

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

Title/Name of the area:

Nayband Marine-Coastal National Park

Presented by

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Abstract

Nayband marine-coastal national park is located in the northern coast of the Persian Gulf. This area has a wide range of terrestrial and marine habitats including coastal sand dunes, rocky, muddy and sandy shores, coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass meadows and estuaries. Nayband Bay is the only coral reef area of mainland coastal waters of the northern Persian Gulf and one of the most important nesting sites and feeding grounds for hawksbill and green sea turtles in the area. Nayband Bay has a high diversity of marine and coastal habitats which is completely unique in the northern part of the Persian Gulf.

Location

Nayband marine-coastal national park is located in the northern part of the Persian Gulf in Bushehr and Hormozgan provinces, 320 km south-east of Bushehr city and has an area of about 50000 hectares.

Feature description of the proposed area

Nayband marine-coastal national park was declared as a national park in 2004 and is the first of its kind designated in Iran. Nayband Bay encompasses a wide range of terrestrial and marine habitats including coastal sand dunes, rocky, muddy and sandy shores, coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass meadows and estuaries and represents a unique area with high diversity of ecosystems in the northern Persian Gulf.

Nayband Bay supports the only coral reef area of mainland coastal waters of the northern Persian Gulf. The reef area is mainly dominated by *Porites* corals and has been roughly estimated to measure about 181 ha. This reefs are among the best coral areas of Iran.

Mangrove forests of Nayband Bay with an area of 390 hectares, are the widest mangrove communities in above 27 degrees latitude in the Persian Gulf and the last dense and extensive complex of these ecosystems in the north-west Indian Ocean. This mangroves support more than 84 species of waterbirds and large populations of migratory birds.

This area is one of the most important feeding grounds and nesting sites for hawksbill and green sea turtles. Shallow waters of Nayband Bay are important areas for fish spawning and larvae breeding. Dolphins and whales also visit waters in Nayband Bay and its offshores areas.

Feature condition and future outlook of the proposed area

Despite its ecological importance in the Persian Gulf, Nayband Bay is surrounded by oil and gas facilities of Pars Special Economic Energy Zone (PSEEZ), in the north-west. Oil and gas activities and their pollution, land reclamation, dredging, over using natural resources, and changing landuse have led to extensive ecosystem destruction especially in northwest part of the area.

Road construction has been led to hydrological changes and subsequent decline of mangrove forests of east Nayband Bay.

Ongoing action plans:

The Centre for Sustainable Development and Environment (CENESTA) prepared a plan for the transfer of governance system (from governmental to co-management) in the area under an European Commission grant. The efforts led to formation of a Community Based Organisation (CBO) called

Nayband Sustainable Development Organisation. The European Commission-funded “Dialogue and Development” project supported the process of participatory zoning, management plan and transferring governance responsibility to key stakeholders, notably the indigenous peoples and local communities of Nayband Bay area.

Assessment of the area against CBD EBSA Criteria

(Discuss the area in relation to each of the CBD criteria and relate the best available science. Note that a proposed area for EBSA description may qualify on the basis of one or more of the criteria, and that the polygons of the EBSA need not be defined with exact precision. And modeling may be used to estimate the presence of EBSA attributes. Please note where there are significant information gaps)

CBD EBSA Criteria (Annex I to decision IX/20)	Description (Annex I to decision IX/20)	Ranking of criterion relevance (please mark one column with an X)			
		No information	Low	Medium	High
Uniqueness or rarity	Area contains either (i) unique (“the only one of its kind”), rare (occurs only in few locations) or endemic species, populations or communities, and/or (ii) unique, rare or distinct, habitats or ecosystems; and/or (iii) unique or unusual geomorphological or oceanographic features.				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nayband Bay has a wide range of terrestrial and marine habitats including coastal sand dunes, rocky, muddy and sandy shores, coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass meadows and estuaries which is completely unique in the northern Persian Gulf. - The only coral reef area of mainland coastal waters of the northern Persian Gulf. 					
Special importance for life-history stages of species	Areas that are required for a population to survive and thrive.				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs known worldwide as nurseries, foraging and protection areas for small fishes, shrimps among other organisms. - One of the most important feeding grounds and nesting sites for hawksbill and green sea turtles. - An important breeding site for waterbirds. 					
Importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats	Area containing habitat for the survival and recovery of endangered, threatened, declining species or area with significant assemblages of such species.				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The only coral reef area of mainland coastal waters of the northern Persian Gulf. - One of the few known seagrass meadows of northern Persian Gulf. - Supports large populations of hawksbill and green sea turtles as feeding grounds and nesting sites. - Supports threatened species of waterbirds and marine mammals. 					
Vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity, or slow recovery	Areas that contain a relatively high proportion of sensitive habitats, biotopes or species that are functionally fragile (highly susceptible to degradation or depletion by human activity or by natural events) or with slow recovery.				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coral reefs of the area are highly susceptible and fragile to coastal developments. 					
Biological productivity	Area containing species, populations or communities with comparatively higher natural				X

	biological productivity.				
	- Mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs of Nayband Bay present high productivity of fish and marine invertebrates providing the source of subsistence for local communities.				
Biological diversity	Area contains comparatively higher diversity of ecosystems, habitats, communities, or species, or has higher genetic diversity.				X
	- Ecosystem diversity of the area represents a high biological diversity, although more studies are needed to estimate biological diversity.				
Naturalness	Area with a comparatively higher degree of naturalness as a result of the lack of or low level of human-induced disturbance or degradation.		X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nayband Marine-Coastal National Park is threatened by development of oil and gas facilities. - Oil and gas activities and their pollution, land reclamation, dredging, over using natural resources, and changing landuse have led to extensive ecosystem destruction especially in northwest part of the area. 				

Sharing experiences and information applying other criteria (Optional)

Other Criteria	Description	Ranking of criterion relevance (please mark one column with an X)			
		Don't Know	Low	Medium	High
<i>Add relevant criteria</i>					
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					

References

(e.g. relevant documents and publications, including URL where available; relevant data sets, including where these are located; information pertaining to relevant audio/visual material, video, models, etc.)

Maps and Figures

