Bikar and Bokak) Regulations, 2024.

§102. Commencement.

If approved, these Regulations come into operation after 3 months upon approval.

§103. Purpose.

The purpose of these Regulations is to identify, designate, declare, and administer areas or atolls as national sanctuaries which are of special national significance and to manage these National Sanctuaries under the PAN and in accordance with the *Reimaanlok* process.

§104. Interpretation.

“Sanctuaries” means marine areas identified, designated and declared pursuant to this Regulation for conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, scientific, cultural, archaeological, educational or esthetic qualities;

“Minister” has the same meaning as defined under Marshall Islands Marine Resources Act;

“PAN” means the Protected Areas Network;

§105. Special Areas Identified and Designated for National Sancturaries.

Pursuant to Section 107, the following Atolls/areas are identified and designated in accordance with the PAN Act and the Regulations, for national sanctuaries:

- (a) Bikar Atoll
- (b) Bokak Atoll

§106. Declaration of National Sanctuaries.

(1) The Minister hereby declared the following areas or Atolls as National Sanctuaries:

Atolls/Areas	Longitude	Latitude
1. Bikar Atoll	170°06'27.2"E	12°14'49.5"N
2. Bokak Atoll	168°58'37.8"E	14°39'04.7"N

(2) The geographic coordinates of the atolls or areas declared for national sanctuaries, shall including the lagoons and internal waters (if any) of each atoll, and those parts of the Marshall Islands territorial waters, a detailed geographic coordinates is depicted under Schedule 1 of this Regulation.

§107. Minimum criteria for a protected area to be declared as National Sanctuary.

The following are minimum criteria for area qualified for declaration as a national sanctuary:

- (a) The area must be of national significance that its natural resources and ecological qualities are of special significance and contribute to:
 - (i) biological productivity or diversity;
 - (ii) maintenance or enhancement of ecosystem structure and function;
 - (iii) maintenance of ecologically or commercially important species or species assemblages;
 - (iv) maintenance or enhancement of critical habitat, representative biogeographic assemblages, or both; or

- (v) maintenance or enhancement of connectivity to other ecologically significant resources.
- (b) The area contains submerged maritime heritage resources of special historical, cultural, or archaeological significance, that:
 - (i) individually or collectively are consistent with the criteria of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;
 - (ii) have met or which would meet the criteria for designation as a National Historic Landmark; or
 - (iii) have special or sacred meaning to the indigenous people of the region or nation.
- (c) The area provides or enhances opportunities for research in marine science, including marine archaeology
- (d) The area is designated as 'protected area' strategically enhances the protected area network, and contributes to the comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness of the Protected Areas Network, and that:
 - (i) The area must follow community-based resource management planning under the *Reimaanlok* process, and the resource management plan must be submitted to the PAN Office; and
 - (ii) The LRCs must submit a letter to the Minister of Natural Resources and Commerce to express their interest to nominate their protected areas (whether Type 2, 3 or 4) to be considered for national sanctuary under Type 5. Letter must be signed by both the traditional leadership and local government.

§108. Offences and Penalties.

- (a) Any person or operator of a vessel that contravenes the requirements under these Regulations commits an offence and shall be liable for penalties in accordance with the Protected Areas Network Act 2015.
- (b) Specific penalties on offences by any person, or operator of a vessel shall be in accordance with the Protected Areas Network Act, 2015.

SCHEDULE

(PURSUANT TO SECTION 106(2))

National Sanctuaries of Bikar and Boka

- 1 The National Sanctuaries of Bikar and Bokak [of the Republic of the Marshall Islands] are the lines specified in the tables in Schedule 1.
- 2 The table in Part 1 specifies the national sanctuaries of Bikar and Bokak.

Guide to reading Schedule 1

- 3 In the tables in Schedule 1:
 - (a) lines are generated by reference to points,
 - (b) the first column sets out the point identifier and
 - (c) the second and third columns set out the geographic coordinates for each point.

Geodetic framework

- 4 In this Declaration, points defined by geographic coordinates are determined by reference to the World Geodetic System 1984 (WGS 1984). Points are connected by geodesic lines realised in the WGS 1984.

5 Illustrative chart

- 6 The chart in Schedule 2 provides a general illustration of the line specified in Schedule 1.

SCHEDULE 1 – Protected Areas Network (National Sanctuaries of Bikar and Bokak) Regulations, 2024**Part 1 – National Sanctuaries of Bikar and Bokak**

The line commencing at point NSBB1 in the following table and running along the geodesics sequentially connecting each point in the table and ending at the last point mentioned NSBB4.

Point Indicator	Longitude	Latitude
NSBB1	169.857	11.57461
NSBB2	168.275	14.89827
NSBB3	169.216	15.32416
NSBB4	170.797	12.00652

**SCHEDULE 2 – CHART ILLUSTRATING THE PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK
(NATIONAL SANCTUARIES OF BIKAR AND BOKAK) REGULATIONS, 2024
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

Part 1 chart illustrates the National Sanctuaries of Bikar and Bokak.

