



Landowners' Advocacy and Legal Support Unit, Public Solicitor's Office

### About the Public Solicitor's Office

The Public Solicitor's Office is an independent public office established under the Constitution to provide legal aid, advice and assistance to persons in need. Please ask at our offices for the circumstances and conditions of how we can assist you with your legal problems.

- Honiara Office**  
Placemakers Building,  
P.O. Box 553  
Honiara, Solomon Islands.  
☎ 22348/28404/28405/28406
- Lata Office**  
☎ 53004
- Kirakira Office**  
☎ 50153
- Auki Office**  
(within the precincts of  
the Auki Magistrate's Court)  
PO BOX Auki 44  
☎ 40008/40006
- Munda Office**  
☎ 6204  
✉ [pubsol@pso.gov.sb](mailto:pubsol@pso.gov.sb)
- Gizo Office**  
(next to the Gizo Magistrate's Court)  
PO BOX Gizo 84  
☎ 60682

### Honiara Legal Clinics Timetable

- Family Legal Clinic**  
Tuesdays  
9.00am to 12.00noon
- Criminal Legal Clinic**  
Thursdays Wednesdays  
2.00pm to 4.00pm
- Civil Legal Clinic**  
Wednesdays  
2.00pm to 4.00pm
- Land Legal Clinic**  
Fridays  
9.00am to 12.00noon

**Legal Clinic for People with Disabilities, every Thursday on a fortnightly basis from 9am to 1pm. People with Disabilities Solomon Islands (PWDSI) Office, DSE Building, New China Town.**

### How do you enforce the rules?

Police can help with some offences, but cannot enforce the management plan rules. Inspectors and rangers can be appointed to enforce the rules.

- Inspectors' powers include issuing infringement notices and assisting in management and protection.
- Rangers' powers include boarding and searching vessels, seizing specimens or equipment used in an offence, ordering a person to rectify a minor breach, and ordering a person to stop an activity.

**DISCLAIMER:** The information displayed on this page is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If you have a legal problem, you should see a lawyer.



# FACT SHEET: PROTECTING SPECIAL PLACES ON LAND AND SEA





## What is a 'Protected Area'?

A 'protected area' is a place of biological diversity significance declared under the Protected Areas Act 2010. A place can only become a protected area if the community consents. A protected area declaration does not affect land ownership; the customary owners remain the same. Depending on how you set up the protected area, it may change how the community uses the land.

## Benefits of establishing a Protected Area

Establishing a protected area can help you protect your land and sea for current and future generations. It can:

- allow plants and animals to recover from past activities such as logging and mining
- improve food security
- allow traditional rules to be enforced under the law
- help maintain traditional knowledge about land and sea management
- protect habitats and species, which may increase tourism and donor support



## The process for declaring a Protected Area

- 1. Community consultations:** If your community wants to apply for a piece of your land to be a protected area, you need to hold consultations with your community and neighbouring communities to reach agreement. Protected area does not change ownership of the land.
- 2. Management committee and management plan:** SIG's Environment Advisory Committee appoints a management committee. The management committee prepares the management plan in consultation with the community. Protected area does not change ownership of the land.
- 3. Application to the Director:** Your community submits an application form, the management plan, a map of the proposed protected area, and the agreement with neighbouring communities.
- 4. Director's consultations and investigations:** The Director of the Environment and Conservation Division verifies who has customary rights in the area, consults the Government, assesses the area's environmental values, and puts a notice in the newspaper.
- 5. Letters of objection and support:** The public has 30 days from the newspaper notice to send letters to the Director supporting or objecting to the proposed declaration.

- 6. Declaration of protected area:** The Director and the Environment Minister decide whether to declare a protected area. Protected area does not change ownership of the land.

## What can't you do in a protected area?

In all protected areas, activities that may damage the environment are prohibited. For example:

- large-scale logging and mining
- dragging nets on the sea floor
- discharging waste into marine protected areas

Some activities are prohibited unless authorised in the management plan or by the management committee. For example:

- agriculture
- hunting
- taking firewood
- remove live coral
- building

The management plan will include rules on what activities are restricted and what penalties apply. The management plan will depend on the community's objectives.