

MPA NEWS



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Highlights from the Fourth International Marine Protected Areas Congress

From 4-8 September, MPA News attended the [Fourth International Marine Protected Areas Congress \(IMPAC4\)](#) in the beautiful beachfront town of La Serena, Chile. In all there were 1100 attendees from 59 countries – a good turnout.

The highlights of the conference, providing the main news and outcomes from the week, are below. If we have missed anything, please let us know at mpanews@u.washington.edu and we will add it. Thanks! (And if you'd like a more detailed, blow-by-blow account of the conference, please [see our live-blog](#) of it.)

MPA announcements

- **Three new Chilean MPAs:** On opening night of IMPAC4, the Chilean government announced the official designation of three MPAs – Rapa Nui, also known as Easter Island (740,000km²); Juan Fernández Archipelago (480,000km²); and Cabo de Hornos (147,000km²). Details on the Rapa Nui MPA were the first to emerge: the MPA bans industrial fishing and mining, but traditional artisanal fishing by the Rapa Nui community will continue. The marine park's creation was enabled by a 73% vote in favor from the Rapa Nui community in a 3 September referendum, following five years of consultations. For more information, click [here](#) and [here](#).
- **No mining in penguin reserve:** The week before IMPAC4, the Chilean government decided to halt development of a major mining project near the Las Damas Reserve, a penguin MPA near La Serena. The decision was relatively controversial in Chile, where the mine developers had promised the creation of thousands of jobs.
- **GLORES program announces first three platinum-level sites:** At IMPAC4, the Global Ocean Refuge System (GLORES), managed by the Marine Conservation Institute, [announced](#) its first Global Ocean Refuges: [Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument](#), [Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary](#), and [Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park](#).

Joint actions

- **Call to Action for the Oceans:** IMPAC4 culminated in a one-day high-level meeting attended by Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and other international and national leaders. The leaders endorsed a "Call to Action for the Oceans", which calls on nations to unite in favor of ocean protection and sustainable marine use. The official IMPAC4 announcement of the Call to Action [is here](#).
- **Transatlantic MPA Network:** An initiative to link existing networks of MPA managers in the Atlantic region was highlighted at IMPAC4. In development since late 2016, the network aims to transfer knowledge between sites that face shared challenges and wildlife. The project is funded by the European Commission. For more information, [click here](#).

New websites, publications, videos

- **New website for global MPA database:** The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre and IUCN released the latest online version of its MPA database: [marine.protectedplanet.net](#). The new site is much more interactive than the previous one. As of early September, the global MPA count was 15,271 MPAs covering 6.35% of the world ocean.
- **Website for proposed MPA classification system:** In 2016 a joint team of Portuguese and French researchers [proposed a new system for classifying MPAs](#) based on what activities the sites allow and how those activities could impact biodiversity. The project [now has a website](#) that allows practitioners to generate a classification for their sites within minutes, following a brief series of questions.
- **Report: Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas: Guidelines for design and management** (IUCN)
- **Journal issue:** A [special issue](#) of the journal *Aquatic Conservation* was published at IMPAC4. It highlights key MPA-themed lessons from the 2016 World Parks Congress in Honolulu, Hawai'i, including on MPA management, financing, blue carbon, and more.
- **Journal issue:** [The latest issue of Antarctic Affairs journal](#) (July 2017) contains six articles on Antarctic MPA projects, including for the Ross Sea, Eastern Antarctica, Weddell Sea, and the Western Antarctic Peninsula.
- **New video by young professionals:** The Young Professionals network of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas [released a video titled "Making Waves"](#) with lessons and inspiration gathered from IMPAC4.
- **New video on high seas conservation:** IUCN released a new video, ["The Last Frontier"](#), on high seas conservation, including a call for increased science and better governance for international waters.

Award

- **Keobel Sakuma wins Kenton Miller award:** IUCN awarded Keobel Sakuma of Palau with the Kenton Miller Award for innovation in protected areas. Keobel and his team have been responsible for planning and managing the MPA that now covers Palau's entire marine area. For more information, [click here](#).

Next IMPAC

- IMPAC5 will be [in Vancouver, Canada, in 2021](#), hosted by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

Commitments from the 'Our Ocean' conference, held in Malta in October

The annual Our Ocean conference aims to drive nations, NGOs, and others to make commitments to foster more sustainable ocean management, including through the designation of new MPAs. The latest conference – held in Malta from 5-6 October and hosted by the EU – was no exception.

For a full list of commitments made at the latest Our Ocean conference, [click here](#). Here were some of the MPA-related highlights:

- The South Pacific island nation of Niue announced that over the next three years 40% of its EEZ, equal to 127,000 km², will be designated as an MPA.
- Colombia announced the expansion of the Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, increasing its area from 9500 to 26,670 km².
- Mexico announced its intent to expand Revillagigedo National Park, a no-take MPA and World Heritage site, to 140,000 km². It will be the [largest MPA in waters of continental North America](#).
- The MAVA Foundation announced a €27-million (US \$32-million) commitment to promote MPAs as a tool for protecting marine species, habitats, and fish resources, mainly in the Mediterranean Basin and in West Africa.

The next Our Ocean conferences will be held in Indonesia in 2018, in Norway in 2019, and in Palau in 2020.

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