



M A R I N E p r o g r a m m e s

Work Travel SA's marine volunteering programmes offer a window to a world that will change your life forever. Based in South Africa's first UNESCO World Heritage Site – the iSimangaliso Wetland Park in the northern region of the KwaZulu-Natal province – these projects are set in idyllic beach locations with access to some of the world's southernmost coral reefs and breeding populations of leatherback and loggerhead turtles.

In partnership with researchers from one of South Africa's leading Universities, volunteers on the Sea Turtle Conservation project are based at a research camp inside the Marine Protected Area (MPA), right on a secluded stretch of beach reserved for nesting turtles. Volunteers take part in monitoring activities and assist researchers in collecting data, including night-time monitoring walks along the beach, working with nesting adult females and taking measurements and DNA samples from hatchlings.

The Indian Ocean Reef Conservation project introduces volunteers to the wonders beneath the waves in a Marine Protected Area, with some of the most diverse coral reefs in the world. Get your PADI scuba qualification in Sodwana Bay, South Africa's diving mecca, and learn to identify marine species, discover more about marine ecosystems and collect data contributing to research on reef mega fauna including turtles, whale sharks, dolphins, sharks and manta rays.

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park supports a diverse array of marine habitats including Sodwana Bay's unique coral reefs, Africa's largest estuary at Lake St. Lucia, mangrove swamps, sea grass meadows, intertidal reefs and deep water canyons.





Project Durations: 1 to 3 months (projects may vary).

Work Days: Generally Monday to Friday (projects may vary).

Accommodation: **MPA Turtle camp:** Research hut on the beach; gas-powered kitchen and limited electricity from generator (4 to 5 hrs/day), shared ablutions.

Sodwana Bay: Fully-furnished lodge (modern conveniences, swimming pool, free WiFi). Walking distance to town amenities and a 5-minute drive to the beach.

Special Skills: A love for nature and the marine environment and a genuine desire to make a difference in conservation are essential. Volunteers must be fit, healthy and prepared to work hard! Volunteers doing scuba diving must have medical clearance from their doctor. *It is up to volunteers to make the most of their stay. Staff will provide guidance to ensure a rewarding experience, but ultimately an individual's attitude will determine what they gain from the programme.*

Attractions: The MPA Turtle research camp is in a remote coastal area; the nearest town is more than 20 km away. There are limited social activities and attractions, BUT if you love spending time in nature and on the beach this is a great opportunity to work closely with breeding sea turtles and contribute to research efforts. Sodwana Bay is one of the top diving destinations on the planet, with the chance to interact with iconic marine species including whale sharks, manta rays, sea turtles and dolphins. The small, close-knit local community provides a warm welcome and most visitors fall in love with Sodwana's pristine beaches, natural highlights and nearby Wildlife Reserves.