

MPA NEWS



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World Heritage developments at WPC

UNESCO's World Heritage Marine Programme was busy at the World Parks Congress:

- The Programme released a new four-minute film, narrated by supermodel and UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Environment Gisele Bündchen, profiling conservation achievements at three WH marine sites: Aldabra Atoll (Seychelles), iSimangaliso Wetland Park (South Africa), and Glacier Bay (US). <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1189>
- The Programme publicized its new smartphone app to share data, reports, and decisions related to the conservation of WH marine sites. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1189> (scroll down page)
- IUCN launched its new World Heritage Outlook website (www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org), providing assessments of all 222 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List for their natural Outstanding Universal Value. This includes the 45 marine WH sites. In addition, IUCN released a report on the ecosystem services provided by natural WH sites: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2014-045.pdf>

The World Heritage Programme was also the subject of attention from NGOs. An alliance of several conservation groups (African Wildlife Foundation, Fauna & Flora International, Frankfurt Zoological Society, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, The Nature Conservancy, The WILD Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society, WWF, and the Zoological Society of London) called for all natural WH sites to be made off-limits to commercial extractive activities. Of note: Kiribati's 408,250-km² Phoenix Islands Protected Area, a World Heritage site, is scheduled to ban commercial fishing as of 1 January 2015 (*MPA News 15:5*).

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