

MPA NEWS



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Reader Feedback on Nomenclature

In the last issue of *MPA News* ([December/January](#)), we initiated a discussion on the topic of MPA nomenclature. We reprinted the IUCN's and national definitions for "marine protected area", and provided a list of terms that had previously appeared in the newsletter to describe MPAs. "Ecological reserve", "highly protected zone", and "fish replenishment area" were some of the examples. At the end of the article, we solicited feedback on the topic from readers.

Below is one of the responses we received. We thank our contributors and welcome further responses by e-mail at mpanews@u.washington.edu. We look forward to printing more submissions in future issues. (Opinions expressed in the following letter are those of the author, and not necessarily of *MPA News*.)

Kapu Zones

Jim Bohnsack, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (US)

While Shakespeare noted that "a Rose by any other name would smell as sweet," a variety of names would still be confusing. My problem with the IUCN classification [for protected areas] is that it focuses on MPA goals and not on process. Thus, a "no-take reserve" would be of high value for science (IUCN category Ia), wilderness (Ib), ecosystem protection and recreation (III), land/seascape conservation and recreation (V) and support sustainable use of surrounding areas (category VI).

The value of the no-take (no-extraction) definition is that it describes a high level of protection and is objectively defined by prohibiting activities (processes) with the "intent of extraction", except in a few special cases needed for scientific and education purposes as recommended by Ballantine (1997).

Note that no-extraction differs from no-consumption. While pollution, human presence, diving, anchoring and other non-extractive uses can "consume" resources, the physical extraction of resources is not intended and the measurable impacts in most cases are usually orders of magnitude below those of extractive activities.

All currently used English terms have too many meanings and too much cultural baggage to be really internationally useful. "Sanctuary", derived from Spanish, would come the closest to describing no-take reserves but it has been corrupted by the U.S. Sanctuaries Act which created a "sanctuary" program with areas that are not sanctuaries in traditional usage.

I suggest that the best term to describe no-take zones in an operational sense is the Hawaiian word "kapu". When "discovered" by Capt. James Cook, Hawaii had an extensive network of no-fishing, or kapu, zones in which violation of kapu was considered a serious offense punished by death. Kapu offers the positive meaning in terms of protection without the detrimental connotations of the "no-" modifier. The appropriate punishment for violating a kapu zone is another discussion.

Reference: Ballantine, W.J. 1997. "No-take" marine reserve networks support fisheries. *Developing and Sustaining World Fisheries Resources: The State and Management* pp. 702-706, D.A. Hancock, D.C. Smith, A. Grant, and J.P. Beumer (eds.), in 2nd World Fisheries Congress, Brisbane, Australia.

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