

## iSimangaliso Wetland Park Quadruples to help Protect the Ocean



### ***Did you hear the exciting news about KwaZulu-Natal's iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site?***

On 1 August 2019 the iSimangaliso Wetland Park **officially quadrupled in size** to include its 220km of coastline and the surrounding ocean into its new marine protected area (MPA). iSimangaliso now has the privilege and weighty responsibility of protecting around 1-million hectares of South Africa's ocean from harm – and is proud to be the second largest protected area in the country after the Kruger National Park.

This stretch of coastline is nothing short of magnificent with white sandy beaches and warm ocean currents making it ideal for beach tourism, which in turn helps uplift local communities and creates jobs. However, these coastal dunes and waters, more importantly, play a vital role for some of the local marine wildlife.

- The northern dunes, stretching up into Mozambique, form the southernmost breeding grounds of two endangered sea turtle species – the leatherback and loggerhead turtle.
- Sodwana Bay is another hotspot on this coastline – ranking as one of the world's top ten scuba diving reefs and home to some 1200 species of fish and 100 types of warm water coral.
- Migrating whales, whale sharks, sharks and dolphins also find refuge in these waters, as does the world's oldest known fish species, the ancient coelacanth.

The expansion is a massive step forward for the benefit of South Africa's marine resources – especially as iSimangaliso is just one of 20 newly proclaimed marine protected areas around the country. Read more [here](#).

**Makakatana Bay Lodge** is the only privately-owned and owner-managed game lodge within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and offers unforgettable guided 4x4 safaris, hippo, croc and bird spotting boat cruises on Lake St. Lucia as well as the opportunity to enjoy remote stretches of beach where yours are often the only footprints. **To see/download the new images of since its recent refurbishment please visit our [gallery](#).**



***Where else could you spot a breaching whale, a pod of dolphins, rhino and buffalo on one day?***