

# MPA NEWS



Published on *MPA News* (<https://mpanews.openchannels.org>)

## Notes & news: Expansion of Papahānaumokuākea - Malaysia - GBR - North America - Benefits of MPAs - Transboundary MPAs - Marine litter & MPAs - MPA Science Corner - MPA News vault

### US President Obama considering expansion of Papahānaumokuākea to 1.6 million km<sup>2</sup>

A proposal initiated by a Native Hawaiian-led group to expand the boundary of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands is being considered by US President Barack Obama. The proposed expansion would move the seaward boundary of the MPA from its current 50 nm from shore to the full 200-nm limit of the EEZ. As a result, the 362,000-km<sup>2</sup> site would grow to a giant 1.6 million km<sup>2</sup> in area - making it arguably the largest MPA in the world.

Obama Administration officials reportedly held a recent listening session in Hawai'i with stakeholders to discuss the expansion idea. The expansion is supported by US Senator Brian Schatz of Hawai'i, who sent a formal proposal developed with stakeholder feedback to President Obama on 16 June (<https://oct.to/ZZW>). In the proposal, Schatz recommends that sections of the expanded park remain open to recreational and subsistence fishing. Commercial fishing and other extractive activities would be banned in the expanded area, as they are in the current MPA.

For news coverage of the proposed expansion:

**The Washington Post:** <https://oct.to/ZZm>

**Hawai'i Magazine:** <https://oct.to/ZZs>

### Malaysia designates 10,000-km<sup>2</sup> MPA

In May, Malaysia designated the 10,000-km<sup>2</sup> Tun Mustapha Park off the northern end of Sabah province in Borneo. It is the country's largest MPA. The site includes coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, more than 50 islands, and productive fishing grounds, as well as tens of thousands of Malaysian residents. Sustainable fishing will be allowed in designated zones of the park. The MPA designation comes after 13 years of work led by Malaysia's Sabah Parks, local communities, and international NGOs, including WWF-Malaysia. A press release by WWF-Malaysia is at <https://oct.to/ZZn>

### Preliminary findings on bleaching-related coral die-off on Great Barrier Reef

Amidst the major bleaching event affecting so many coral reefs around the world, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park has released preliminary findings on the extent of coral die-off in its waters. Produced by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and the Australian Institute of Marine Science, the findings indicate that 22% of the park's corals have died so far as a result of the bleaching event.

Most of the mortality has occurred in the northernmost section of the park, where heat stress has been greatest: in that area alone, 50% of the corals have died. The southernmost section of the park has experienced no recorded coral mortality from the bleaching event so far. A GBRMPA press release with the findings, released 3 June, is available at <https://oct.to/ZZh>

AIMS Chief Executive John Gunn said, "While we know many corals in the northern sector will die, others will recover from bleaching over the coming months and we're hopeful that in areas where bleaching has been minor the Reef will bounce back well."

The Ocean Elders, an independent group of global leaders on ocean conservation issues ([www.oceanelders.org](http://www.oceanelders.org)) has called on Australia's government to combat coral bleaching and climate change, including in the name of protecting the Great Barrier Reef. The group's open letter to Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is available at [www.mpanews.org/ocean-elders-letter.pdf](http://www.mpanews.org/ocean-elders-letter.pdf)

### MPA coverage in North American waters is lagging

An assessment of MPA progress across the continent of North America has found that MPAs cover just 1% of the continent's total ocean area, and only 0.04% of the ocean area is in fully protected areas. Co-produced by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and the Marine Conservation Institute (MCI), the report concludes the countries of Canada, the US, and Mexico have a long way to go to reach the goal of 10% marine protection by the year 2020, as established under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. (The report included only continental waters, so excluded Hawai'i and the US's Pacific Island territories from its calculations.)

The report describes the need for urgent action, including recommendations to designate all currently proposed sites and partially implemented MPAs, implement strict interim protection measures, establish strategic MPA network planning, and secure full and permanent protection for at least 30% of each ecoregion. The report *Dare to Be Deep* is available at <https://oct.to/ZZZ>

### Report: European MPAs provide an array of benefits

European MPAs are providing a range of real benefits beyond just biodiversity conservation, according to a new report from the Institute for European Environmental Policy. These benefits include the provision of food, climate change mitigation, nature-based tourism, coastal security, and opportunities for bioprospecting and research.

"The existing evidence, while incomplete, clearly indicates that MPAs can contribute to the development of a sustainable blue-green economy in Europe, where the long-term sustainability of marine ecosystems, as well as the associated livelihood opportunities and wellbeing of different stakeholders, are ensured," states the report. European MPAs as of 2012, including the EU marine Natura 2000 network and areas protected under other regional or national legislation, covered 7725 sites and an area of 338,623 km<sup>2</sup>, or 5.9% of EU waters.

The report *Socio-Economic Benefits of the EU Marine Protected Areas* is available at <https://oct.to/ZZ8>

### New book on management of transboundary MPAs

The establishment and management of transboundary MPAs present significant governance challenges. A new book, *Marine Transboundary Conservation and Protected Areas*, analyzes a series of initiatives - from the Red Sea, Adriatic Sea, Wadden Sea, West Africa, Coral Triangle, Central America, the Korean Peninsula, and elsewhere - to examine the underlying reasons for their success or failure.

Edited by Peter Mackelworth, conservation director of the Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation, the book offers insights into the development of such initiatives, including the effectiveness of international rules, international norms, and discourse; market forces; and direct access to policy making. The authors also assess the potential for developing wider international cooperation based on relationships forged through marine transboundary conservation.

The 314-page book is available at <https://oct.to/ZZX>. For a 20% discount off the normal price, enter the code FLR40 at checkout.

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## Caribbean MPAs invited to participate in regional marine litter program

The Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and the UN Environment Programme's Regional Coordinating Unit for the Caribbean (CAR/RCU) are co-hosting a Regional Node for the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) in the Wider Caribbean Region. The GPML node is bringing together public and private sector actors, community-based groups, and local and regional institutions - including MPAs and MPA networks - to help reduce waste that might otherwise end up as marine litter.

So far, two planning workshops have been held to guide the establishment and management of the Caribbean GPML node, one in Panama in late 2015 and one in Jamaica in early 2016, both with the participation of MPA managers and professionals among other government, NGO, and academic representatives.

The GPML node will help support implementation of the Caribbean Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Management (2014) by maintaining communication and coordination across the Wider Caribbean Region on marine litter; by identifying ways to increase capacity and leverage support to address gaps in marine litter management in the region; and by providing information to the GPML Secretariat on Caribbean regional priorities, interests, and needs.

The work of the node will also assist countries in the Wider Caribbean Region to implement the Global Programme of Action for the Control of Marine Pollution from Land-Based Activities, administered by UNEP, and the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities, for which UNEP CAR/RCU is the Secretariat.

Interested MPA managers, staff, and stakeholders are invited to join the new GPML-Carib List LISTSERV list that is dedicated to providing a forum for real-time exchange of information on marine litter issues in the Wider Caribbean Region. To subscribe, go to <https://oct.to/ZZE>

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## MPA Science Corner

- **Article:** "Lack of recognition of genetic biodiversity: International policy and its implementation in Baltic Sea marine protected areas", *Ambio* (2016). <https://oct.to/ZZc>
    - **Finding:** Management plans across Baltic Sea MPAs are largely void of goals and strategies for maintaining genetic biodiversity, despite the importance of such diversity for enabling species' adaptation to changing selective pressures and rapid environmental change.
  - **Article:** "Description of the vessel traffic within the north Pelagos Sanctuary: Inputs for Marine Spatial Planning and management implications within an existing international Marine Protected Area", *Marine Policy* 69, 102 - 113 (2016). <https://oct.to/ZZp>
    - **Finding:** An AIS receiver in the Pelagos Sanctuary in the northern Mediterranean tracked maritime activity in the MPA's busy waters over 18 months - a total of 3.75-million km of vessel traffic from 82,000 transits by more than 4000 distinct vessels.
  - **Article:** "Effectiveness of a deep-sea cold-water coral Marine Protected Area, following eight years of fisheries closure", *Biological Conservation* 200, 60 - 69 (2016). <https://oct.to/ZZG>
    - **Finding:** Demonstrates the effectiveness of a deep-sea MPA at preventing further damage to fragile cold-water coral ecosystems, but also highlights the low resilience and slow recovery potential of deep-sea ecosystems.
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- Impacts of the March 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami on Japanese MPAs

**Ten years ago:** May 2006 ([MPA News 7:10](#))

- Measurement of Management Effectiveness: The Next Major Stage in MPAs?
- Using Regional Workshops to Understand the Human Dimension of MPAs

**Fifteen years ago:** May 2001 ([MPA News 2:10](#))

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