Notes & News, From the MPA News Vault, and Poetry Corner

Canada closes two areas to bottom fishing

In September, Fisheries and Oceans Canada banned the use of bottom-contact fishing gear in two areas off the Canadian province of Nova Scotia. The closures are designed to protect sensitive benthic areas, particularly the habitat for cold-water corals and sponges. Together the two new closed areas total more than 9000 km$^2$. Background on the closures, including photos of colorful corals and sponges in the newly closed areas, is available here and here.

New report on state of US MPAs

The NOAA National Marine Protected Areas Center has released its latest report on the state of US MPAs, “Conserving Our Oceans One Place at a Time”. Among the report’s findings:

- The US has more than 1200 MPAs, covering more than 3.2 million km$^2$ or 26% of US waters
- 13% of all US waters are in no-take MPAs
- 96% of US MPA area is in the Pacific Islands
- The area of US MPAs increased over 20 times between 2005 and 2016

First IMMA workshop puts marine mammals on the map

The first workshop to implement a new tool for conservation — Important Marine Mammal Areas, or IMMAs — is occurring in Chania, Greece, from 24-28 October. The workshop is organized by the IUCN WCPA-SSC Marine Mammal Protected Areas (MMPAs) Task Force, which has devised this new tool. The workshop brings together a body of experts from nearly every Mediterranean country to identify sites important to marine mammals.

IMMAs are not MPAs but may lead to a variety of outcomes including MPAs, ship or noise directives, and other conservation outcomes. IMMAs also provide a tool for monitoring marine mammal habitats against the advance of climate change, ocean acidification, and other threats to biodiversity.

The Chania workshop will cover the Mediterranean Sea while future planned workshops will be held in the southern oceans, including separate workshops for the South Pacific, the NE Indian Ocean, the NW Indian Ocean, the SE Pacific, and Australia-New Zealand and adjacent Oceania waters.

While the IMMA workshop process will select areas important to the 140 species of marine mammals, it also integrates with existing conservation measures and will help in the selection of ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) as devised by the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as key biodiversity areas (KBAs) from IUCN.

For more information about the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force or to view its new poster-map of marine mammal habitats worldwide, go to its new website.
Journal paper: Brexit implications for marine governance

A new article in *Marine Pollution Bulletin* offers insights on how the decision by UK voters in July to withdraw from the EU could impact the nation’s marine governance. Titled “Brexit: the marine governance horrendogram just got more horrendous!” the paper was written by Sue Boyes and Mike Elliott of the University of Hull’s Institute of Estuarine & Coastal Studies. The June-July 2016 issue of MPA News also provided some insights on potential Brexit implications for UK MPAs.

New website guides users through surveillance technologies for MPAs

The Stimson Center, an independent US-based policy institute that studies and consults on security and defense matters worldwide, has launched a new website on technologies to protect MPAs. Called *Secure Our Oceans*, the website guides users through 12 categories of surveillance technologies to learn about the advantages and challenges of each. Categories include acoustic monitoring, aerostats (tethered airships), AIS, buoys, camera surveillance, manned aircraft, radar technologies, satellite observation, and more. Specific examples — including product specs and the direct and indirect costs involved — are provided for several categories. The website also offers case studies of the technologies being used in MPAs.

In addition, the project aims to create teams to build enforcement projects from the ground up for participating MPAs. The teams — including technologists, ocean scientists, and enforcement experts — will produce technology feasibility studies and implementation plans. “Secure Our Oceans connects those in need of technology with a smorgasbord of organized technology opportunities and experts to design sustainable solutions,” states the website.

Study finds marine wilderness areas are generally healthier than marine reserves

A study in the journal *Nature* compares no-take marine reserves to marine wilderness areas — with the latter defined as being more than 20 hours from the nearest market — and finds that the wilderness areas support more intact ecosystems. Specifically, the remote wilderness areas had higher top-predator biomass than reserves, even when the reserves were old, large, and highly restrictive (no-entry). The research focused on coral reef ecosystems in New Caledonia. “We…demonstrate that wilderness areas support unique ecological values with no equivalency as one gets closer to humans, even in large and well-managed marine reserves,” write the authors. “Wilderness areas may therefore serve as benchmarks for management effectiveness and act as the last refuges for the most vulnerable functional roles.”

From the MPA News Vault

Features and news items from yesteryear

Five years ago: September-October 2011
- The Surge in Very Large MPAs: What Is Driving It and What Does the Future Hold?
- Is Mexico's Cabo Pulmo National Park the Most Successful No-Take Marine Reserve in the World?

Ten years ago: October 2006
- Examining the Role of MPAs in Ecosystem-Based Management, and Vice Versa: Five Examples
- Lessons Learned on MPAs, Conservation, and Customary Sea Tenure in the Western Solomon Islands

Fifteen years ago: October 2001
- Sea Shepherd, an International NGO, Participates in Enforcement at Two MPAs
- Workshop Results: Tips from Managers on Improving Science in MPA Management

For these and all other issues of MPA News, go to https://mpanews.openchannels.org/mpanews/archives

Poetry Corner
**Amphidromy**

By Stephanie Januchowski-Hartley (poetry form: haiku)

nets abundant, food

arrives by changing moon-tides

tiny migrators!

*About the poet: Stephanie Januchowski-Hartley is a postdoctoral researcher in aquatic ecology at Université Paul Sabatier, Toulouse, France.*

*If you would like to submit a marine-themed (and ideally MPA-themed) poem to Poetry Corner for consideration, please email it to mpanews@u.washington.edu. Selected poets will receive an MPA News tote bag. Poetry Corner is curated by Anna Zivian of Ocean Conservancy.*

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