

# MPA NEWS



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## New Year's Resolutions for the MPA Field: What Practitioners Would Like to Happen in 2013

The year 2012 was a noteworthy one for the MPA world, both for things that happened (like Australia's designation of an enormous new national MPA system) or, in some cases, did not (like Antarctic managers' failure to designate a Southern Ocean MPA system by year-end, as planned). In 2012 the World Commission on Protected Areas released new, more restrictive guidelines for what should be considered an MPA - reopening a central discussion with implications for whether and how the field can meet global protection targets. And the year featured some quirky occurrences, too, like when the UK realized its Chagos MPA was actually 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> larger than it had previously thought.

As we turn to 2013, MPA News is introducing a new annual feature: collecting MPA-related New Year's resolutions from practitioners in the field. Typically, New Year's resolutions pertain to the people making them - a commitment they make to meet a goal or reform a habit in the coming year. In our case, however, we invited contributors to apply resolutions to any person or group they wished in the MPA world: themselves, managers, a particular elected official, scientists, fishing groups, anyone! In essence we asked,

**What action would you like to see this year in the MPA world, and who should take that action?**

The resolutions we received are below. Do you have your own MPA resolution in mind for 2013? Please feel free to share it at the bottom of this article!

**Jay Nelson**, Director, Global Ocean Legacy Project, Pew Environment Group

### A resolution for scientists

Although it is not typical to offer New Year's resolutions for others, this is an opportunity that's hard to turn down! I would like to see scientists end their use of the term "marine protected area" to describe marine protection from IUCN Category I to Category VI. As a catchall term, MPA is imprecise, unfocused - and sounds deceptively benevolent to the public. It is understandable why government officials, who benefit from ambiguity, use the term for virtually any marine protection, no matter how minor. But it's a mystery why scientists, who otherwise pride themselves on empirical precision, use a term with such a broad range of interpretations as to be virtually meaningless in a scientific context. Whatever terms are used to describe marine protection, they need to be clear and descriptive.

**Tim McClanahan**, Senior Conservation Zoologist, Wildlife Conservation Society

### A resolution for practitioners and governments

This year marine practitioners and governments will recognize and act on the recognition that small and short-term fisheries closures are not sufficient for protecting the marine communities and biodiversity that are inherent in their regions. They will acknowledge that large and permanent wilderness areas are fundamentally different than the common small closure systems. And they will work with neighboring communities, countries, and international governance bodies to establish large wilderness areas, such that all of the major marine regions have at least one wilderness area where community, regional, and international governance bodies share the recognition and protection.

**Lida Pet-Soede**, Head, Coral Triangle Program, WWF

### A resolution for the fishing sector

In 2013, I would like to see the fisheries sector collaborating with WWF in designing "MPAs for fish fillets". In the Coral Triangle, important progress is being made where new MPAs are declared for the purpose of securing food and livelihoods. Unfortunately, however, few of these are sufficiently designed or implemented to deliver these goals. No-take zones are not in the right place or of the right size for the optimization of actual fish output, and hardly anywhere is fishing around the no-take zones managed with suitable catch limits and effort restrictions. As responsible fishing companies enter the arena of sustainable use of our oceans, I would like to see them apply their business acumen to help design and implement additional MPAs that are designed to deliver what most MPAs of the past have promised but unfortunately failed to deliver: more fish.

**Fanny Douvere**, Coordinator, UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme

### A resolution for marine World Heritage sites

We want the 46 marine World Heritage sites to be drivers for change in ocean conservation worldwide. For this, we developed a 10-year strategy to ensure that by 2022 every site will have sufficient means to protect its Outstanding Universal Value for which it was inscribed on the World Heritage List. To achieve that, our resolution this year is to attract key strategic partners that can help us deliver this goal. Marine World Heritage is a story of success. We are at the beginning of a long route and our ambitions are big - 2013 is a time for action!

**[Editor's note:** On 7 February in Paris, the World Heritage Marine Programme is hosting an event to raise visibility and attract new partners, including debuting a short film, "Marine World Heritage: The Crown Jewels of the Ocean", narrated by Jacques Perrin.]

**Blair Palese**, Communications Director, Antarctic Ocean Alliance

### A resolution for CCAMLR

The Antarctic Ocean Alliance (AOA) is calling on the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources - the body that regulates most marine life in the Southern Ocean - to live up to its commitment to establish a network of MPAs and marine reserves around Antarctica while the region's habitats are still largely intact. In particular, the AOA is urging CCAMLR to agree on two proposed protected areas: for the Ross Sea (the world's last pristine ocean area) and East Antarctica. The 25 CCAMLR member countries failed to establish any large-scale marine protection at their meeting last year because some countries actively blocked conservation efforts. We challenge CCAMLR in 2013 to meet its conservation commitments and preserve this unique and remarkable ocean habitat.

**Mike Weber**, Program Officer for Oceans, Coasts, and Fisheries, Resources Law Group

### A resolution for communities and stakeholders

In 2013, the existence of large MPAs in remote areas (as in Chagos, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, and the Phoenix Islands) will be complemented by growing networks of protected areas near densely populated, heavily used, yet ecologically critical, coastal waters (as in the US states of Oregon and California). The vision is a global movement toward science-based networks of coastal MPAs, designed

by stakeholders and stewarded by local communities invested in their success. These MPAs will be integrated into coastal management and inspire action at all levels of government to improve water quality, ensure sustainable fisheries and promote sustainable coastal use generally. Fishermen, conservationists, and coastal tourism-based business will recognize the importance of MPAs to a healthy ocean and healthy fisheries, and work together to ensure the success of local protected areas.

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**Yvonne Sadovy de Mitcheson**, Director, Science and Conservation of Reef Fish Aggregations ([www.SCRFA.org](http://www.SCRFA.org)), University of Hong Kong

## A resolution for Pacific Island governments and the Secretariat for the Pacific Community

My wish is for universal inclusion of fish spawning aggregations in marine protected areas and as an integral part of MPA planning. Realistically, my resolution for 2013 is that this happens across the Pacific. Spawning aggregations of many important reef fishes support fisheries that feed and generate income for communities and traders in Pacific Island nations. Yet lack of management and increasing demand for fish are causing the aggregations to disappear along with the tremendous benefits they bring. Spawning aggregations are also some of our ocean's most spectacular natural events. The good news is that many Pacific aggregations are still in good shape and there is time to protect them. But this requires urgent and strong commitment from the region's government fisheries departments supported by the Secretariat for the Pacific Community.

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**Kristina Gjerde**, Senior High Seas Advisor, IUCN Global Marine Programme

## A resolution for governments and the United Nations

I wish governments in 2013 would support a new agreement for the high seas and deep seabed beyond national jurisdiction. A new implementing agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea is needed to facilitate the establishment of a representative system of marine protected areas for fully 50% of the planet, set forth baseline standards for prior impact assessments while addressing wider issues of capacity development, technology transfer, and access and benefit sharing of marine genetic resources. The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea is in need of updating to reflect more sophisticated approaches to protecting the marine environment beyond its primary focus on pollution control, while still retaining the structure and wide support that the Convention already enjoys.

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**Marie-Aude Sévin and Paul Gouin**, Coordinators, Third International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC 3), National MPA Agency, France

## A resolution for the MPA field

Do not procrastinate! This applies foremost to ourselves. Here in France, the final rush has begun to get everything ready for IMPAC 3, opening in Marseille on 21 October and closing in Corsica on 27 October. But we hope that you, too, can own up to this resolution, because we need your involvement, and quickly. The Congress is the only MPA-specific platform designed to pool global expertise and know-how, enabling us hopefully to meet our common target of protecting 10% of the Earth's waters by 2020. So whether you work for an MPA authority, an NGO, a research institute or a sea-related industry, you are bound to have something to learn - and something to contribute. To make sure you don't miss out on anything, follow our timeline:

- Mid-March: Connect to [impac3.org](http://impac3.org) and discover the program.
- April 30: Remember the submission deadline and mail in your contribution.
- June 8: Dress up for World Oceans Day, take photos, and share them with overseas friends [atfacebook.com/impac3](https://www.facebook.com/impac3).
- June 15: Be an early bird - register for IMPAC 3 while the coziest hotel rooms are still available.
- September: Buy a French (or, alternatively, Corsican) phrasebook.
- October 21: Be there!

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## BOX: ...and one dream for the MPA field

**By Joachim Claudet**: Editor, *Marine Protected Areas: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (Cambridge University Press)

I have a dream.

I have a dream that one day our perception of the oceans will change.

I have a dream that one day marine spatial planning will be aimed at designating areas where uses, and especially fisheries, are allowed, rather than prohibited.

I have a dream that one day the debate will not be about what should or should not be considered an MPA but rather about the fishing activities that should or should not be allowed within the established marine fished areas.

I have a dream that one day the management target will no more be "percent area to be protected" but rather the amount of fishing allowed in a fished area to maintain a healthy ecosystem.

I have a dream that one day some policy-makers will share this dream.

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