



أبوظبي البحرية
ABU DHABI MARITIME

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Visitor Guidelines



admaritime.ae



هيئة البيئة - أبوظبي
Environment Agency - ABU DHABI



دائرة الثقافة والسياحة
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
AND TOURISM



Sharing the beauty and wonders of Abu Dhabi's diverse marine ecosystem with the world

Abu Dhabi – An Extraordinary destination now offers you the chance to explore the protected pristine waters with diving, snorkelling, kayaking and more.

Range of activities has been expanded to include:

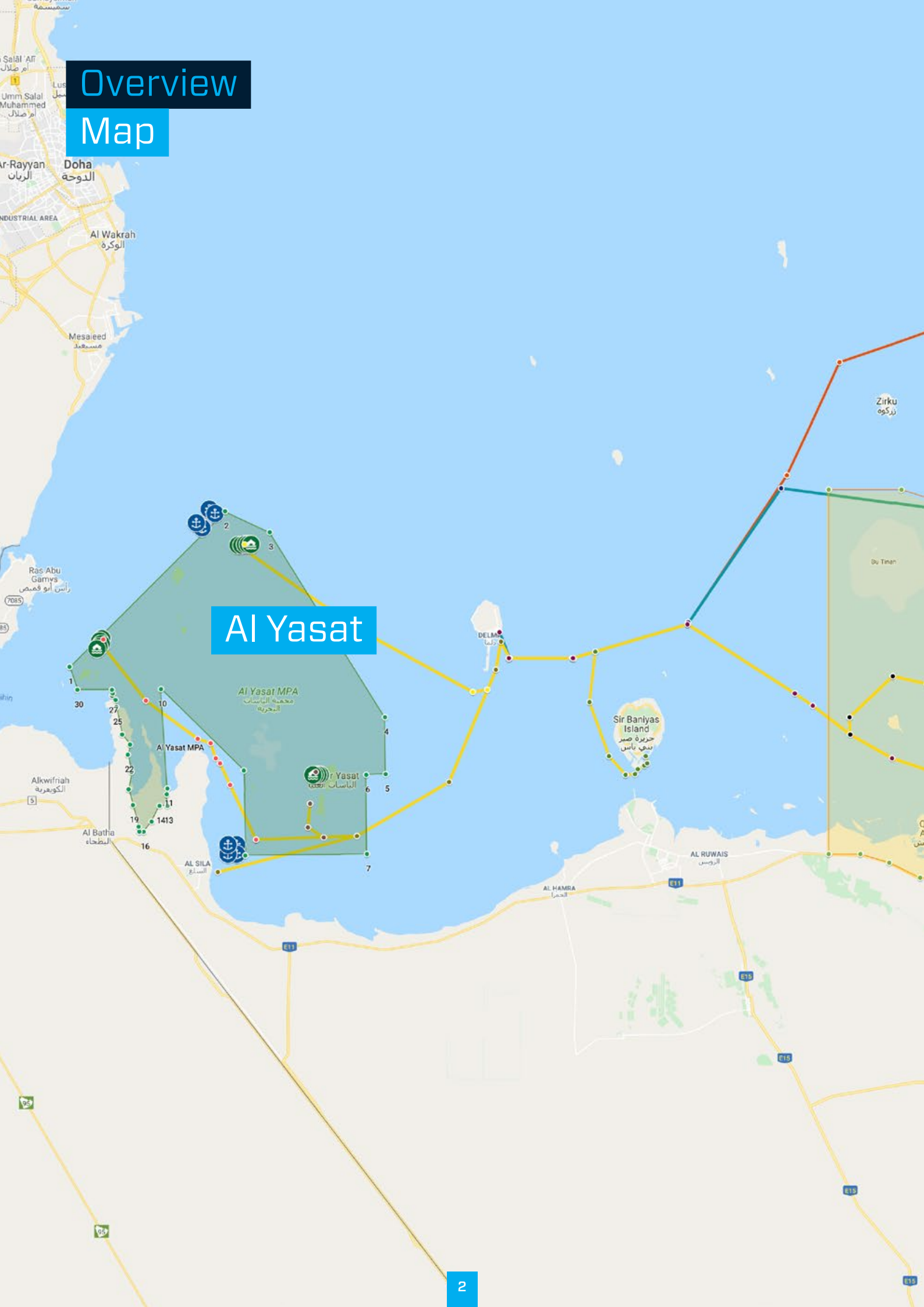
- Designated mooring facilities for vessels
- Separate anchorages for larger vessels

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Overview Map



Al Yasat

- Anchorage
- Marine Protected Area
- Indicative Navigation Routes



Attractions and Activities

- Kayaking, sailing and other non-motorised water sports
- Scuba diving
- Snorkelling
- Dolphin watching and swimming
- Sea turtles and dugong watching
- Recreational cruising inside the MPAs
- Sunrise and sunset visits
- Recreational fishing in Marawah and Yasat MPA (with line and rod only)
- Coral reef and shoal visits

Restrictions

- Anchoring is only allowed in designated anchorage areas outside of MPAs
- The use of jet skis is prohibited
- De-ballasting, sewage discharge are prohibited
- No collection of shells and corals
- Garbage disposal is prohibited



Marine Protected Areas

The UAE recently ranked first in the world list of marine protected areas. Working directly with Abu Dhabi Maritime and Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi has developed the opportunity to explore the Marine Protected Areas of Abu Dhabi and hereby enhance the tourism potential of our Emirate.

It is doing so by setting a new standard in sustainable development through the deployment of mooring buoys rather than allowing anchorage in these key protected areas. Thanks to these measures, we are respecting the natural world and conserving it for future generations to enjoy, allowing leisure craft up to 300-500 Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) – this is directly developing these areas for tourism potential including; day cruises, diving, snorkelling, kayaking and marine wildlife watching.

This initiative will also stimulate the economy by offering businesses the chance to grow their product offering and allowing Emirate wide accessibility.





Ras Ghanadah Protected Area

With a total area of 55 square kilometres, this is one of the largest and most remarkable coral reefs in the country. Its protection and the protection of animals living here, are a priority.

Location

The Marine Protected Area is located on the coast of Taweelah, Ras Ghanada. The MPA covers the area shown on the map on the following page, with buoy GPS coordinates provided for easy navigation. A separate anchorage area with related GPS coordinates is also provided.

Anchorage Area Coordinates

1	24°52.7900'N	054°40.9437'E
2	24°53.2895'N	054°41.5294'E
3	24°54.0142'N	054°40.7174'E
4	24°53.5384'N	054°40.1029'E

For mooring coordinates see page 8



SIGHTS

- Coral reefs
- Dolphins
- Turtles
- Sunset and sunrise



MOORINGS

See next page for exact mooring buoys location.
Groups of buoys are located at:

1	24°52.8451'N	054°43.4456'E
2	24°52.0318'N	054°42.2376'E
3	24°50.8816'N	054°41.7653'E



ACTIVITIES

- Diving
- Snorkeling
- Dolphin & turtle watching
- Sunset and sunrise viewing



LOGISTICS

- Mooring buoys
- Navigation signs
- Anchorage areas



PROHIBITED

- Anchoring in the MPA
- Jet skis
- Fishing
- De-ballasting, sewage discharge
- Collection of shells and corals
- Garbage disposal

Infrastructure

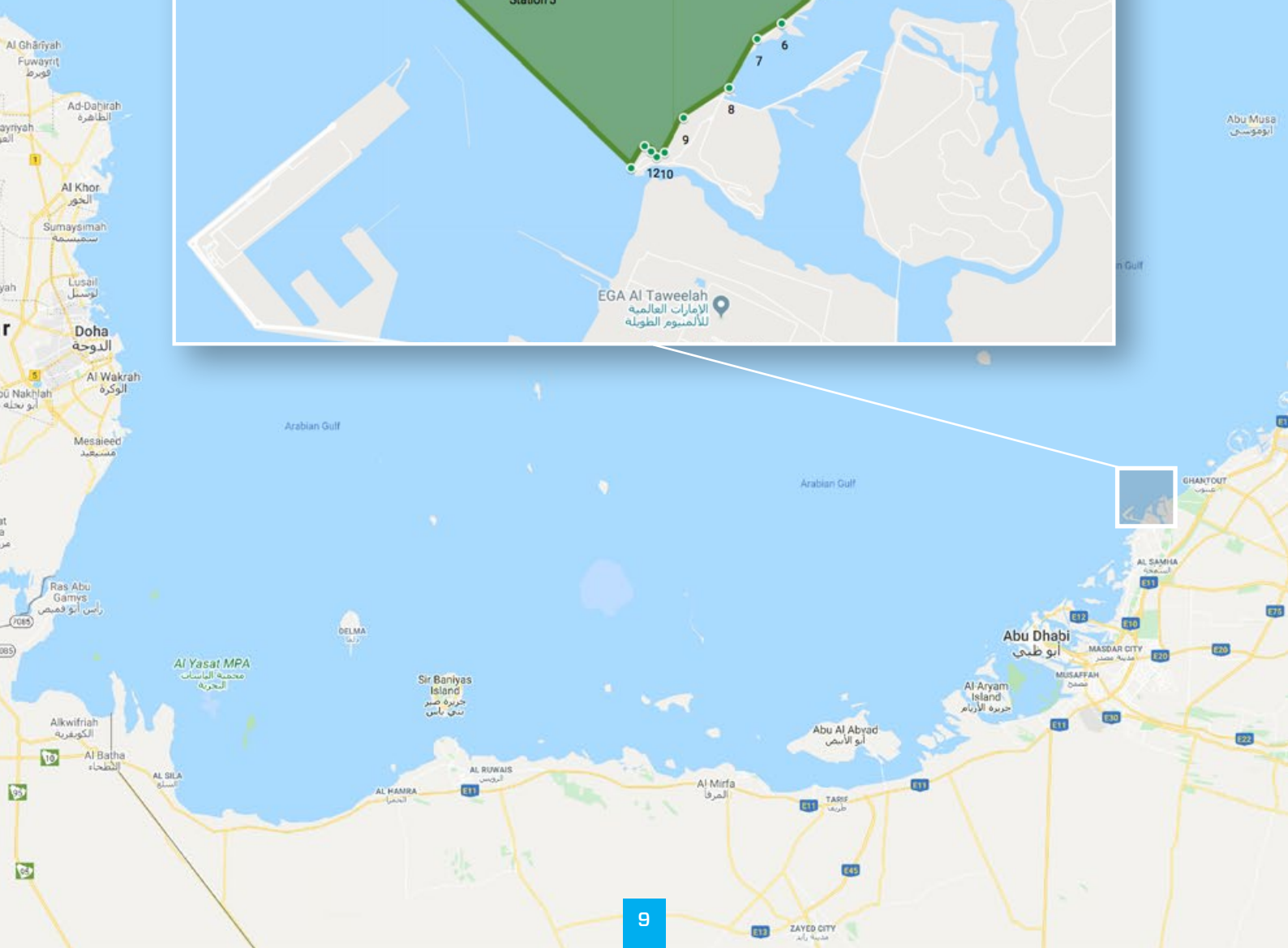
There are three mooring stations in the Ras Ghanadah Marine Protected Area and each area has 4 mooring buoys where visiting yachts can moor instead of dropping anchors.

Find our locations easily using this QR code.



Geographical Coordinates	Buoy Coordinates	Seabed	Buoy Type	Depth
24°52.8451'N 054°43.4456'E	24°53.1165'N 054°42.7856'E	Sand, shells	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	6.7m
	24°52.9747'N 054°42.9441'E			
	24°52.8356'N 054°43.1027'E			
	24°52.6770'N 054°43.2612'E			
24°52.0318'N 054°42.2376'E	24°52.1579'N 054°42.0437'E	Sand, corals	2.4m (up to 500 GRT)	7.6m
	24°52.0119'N 054°42.1624'E			
	24°51.8706'N 054°42.3070'E			
	24°52.3558'N 054°41.8784'E			
24°50.8816'N 054°41.7653'E	24°50.5319'N 054°41.3965'E	Coral	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	5.5m
	24°50.6931'N 054°41.2152'E			
	24°50.8924'N 054°41.0108'E			
	24°51.0450'N 054°40.8760'E			

Ras Ghanadah Protected Area





Saadiyat Marine National Park

Protected marine area near Saadiyat Island. The endangered Hawksbill sea turtle calls this 59 square kilometre area home, and thrives here.

Location

The Marine Protected Area is located on the coast of Saadiyat Island. The MPA covers the area shown on the map on the following page, with buoy GPS coordinates provided for easy navigation. A separate anchorage area with related GPS coordinates is also provided.

Anchorage Area Coordinates

1	24°38.3948'N	054°22.6901'E
2	24°38.4286'N	054°23.3558'E
3	24°37.3750'N	054°23.5037'E
4	24°37.3355'N	054°22.8257'E

For mooring coordinates see page 12



SIGHTS

Coral reefs
Dolphins
Turtles
Sunset and sunrise



MOORINGS

See next page for exact mooring buoys location.

Groups of buoys are located at:

1	24°36.8946'N	054°24.0546'E
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ACTIVITIES

Diving
Snorkeling
Dolphin & turtle watching
Sunset and sunrise viewing



LOGISTICS

Mooring buoys
Navigation signs
Anchorage areas



PROHIBITED

Anchoring in the MPA
Jet skis
Fishing
De-ballasting, sewage discharge
Collection of shells and corals
Garbage disposal

Infrastructure

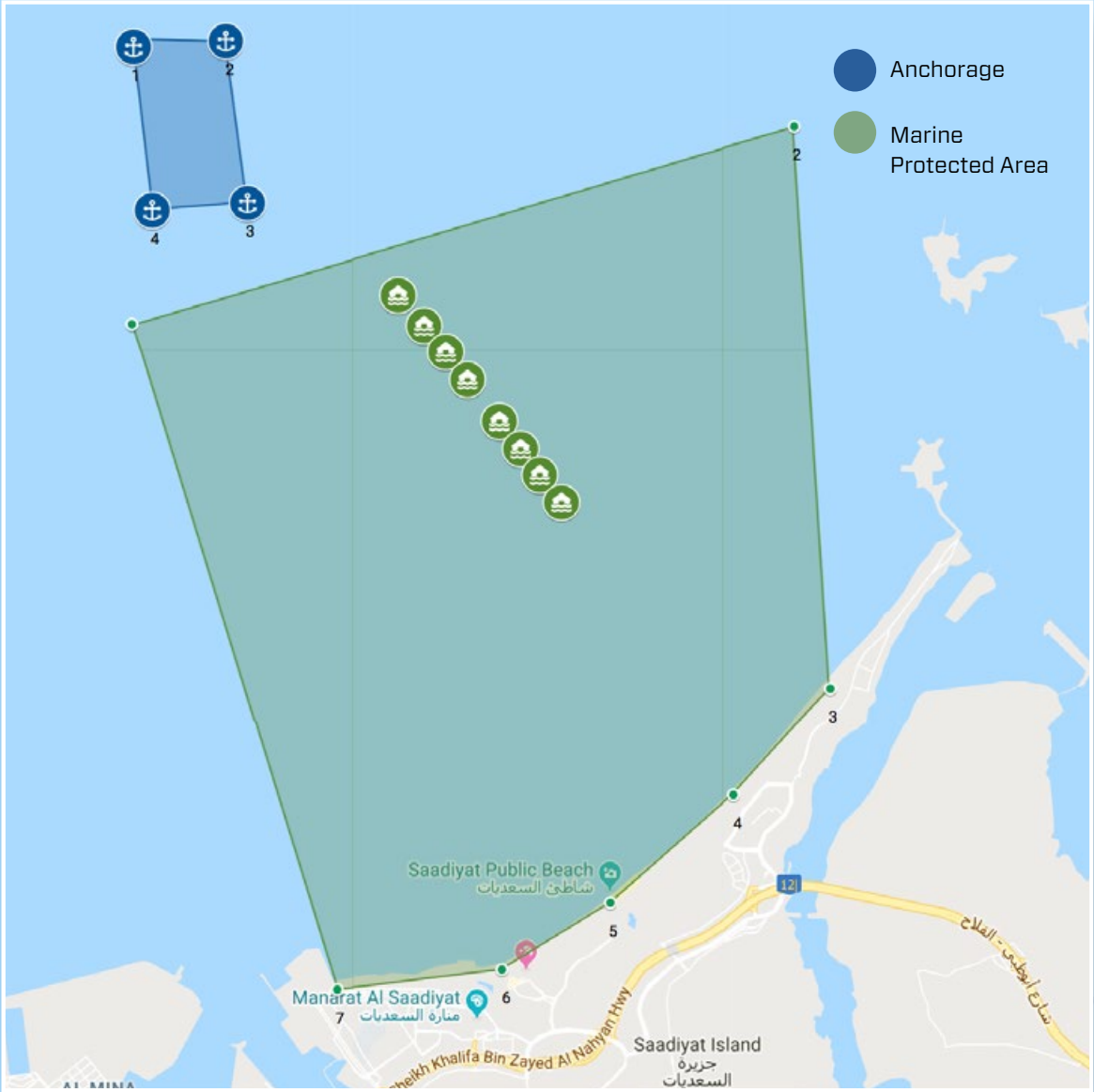
There is one mooring station in the Saadiyat Marine Protected Area with eight mooring buoys where visiting yachts can moor instead of dropping anchor.

Find our locations easily using this QR code.



Geographical Coordinates	Buoy Coordinates	Seabed	Buoy Type	Depth
24°36.8946'N 054°24.0546'E	24°36.7785'N 054°24.5809'E	Sand, coral	2.4m (up to 500 GRT)	5.8m
	24°36.5862'N 054°24.7594'E			
	24°36.4114'N 054°24.9124'E			
	24°36.2366'N 054°25.0718'E			
	24°35.9626'N 054°25.2977'E	Sand, coral	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	5.2m
	24°35.7832'N 054°25.4502'E			
	24°35.6189'N 054°25.5864'E			
	24°35.4445'N 054°25.7444'E			

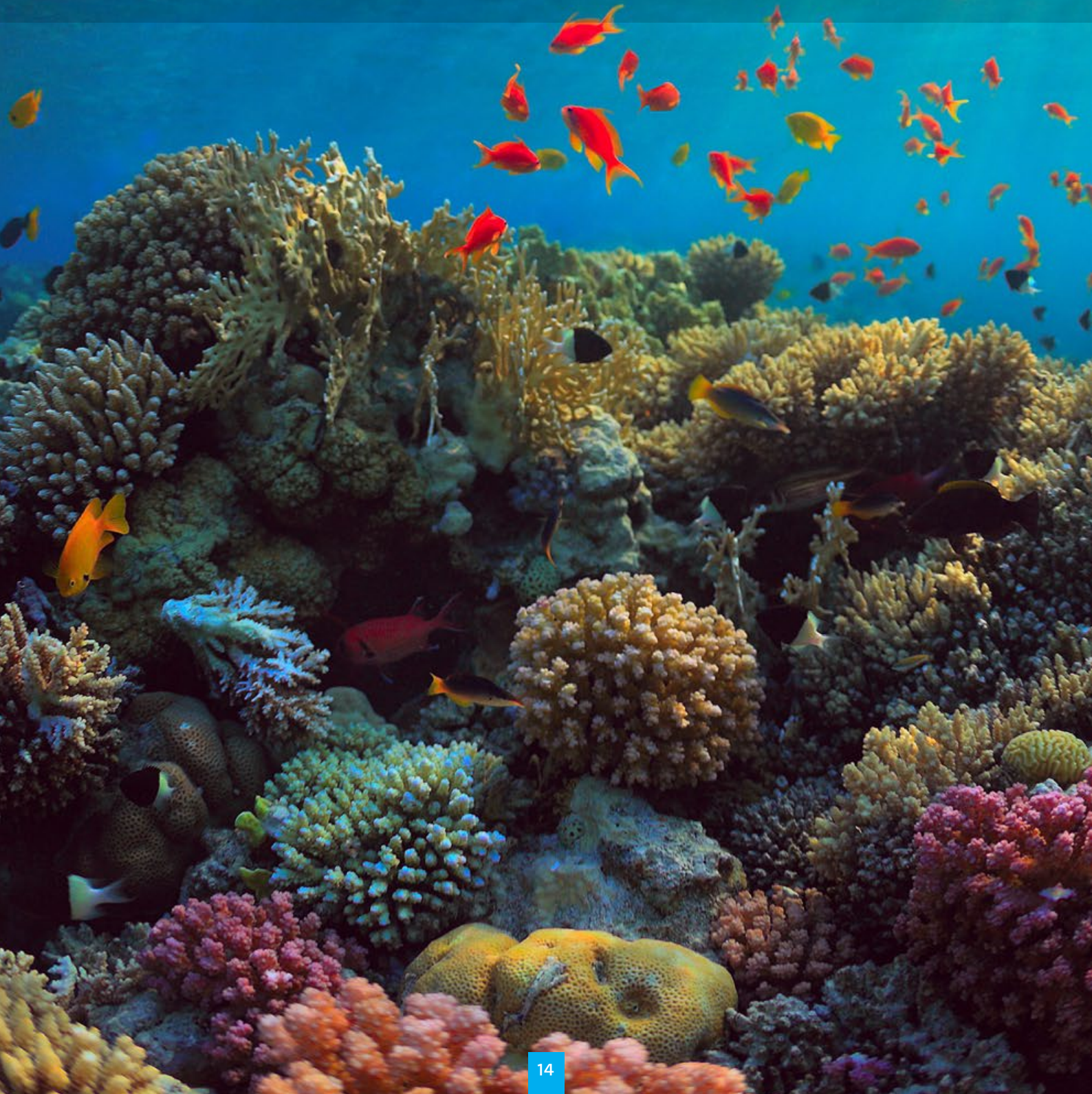
Saadiyat Marine National Park





Marawah Marine Biosphere Reserve

Marine inhabitants live freely on this tranquil 4,255 square kilometres reserve. Here you can find the second largest dugong community in the world.



Location

The Marine Protected Area is located around Marawah island and extends from the mainland up to Butina Island and encompasses the area highlighted on the map on the following page.

For mooring coordinates see page 16



SIGHTS

- Dugongs
- Coral reefs
- Dolphins
- Turtles
- Sunset and sunrise



MOORINGS

See next page for exact mooring buoys location.

Groups of buoys are located at:

1	24°22.9276’N	053°09.3818’E
2	24°16.6315’N	053°07.9576’E



ACTIVITIES

- Diving
- Snorkeling
- Dugong watching
- Dolphin & turtle watching
- Recreational fishing (with line and rod only)
- Sunset and sunrise viewing



LOGISTICS

- Mooring buoys
- Navigation signs



PROHIBITED

- Anchoring in the MPA
- Jet skis
- De-ballasting, sewage discharge
- Collection of shells and corals
- Garbage disposal

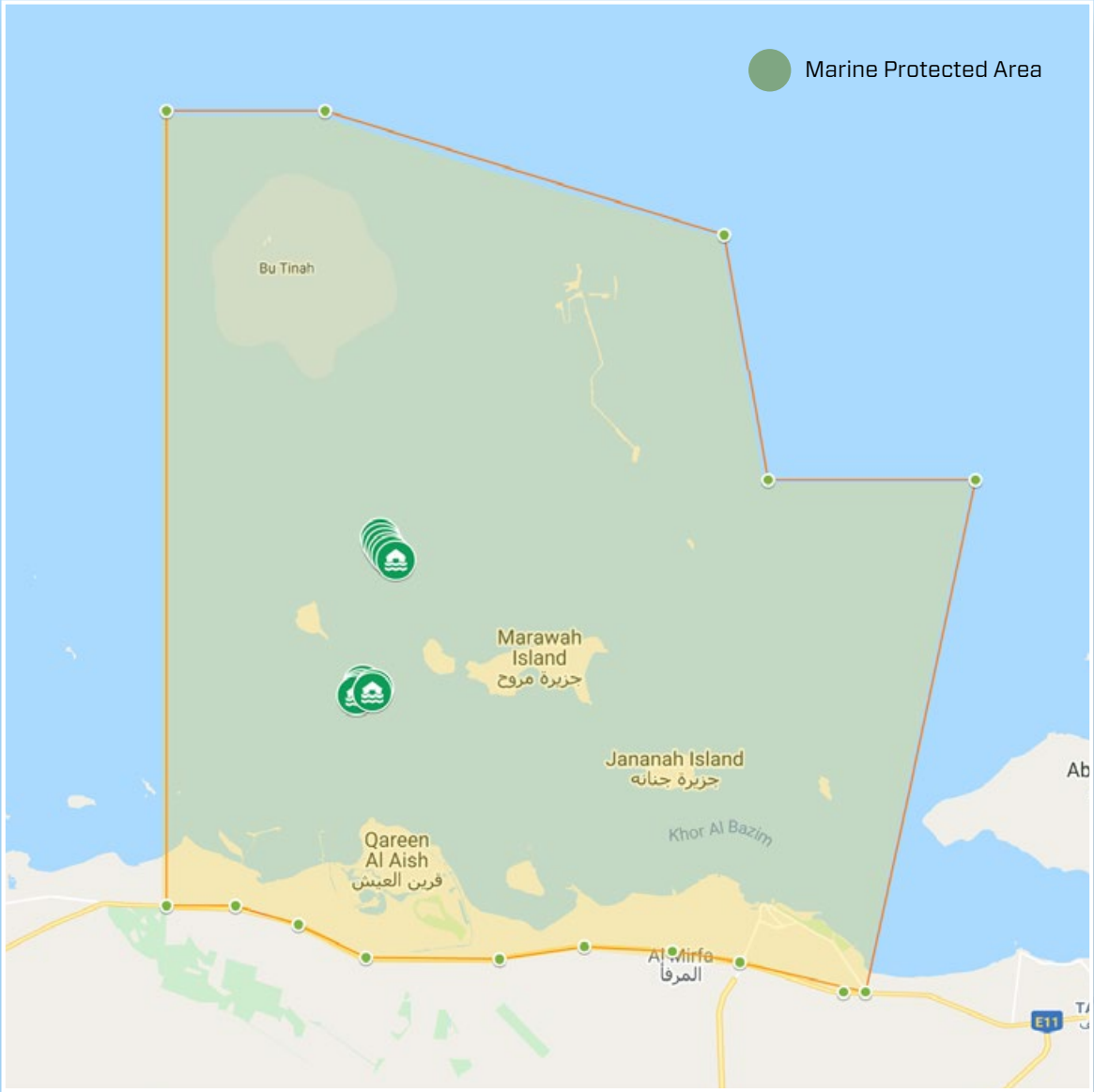
Infrastructure

There are two mooring stations in the Marawah Marine Protected Area with six mooring buoys in each station where visiting yachts can moor instead of dropping anchor.

Find our locations easily using this QR code.

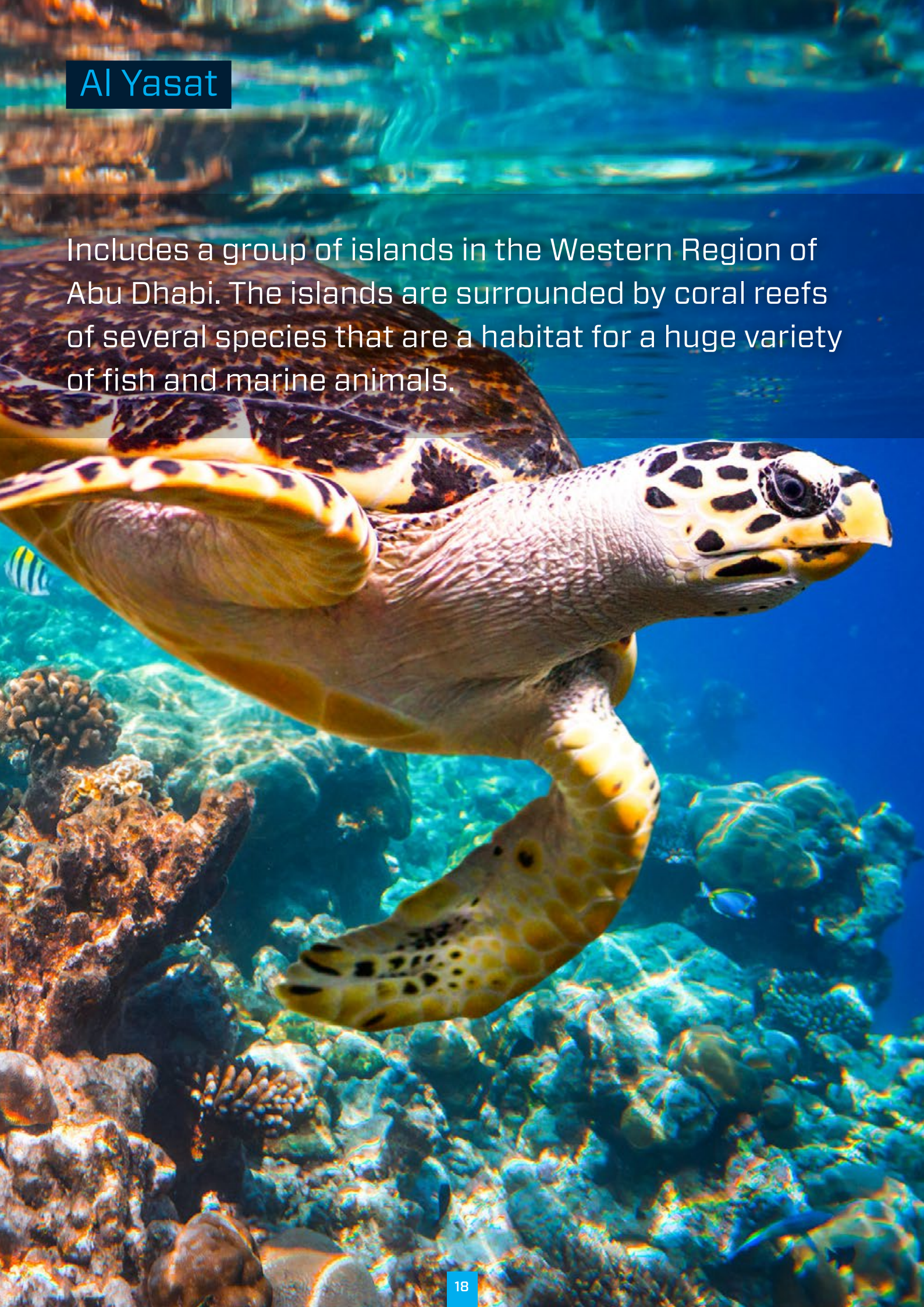


Geographical Coordinates	Buoy Coordinates	Seabed	Buoy Type	Depth
24°22.9276'N 053°09.3818'E	24°23.6241'N 053°08.9325'E	Sand, shells	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	6m
	24°23.3972'N 053°09.0477'E			
	24°23.1597'N 053°09.2033'E			
	24°22.9276'N 053°09.3818'E			
	24°22.7534'N 053°09.5604'E			
	24°22.5740'N 053°09.7621'E			
24°16'37.89'N 053°07'57.46'E	24°16.5923'N 053°08.0501'E	Sand, shells	2.4m (up to 500 GRT)	10m
	24°16.4185'N 053°07.9364'E			
	24°16.2360'N 053°07.8415'E			
	24°16.0578'N 053°07.7278'E			
	24°16.4294'N 053°08.6048'E	Sand, shells	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	10m
	24°16.2376'N 053°08.5077'E			



Al Yasat

Includes a group of islands in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi. The islands are surrounded by coral reefs of several species that are a habitat for a huge variety of fish and marine animals.



Location

The Marine Protected Area is located on the western coast of Abu Dhabi in the Al Dhafra region, covering Al Ghagha Island, Al Qaffay Island and Al Yasat Island and encompasses the area shown on the map on the following page.

Al Yasat / Al Sila Anchorage 1

1	24°07.5236'N	051°49.6415'E
2	24°07.5295'N	051°50.5182'E
3	24°07.1689'N	051°50.5269'E
4	24°07.1600'N	051°49.6415'E

Al Yasat / Al Sila Anchorage 1

1	24°42.0029'N	051°46.8785'E
2	24°41.4933'N	051°47.5292'E
3	24°40.0494'N	051°46.0153'E
4	24°40.5227'N	051°45.4310'E

For mooring coordinates see page 20



SIGHTS

Coral reefs
Dolphins
Turtles
Sunset and sunrise



MOORINGS

See next page for exact mooring buoys location.

Groups of buoys are located at:

1	24°14.4035'N	051°59.3330'E
2	24°26.1368'N	051°33.9578'E
3	24°40.3951'N	051°48.3791'E



ACTIVITIES

Diving
Snorkeling
Dolphin & turtle watching
Recreational fishing (with line and rod only)
Sunset and sunrise viewing



LOGISTICS

Mooring buoys
Navigation signs
Anchorage areas



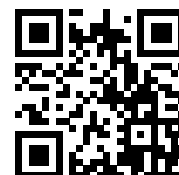
PROHIBITED

Anchoring in the MPA
Jet skis
De-ballasting, sewage discharge
Collection of shells and corals
Garbage disposal

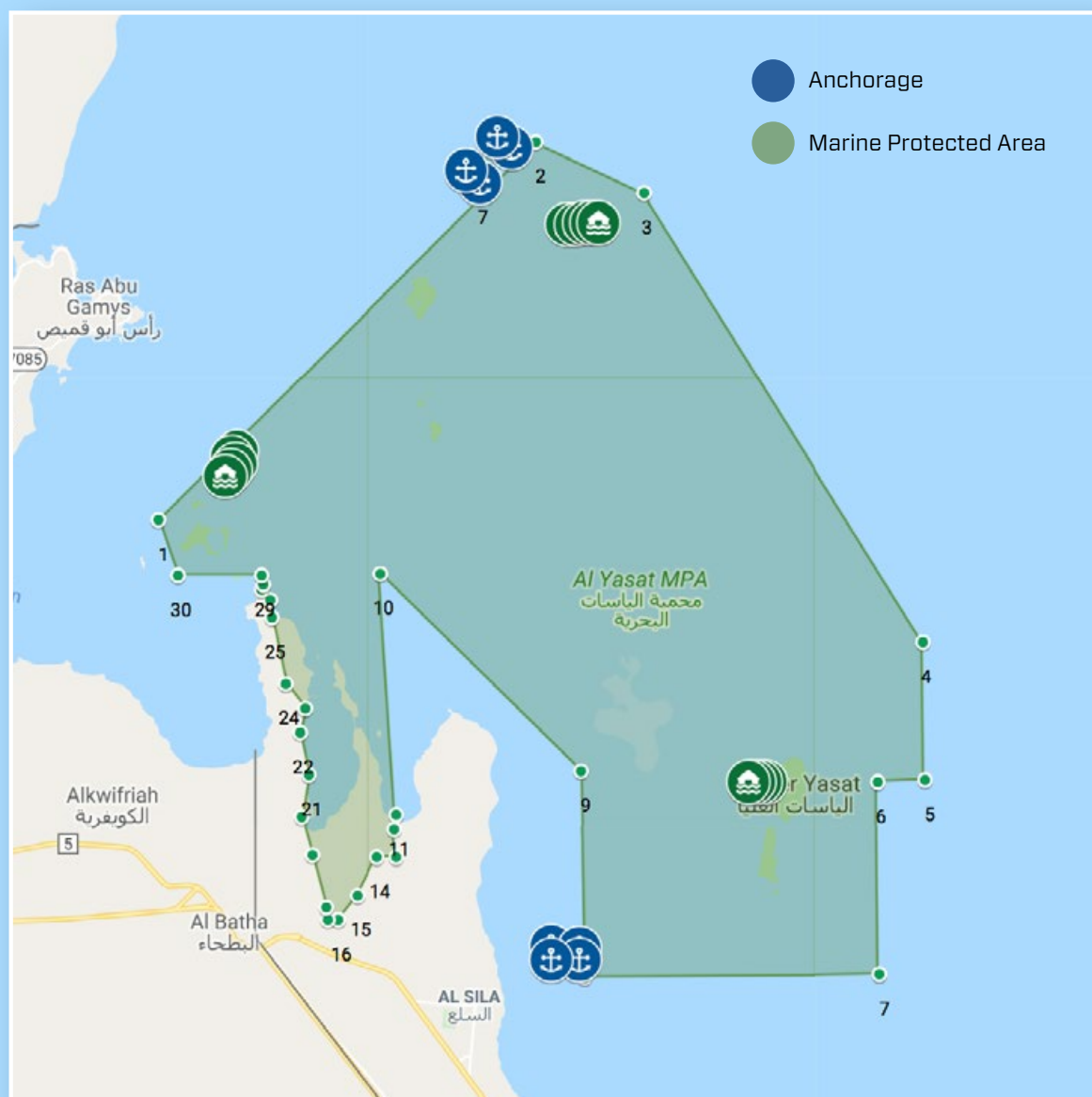
Infrastructure

There are three mooring stations in the Al Yasat Marine Protected Area with four to five mooring buoys where visiting yachts can moor instead of dropping anchor.

Find our locations easily using this QR code.



Geographical Coordinates	Buoy Coordinates	Seabed	Buoy Type	Depth
24°14.4035'N 051°59.3330'E	24°14.2736'N 051°59.5681'E	Mud, shells	2.4m (up to 500 GRT)	22m
	24°14.2612'N 051°59.3034'E			
	24°14.2611'N 051°59.0321'E			
	24°14.2546'N 051°58.7589'E			
24°26.1368'N 051°33.9578'E	24°28.5100'N 051°34.6356'E	Coral, mud	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	8m
	24°28.2753'N 051°34.3852'E			
	24°27.9512'N 051°34.4890'E			
	24°27.6605'N 051°34.2753'E			
	24°27.4042'N 051°34.0323'E			
24°40.3951'N 051°48.3791'E	24°38.2505'N 051°50.1521'E	Sand, coral, shells	1.5m (up to 300 GRT)	10m
	24°38.2574'N 051°50.5893'E			
	24°38.2643'N 051°50.9587'E			
	24°38.2712'N 051°51.3206'E			
	24°38.2779'N 051°51.6631'E			



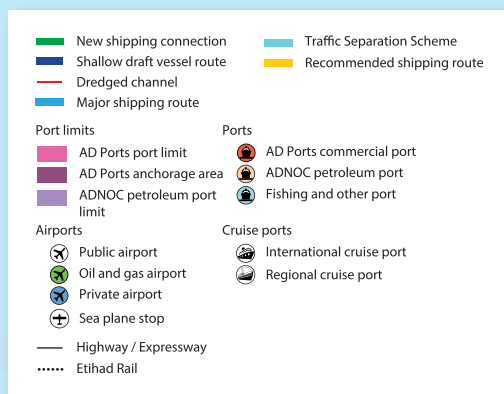


Restrictions on Routes

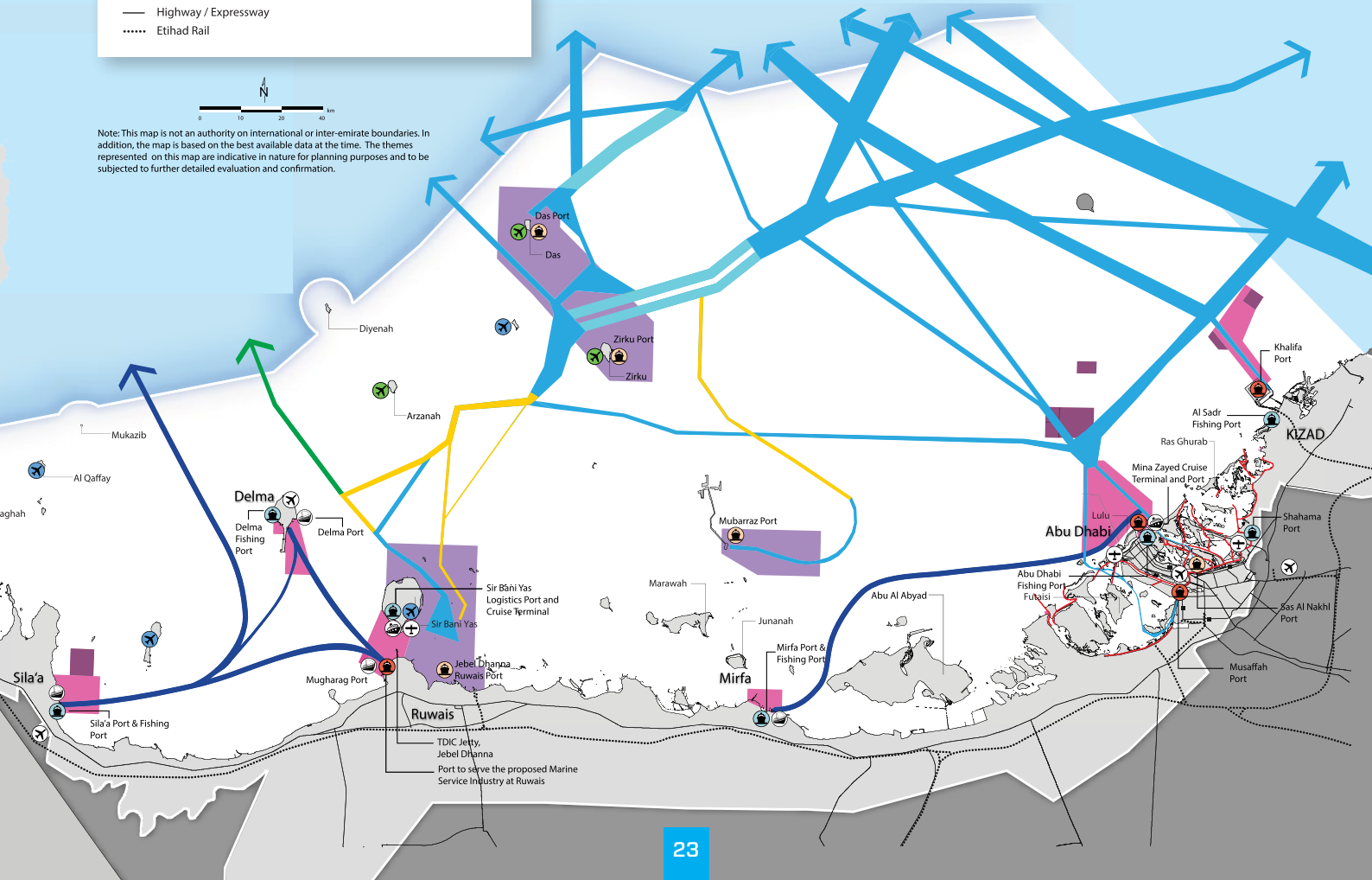
Speed limits should be observed for the purpose of traffic management and avoidance of shallow areas.

Maximum speed limit and minimum safe distance from oil field installations should be strictly observed in the following areas:

- When passing close to oil field installation to minimise wake wash
- When passing in shallow waters to avoid grounding
- Safe speed regulations under COLREGs to be adhere with
- Speed limit regulations from port authorities when passing through port limit or using crossing a navigational channel
- When passing in development areas or underwater survey is in progress
- VTIS instructions with regards to speed limit should always be followed
- No entry in oil fields restricted areas and minimum safe distance passing by oil field installations to be maintained
- Information regarding these restricted zones are clearly marked on navigational charts



Note: This map is not an authority on international or inter-emirate boundaries. In addition, the map is based on the best available data at the time. The themes represented on this map are indicative in nature for planning purposes and to be subjected to further detailed evaluation and confirmation.



Traffic Control and VTIS

Vessel Traffic and Information System (VTIS) Procedure for Ships

- All vessels with in VTIS coverage area either under Abu Dhabi Ports or Petroleum Ports Authority (PPA) ports should monitor the channels as per the Sectors noted below. Reference should be made to NP63 for passage planning and ADRS5 for communication.
- VHF Radio Transmitter (R/T) channels of the VTIS Sector shall be monitored at all times during passage, mooring or anchorage when inside the VTIS area.
- VTIS should be informed on every occasion a vessel leaves / enters the VTIS Sector.
- Vessels navigating within the VTIS Sector, for safety of navigation and protection of life and of the environment, should continuously monitor all VTIS broadcasts and take heed of information, recommendations, warnings and advice given by the VTIS.
- Masters of vessels navigating within the VTIS Sector shall report to the VTIS all perils to safety of navigation observed.
- Vessels navigating within the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) through the VTIS Sector should report to the relevant VTIS Control in case of any deviation from the TSS, berthing or mooring to buoys, dropping anchor, including turning back or emergencies and similar exceptional circumstances.
- Local vessels inside the VTIS area are to proceed and conduct themselves as per the International Regulations for preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs).

Reporting Points

Active Participant vessels in passage through the VTIS Sectors should provide the Call Point Position Report via VHF R/T to the relevant VTIS sector, at the positions designated and mentioned on charts. Furthermore, vessels should provide this report via the required VHF R/T channel to the new Sector at each change of sector, using the following format:

1. Ship's name
2. Position

Vessels are advised to report to both VTIS controls whenever crossing a border between two VTIS Sectors.

The Sectors are:

- Khalifa Port Control VHF Channels 16 and 13
Mina Zayed Port Control VHF Channels 16 and 67
- Free Port Control VHF Channels 16 and 11
Al Dhafra region ports, Mirfa, Silla and Mugharag VTS operates on VHF channel 08 and 16
- VHF Channel 21 will be used for the VTIS Sector in Ruwais
- VHF Channel 23 will be used for VTIS Sector in Das
- VHF Channel 23 will be used for VTIS Sector in Mubarras

VHF 16 will be used for emergencies only. Occasionally it may be used in case no communication can be established with a vessel in order to instruct the vessel to change to the proper VTIS VHF channel.

Reporting Incidents

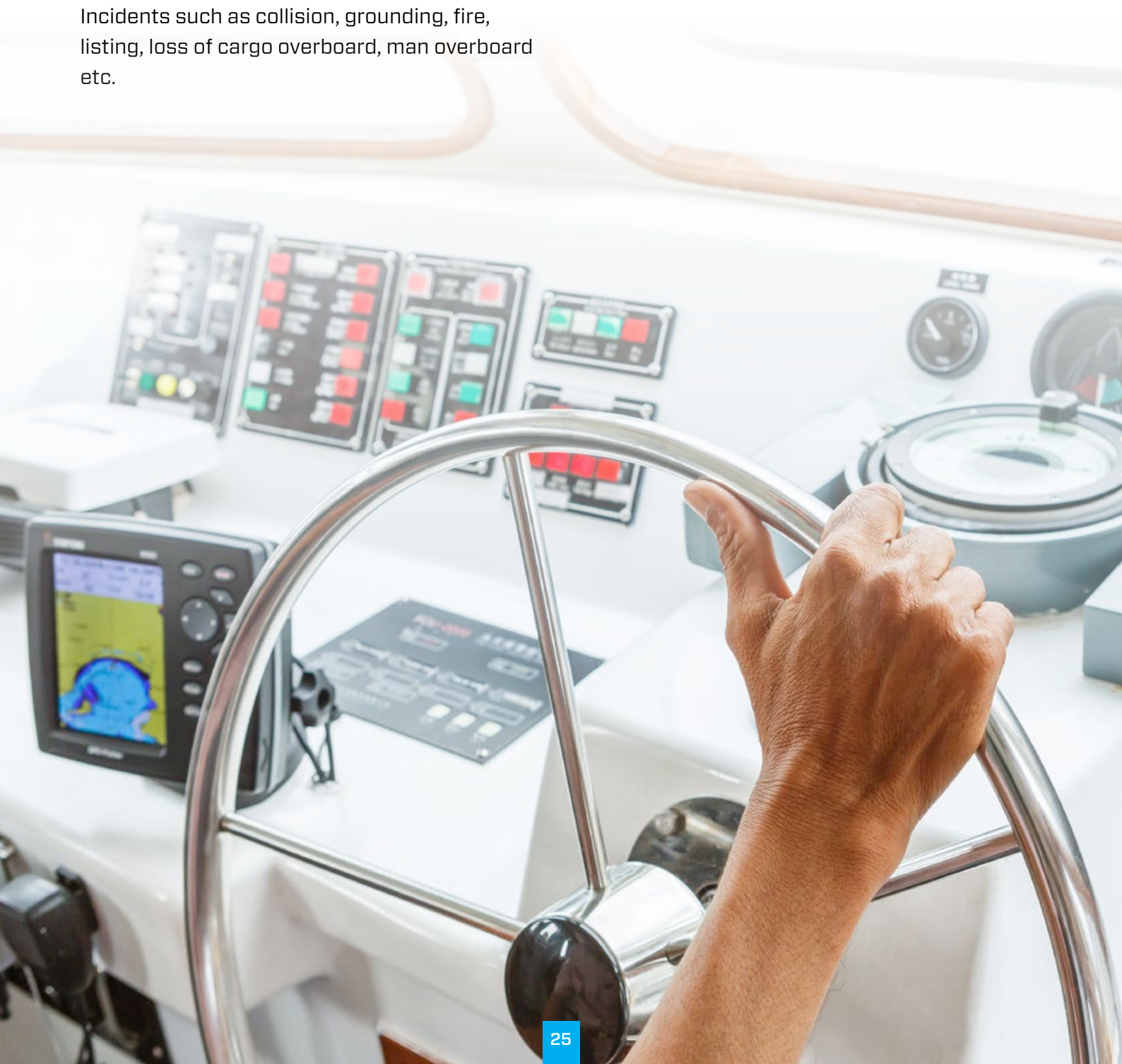
Vessels navigating within the VTIS Sector are obliged to report to the relevant VTIS centre, immediately and without delay, any incident that may occur as a result of, but not limited to;

Effect of adverse weather, such as hull damage and/or water ingress, loss of steering, failure of tow arrangements, engine breakdown etc.

Incidents such as collision, grounding, fire, listing, loss of cargo overboard, man overboard etc.

Vessels should use the following format for reporting an incident:

Designator	Information Required
1	Ship's Name
2	Position
3	Nature of Incident



Mooring Stations in Marine Protected Areas

Mooring buoys layout

Mooring buoys are generally attached to a ground chain, which in turn is anchored to the sea bed with a heavy object or anchor. Sometimes a buoy can be on its own or on a line of moorings attached to heavy chain that runs along the seabed, this is called a 'trot'.

Quite often, the buoy itself is too heavy to lift, as it will be attached to a heavy riser chain, so you will normally find a ring on top of the buoy, which sometimes also has a pick up line attached. You will tie the yacht to that ring.

If you are picking up a mooring in an area that you do not know, or if it is your first time on a yacht, then check the charts and ask for local knowledge about which moorings are strong enough to support your yacht, though often you will find that where there are mooring buoys, they are generally well maintained and on offer for many visiting yachts. In areas where the seabed is especially sensitive due to presence of coral, there are normally strict no mooring or anchoring signs.

Mooring station restriction and maximum vessel size

There are two types of mooring buoys installed in marine protected areas, details of which is described below. It is compulsory to secure the yacht with suitable mooring buoy.

Each yacht Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) and safe working load (SWL) should be considered prior to approaching a mooring buoy. SWL and type of mooring buoys is mentioned on each buoy.

Mooring Buoys Specifications

Two types of mooring buoys are installed on each mooring station along the Marine Protected Area mooring stations. Specification and maximum size of vessel allowed to moor at each buoy are shown below:

Mooring Buoys Limitations

Criteria	Type 1: SMB-1500mm	Type 2: SMB-2400 mm
Max size	300 GRT	500 GRT
Max current	5 Kts	5 Kts
Beaufort Scale Max	6	6
Wind Force Max	35 Kts/h	35 Kts/h
Available Free board	0.910 m	1.14 m

Picking up a mooring buoy

Preparation

All approaching vessels need to have a boat hook and a mooring rope ready for deployment.

All mooring buoys are equipped with a mooring ring and a pick-up line, which can be used for mooring.

Please do not lift the pick-up line upwards, rather, pull it laterally toward the boat.

Approaching

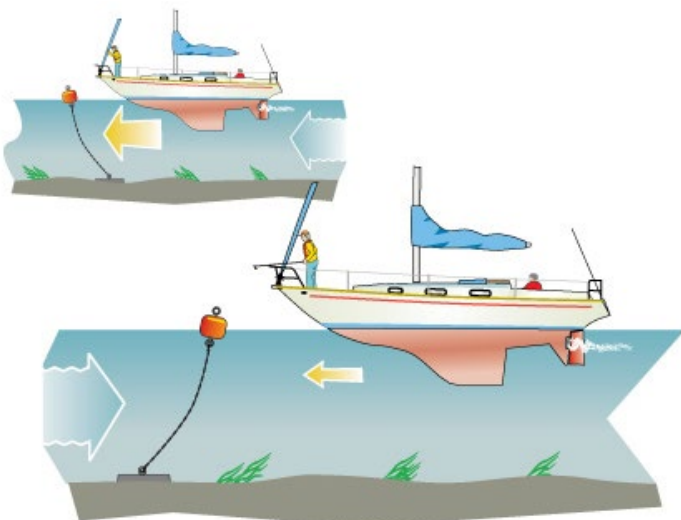
When you are approaching the mooring buoy, always try and aim into the tide or the wind. Look around you at similar yachts and approach the buoy in parallel to them, or look at the pick-up line which will be showing you the direction of the tide.

Keep the buoy to one side of the bow, so you can see it for longer. You can ask the crew to count down the distance to the buoy. Take it nice and slowly, and once the buoy has been picked up, then reverse equally slowly trying to stay on the buoy until the crew have attached the bow of the boat to it.



Securing

Once you are on the buoy, ideally the boat needs to stay stopped over the buoy to give your crew a chance to attach the yacht to the buoy. You don't want the load of the yacht to be fully on the boat hook as then it is impossible for the crew to release the hook from the buoy. Pull in on the mooring rope until the main mooring line is reached and then attach to a cleat. If the buoy doesn't have a mooring line, then use your own line to attach yourself to the ring on top of the mooring. The safest and most secure way of attaching yourself to a buoy is to tie a round turn and two half hitches to the ring on the buoy, if you are planning on staying overnight, then to be even more secure you could use two lines to the buoy.





Fishing License

How to Get a Fishing License in Abu Dhabi

If you want to fish properly in Abu Dhabi, you will need a fishing license from the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency. The license will enable you to fish with a hand-held rod and reel rather than a fishing net.

- However, you need to be over 18 years old to get such a license.
- The weekly cost of a license is AED 30.
- In case, you are going on a fishing excursion with a company, you don't need to worry as the company taking you will already have a commercial license which will cover you.
- Login in below link for more information: <https://eservices.ead.ae/web/guest>

Fishing Rules in MPA

- Recreational fishing using line and rod are restricted to licenced fishermen within Marawah and Al Yasat marine protected areas
- All core areas (Buteina and Al Bazam) are prohibited for any type of fishing
- No fishing within: (1) Bul Sysyeef MPA, Mangrove Marine National Park, Saadiyat Marine National Park, and Ras Ghanada MPA

Documents Required to Get a License For Fishing in Abu Dhabi

You have to submit the following documents to get a fishing license:

For local residents

- Passport copy (with residency for non-local)
- Personal photo
- Boat license (for recreational fishing)

For non-local residents

- Tenancy contract/ownership certificate
- Electricity bill
- Labour contract and official letter

Acknowledgements

We sincerely thank Jalboot UAE and UAE Critical Infrastructure and Coastal Protection Authority for their collaborative efforts in developing the Marine Protected Areas Visitor Guidelines.

In case of any emergency while at mooring stations or anchorages call
Critical Infrastructure and Coastal Protection Authority CICPA 996
Abu Dhabi Maritime 800 10 20 30

Abu Dhabi Maritime

ZonesCorp Main Center, Engineering Building (No 50),
Abu Dhabi Industrial City 1, M41, Al – Mu-asasat Street,
Musaffah, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

800 10 20 30

admaritime.ae

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Critical Infrastructure and Coastal Protection Authority CICPA 996
Abu Dhabi Maritime 800 10 20 30