

International news and analysis on marine protected areas

New on OpenChannels this month (www.openchannels.org)

- **Q&A on the Southern Ocean MPA proposals that CCAMLR considered this month.** With Evan Bloom, US Department of State, and Claire Christian, Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (Office Hour chat transcript)
- **Big Ocean MPA Network: Addressing the common challenges of large, remote marine protected areas.** With Aulani Wilhelm, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (webinar recording)
- **SocMon: Social Science Monitoring in Coastal and MPA Management.** With Peter Edwards, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (webinar recording)

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John B. Davis, jdavis@openchannels.org
MPA News Editor / OpenChannels Supervisor

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The Reverse Fishing License Mechanism for Kiribati's Phoenix Islands Protected Area: An Experiment in MPA Financing

This past June in Monaco at a private meeting of the Monaco Blue Initiative, President Anote Tong of the Pacific Island nation of Kiribati announced some good news. The PIPA Conservation Trust, created four years ago to finance his country's 408,250-km² Phoenix Islands Protected Area, had just received its first donation. President Tong said Kiribati would match the donation.

PIPA is noteworthy in the MPA world. One reason is its size. In 2008 when its boundaries were expanded to their current dimensions, PIPA was considered for a time to be the largest MPA in the world (*MPA News* 9:8) before eventually being surpassed by the UK's Chagos MPA.

Just as notable is the financing arrangement that underpins PIPA's protection: a "reverse fishing license" mechanism, which may in fact be unique in the MPA world. This financing mechanism is embodied in a Conservation Contract that is under development by Kiribati, Conservation International, and the New England Aquarium. The Conservation Contract ties the gradual phase-out of commercial fishing in PIPA to the raising of funds. In other words, the more money the PIPA Conservation Trust receives in its

endowment, the more of PIPA is placed off-limits to commercial fishing (*MPA News* 11:6).

The small but tuna-rich nation of Kiribati "relies entirely on fisheries for economic growth," said President Tong in June. The revenue comes largely from selling fishing licenses to foreign tuna fleets. In accord with that, much of the interest earned on the PIPA endowment will go to compensate Kiribati for lost revenues suffered from restricting those fishing licenses — a component of the gradual closure of PIPA. (Other revenues from the endowment will go to support the core costs of managing PIPA and the Trust, which account for roughly US \$550,000/year.)

Making more of PIPA no-take

Although it is a fairly common misconception in the global MPA community that PIPA is already no-take, that is not true — at least not yet. So far 3.12% (12,714 km²) of the MPA is restricted to all fishing. This no-take zone encompasses seven of the eight atolls and islands in Kiribati's Phoenix Islands group, and includes more than four-fifths of the identified "high priority" habitats and key species in PIPA, including shark nursery areas and seabird nesting sites.

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In addition, no commercial fishing is allowed in a 2486-km² area that encompasses Kanton Island. And there is a 60-nm purse seine exclusion zone around Kanton as well, covering 37,197 km². All told, with the no-take zone and other closures, 12% of PIPA is closed to the predominant commercial fishing industry in the region.

In 2010, the PIPA Conservation Trust set an interim "Phase 2" fundraising target of US \$13.5 million to be raised by the end of 2014. Reaching the \$13.5-million target would trigger additional closures to commercial fishing (as well as funds for core management of PIPA and the Trust). The extent of these closures is under discussion; a goal of 25% additional no-take area has been considered (MPA News 11:6).

The increasing value of tuna licenses, and other complexities

The value of Pacific tuna has risen in recent years, thanks largely to a joint strategy by several Pacific Island nations to constrain tuna catches by foreign fleets, called the Vessel Day Scheme. (For an analysis of the strategy and its impacts so far, go to <http://bit.ly/vesseldayscheme>.) As a result, Kiribati's annual revenue from fishing licenses has grown significantly. What does this have to do with PIPA? Well, the more valuable fishing licenses become, the more costly it becomes for Kiribati to restrict those licenses — which has been the mechanism foreseen for closing PIPA. This is a potential risk of the reverse fishing license mechanism, at least from the conservation side: as fishing generates more revenue, additional protection may become more expensive.

That being said, the calculation of Kiribati's lost revenue from closure may be more complex than that. PIPA includes only about half of the EEZ around the Phoenix Islands group. Conceivably, says Sue Taei, Pacific Marine Director for Conservation International (CI), vessels displaced by additional closure of PIPA could be reallocated elsewhere in the EEZ under the Vessel Day Scheme, with no resulting reduction in fishing days.

"This would essentially be an experiment to close PIPA and to monitor if there would be no significant loss in fees," says Taei. "Potentially, in the longer term, a premium fee could be charged for fishing in Kiribati's wider Phoenix EEZ outside PIPA. CI thinks this is an important experience for the region: it tests the new genre of large-scale MPAs for utility as part of an ecosystem-based management approach on tuna." [Editor's note: Other Pacific Island nations are examining the reverse fishing license mechanism in light of their own MPA plans — see box, "Palau plans to ban foreign commercial fishing in EEZ; is considering options to offset revenue loss".]

Adding another layer of complexity: in October 2012, Environment Minister Tiarite Kwong announced Kiribati's intent to eventually close all of the MPA to commercial fishing. This was the first time that goal was officially set for PIPA. (In his Monaco speech this past June, President Tong said full closure of PIPA was critical to help ensure a sustainable regional tuna supply, provide a natural laboratory for climate change research, and diversify Kiribati's economy through ecotourism.) To reach the 100% no-take goal via the mechanism of the reverse fishing license, it is possible that significantly more funding — several times more — will have to be raised than has been raised so far.

At a crossroads

PIPA's reverse fishing license mechanism is at a crossroads. While the mechanism just experienced its first fundraising success, the challenges the partners face to meet future goals for fundraising and area closure remain significant. What can be learned so far from the use of the reverse fishing license? MPA News spoke with Sue Taei of Conservation International and Teuea Toatu, Executive Director of the PIPA Conservation Trust, about their experience with the mechanism and what lessons can be drawn from it.

MPA News: What main challenges have you faced with regard to implementing the agreement, and are you on target to meet your goals?

Sue Taei: The biggest challenge, and also the biggest opportunity, has been the evolving nature of tuna fisheries management in the Pacific. CI firmly believes that large-scale MPAs have a role to play in ecosystem-based management of pelagic fisheries such as tuna. We also do not have 20+ years at hand to prove MPA utility [in the open ocean context] to naysayers, as was the experience in the realm of coastal MPAs. CI is investing in sites like PIPA on both a precautionary and scientific basis to conserve ocean and island ecosystems with the aim that this becomes a "core business approach" of managing an EEZ.

The reverse fishing license concept remains a novel and promising concept. However, it was conceived at a time when the management structure for a major component of the tuna fisheries in the region was in flux [with implementation of the Vessel Day Scheme and a resulting spike in tuna license value]. Pinning an opportunity cost to this moving target has proven a fascinating challenge in many aspects. We are working on the projections and numbers in the agreed partnership approach with Kiribati and the New England Aquarium to come to a mutually acceptable target for Phase 2 of the fishery closure.

Teuea Toatu: PIPA is on track with implementing its 2010-2014 Management Plan. The 3% of PIPA

that is already fully protected covers 12,000 km² and accounts for a large share (80%) of the priority island, lagoon, coral reef, and immediate offshore habitats in the MPA. Within this prioritized program, globally important research on climate change impacts and recovery from coral bleaching, island restoration, and securing globally important seabird nesting populations have all been successful. Combined with additional fishing restrictions, PIPA is more than 12% zoned with conservation measures, covering more than 52,000 km² of islands and ocean ecosystems.


The [interim] \$13.5-million target is a realistic estimate to cover the Trust operation and core management costs and to provide some resources for reverse fishing licenses that trigger additional [no-take] protection. Nothing has changed for the Trust operation and core management cost needs since that target was set in 2010. It is important to capitalize the endowment to meet its first two objectives on schedule.

MPA News: Do you expect that eventually 100% of PIPA will be closed to commercial fishing?

Sue Taei: We welcome Kiribati's decision to eventually close all of PIPA to commercial fishing in line with President Tong's announcement, and are confident that we can meet the financial goals for the PIPA Conservation Trust. Again, those goals as related to the reverse fishing license are under discussion as we re-evaluate the potential economic costs of full closure and implications of the Vessel Day Scheme use.

MPA News: Other Pacific Island nations have announced plans to set aside large parts of their EEZs in marine protected areas. It is possible that some

of them may be interested in implementing a reverse fishing license mechanism with CI, similar to Kiribati's. Would you be open to exploring such arrangements?

Sue Taei: Tuna fisheries licenses make up a major part of many Pacific Island nations' economies. As a result, excluding commercial fisheries from large swaths of their EEZs could well have significant economic costs. Equally, conserving and restructuring fisheries effort in part of your EEZ is commonsense, like a savings and spending account at your bank. It is wise to keep some, wise to use some. In the longer term, CI believes tuna conservation measures, including MPAs, will be seen as commonplace and part of good management, including fostering better economic returns. CI is committed to helping societies adopt a more sustainable approach to development. As such, we welcome the opportunity to explore the options, possibly including a similar reverse fishing license approach, to achieving this goal of sustainable development. 

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To comment on this article:
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More on PIPA

This past February, OpenChannels.org hosted a live Office Hour chat with Betarim Rimon, information officer for the Phoenix Islands Protected Area. Rimon answered audience questions for an hour on current and future management of PIPA, including the state of PIPA financing, impacts of climate change on the site, and Kiribati's plans to develop an island within PIPA as a self-sufficient harbor. The chat transcript is at <http://openchannels.org/chat/office-hour-PIPA-feb-27-2013>

Palau plans to ban foreign commercial fishing in EEZ; is considering options to offset revenue loss

Earlier this year, President Tommy Remengesau of Palau announced he intends to ban foreign commercial fishing throughout his nation's 604,000-km² EEZ. A study group is now examining the "total marine sanctuary" proposal, as it is known. The examination will include how the large protected area would be financed.

Like Kiribati and other Pacific Island nations, Palau generates revenue from the sale of commercial fishing licenses to foreign tuna vessels. The closure of Palau's EEZ to foreign commercial fishing would result in a loss of fishing license revenue. Umiich Sengebau, Palau's Minister of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism, told MPA News the marine sanctuary study group is exploring all possible options for offsetting that revenue loss, including conceivably a reverse fishing license mechanism like PIPA's.

That being said, Palauan waters are not as tuna-rich as other nations in the region, and as a result Palau is not as dependent on fisheries revenue as Kiribati and others. Palau has focused instead on other revenue sources, particularly the use of environmental protection as a lure for foreign tourism. This led Palau to designate its waters as a shark sanctuary in 2009.

In a speech in Monaco this year, President Remengesau said, "People have started to equate Palau with sharks. Palau has effectively cornered the market on seeing sharks. This is only the beginning of what the protection of apex predators can accomplish for us."

An article on the total marine sanctuary plan, as well as Palau's new initiative to test the use of drones to enforce its shark sanctuary, is at <http://bit.ly/totalmarinesanctuary>

Editor's Note:

Jeff Ardron is a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) in Potsdam, Germany. He attended the July special meeting of CCAMLR in Bremerhaven and filed this report. The article is published here courtesy of the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI; www.gobi.org);

it will appear in the forthcoming Summer 2013 GOBI newsletter.

CCAMLR is the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and has 25 member States. Its decision-making is entirely by consensus.

CCAMLR fails to make progress in establishing Antarctic MPAs

By Jeff Ardron (Special to MPA News)

Back-to-back special meetings of the CCAMLR Scientific Committee and Commission were held 11-16 July in Bremerhaven, Germany, to discuss MPA network proposals for the Antarctic. However, after intensive negotiations, no meaningful progress was achieved.

The proposals call for networks of MPAs in the Ross Sea, proposed by New Zealand and the USA; and the Eastern Antarctic, proposed by Australia, France, and the European Union. The MPA networks are proposed with varying levels of protection in each site, ranging from scientific research to limited commercial fishing.

Russia and Norway were the most outspoken critics, with Russia focusing its criticisms on the Ross Sea proposal, while Norway focused mostly on the Eastern Antarctic proposal. Most of the distant-water fishing nations present expressed varying levels of concern regarding the number and sizes of the proposed MPAs.


Russia surprised the Commission by arguing that CCAMLR did not have the legal mandate to declare MPAs, and that the establishment of MPAs on the high seas was contrary to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Ukraine also argued that CCAMLR had no right to limit "rational use".

MPAs have been under discussion in CCAMLR for almost 10 years, and this is the first time its legal competence has been questioned on this matter. Indeed:

- In 2009, CCAMLR established its first MPA, near the South Orkney Islands;
- In 2010, the Commission endorsed its Scientific Committee's plans to develop a system of MPAs as a matter of priority; and

- In 2011, CCAMLR adopted through consensus the Conservation Measure 91-04, *General framework for the establishment of CCAMLR Marine Protected Areas*.

Some delegations suggested that the MPAs should be of fixed duration, the so-called "sunset clause", and China went further, suggesting that consensus might be achieved only if CCAMLR agreed to MPAs of short duration. IUCN and others pointed out that that long-term protection is intrinsic to the goals of MPAs, as is reflected in international practices.

This was the first-ever special meeting of the Science Committee, and the second-ever meeting of the Commission since its establishment in 1982. The meetings were called because the two proposals failed to achieve consensus at the regular 2012 Commission meeting. The proposals will be discussed again at the next regular CCAMLR meeting at the end of October 2013 in Hobart, Australia. 

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The Ross Sea proposal: www.mfat.govt.nz/ross-sea-mpa/tabs/proposal.php

The East Antarctica proposal: www.antarctica.gov.au/law-and-treaty/ccamlr/marine-protected-areas

To comment on this article:
<http://openchannels.org/node/4003>

Perspective: In Colombia, a New MPA for Deep-water Coral

By David Alonso Carvajal, INVEMAR

Historically, the discovery of deep-water coral reefs was usually accidental, occurring most often when the corals showed up as bycatch in trawl fisheries. In the past decade, however, the study and characterization of deep coral has grown significantly, aided in part by the interest of productive sectors — namely oil and gas — in assessing seabed resources.

Acoustic scanning techniques developed for seabed mapping have made it possible to inspect large areas of the seafloor at a time. These studies have discovered significantly more deep coral than was previously thought to exist. In fact, of the 5100 known species of coral in the world, more than half live in deep water. We also now recognize that deep-water coral reefs provide habitat for large numbers of species, including serving as recruitment areas for commercially important fish.

In May of this year, Colombia designated its first MPA for deep-water coral: the 1420-km² Deep-water Coral National Natural Park. It is an important step for protecting this special habitat, and for increasing the representativeness of Colombia's national MPA system.

Discovery of three banks of deep coral

Since 1995, Colombia's Marine and Coastal Research Institute, or INVEMAR, has studied the biodiversity of the nation's continental margin between 20 and 900 meters deep. This includes the transition from the continent to the adjacent abyssal plains, including shelf, slope, continental elevations and even insular margin. Among the most important results of these studies has been the discovery of three banks of *azooxanthellate* deep-water corals off Colombia's Caribbean Coast:

- The first, located off the peninsula of La Guajira at 70 m depth, is characterized by the presence of the species *Cladocora debilis*, as well as 156 species of other *Scleractinian* corals, *antipatharians*, octocorals, mollusks, echinoderms, bryozoans, and fishes;
- The second, located near the city of Santa Marta, features 12 species of *Scleractinian* corals, accompanied by *Madracis myriaster* coral and 102 other species of various invertebrates and fishes; and
- The third, located near San Bernardo Islands and Rosario Islands at 150 m depth, is dominated by *M. myriaster*, accompanied by 19 *Scleractinian* species and 135 species of invertebrates and fishes.


As a particular feature of coral communities in Colombia, these deep-water coral banks are close to large areas of shallow-water reefs of the Colombian Caribbean Coast. Based on the presence of common species and the geological history of these areas, it has been hypothesized that there is connectivity between these ecosystems. This should be studied in more detail.

Protecting this habitat

INVEMAR leads a project, funded by GEF-UNDP, to design and implement the national Subsystem of MPAs in Colombia. A priority of the project is to increase the representativeness of Colombia's current National Protected Areas System. Deep-water coral communities — ecologically and economically important, but threatened by human activities like trawling and hydrocarbon drilling — must be represented in the national system.

The new Deep-water Coral National Natural Park that was designated in May prohibits all fishing and exploration/exploitation of oil or gas within the MPA. Enforcement of the MPA will be a collaborative effort of the MPA administrative agency and the Colombian National Navy.

In planning the MPA, INVEMAR studied other deep-water coral MPAs for guidance, including the Northeast Channel Conservation Area and The Gully Marine Protected Area in Canada; Darwin Mounds in the UK; and the Oculina Bank protected area in the US. The design was guided by the NOAA Strategic Plan for Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Ecosystems: Research, Management, and International Cooperation (http://coris.noaa.gov/activities/deepsea_coral).

Madracis myriaster is considered the main structuring species in the protected area, and this quality makes the coral community a rare habitat in the Caribbean region and the world. Research in the MPA will study the ecology of deep coral communities at the regional scale. It will also examine past climatic and oceanographic conditions, derived from the historical record preserved in the coral skeletons. This knowledge will help predict possible impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on these systems. 

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To comment on this article:

<http://openchannels.org/node/4004>

Notes & News

Planning for IMPAC3 this October in full swing

The Third International Marine Protected Areas Congress — the world's largest MPA-focused conference — will be held this 21-27 October in Marseille and Corsica, France. Early registration is open until 18 August at www.impact3.org. Here are some of the latest facts and figures about the program:

- Within a submission period of just two months, more than 900 abstracts were received. France accounted for roughly one-quarter of the submissions. The rest of Europe accounted for another quarter, followed by the Americas (20%), Africa (10%), Asia (10%), and countries of the Indian and Pacific Oceans (10%).
- After review, 700 abstracts were retained, and are being slotted into one of five formats: plenary talks

and debates, workshops, Knowledge Cafés, Ocean+ Presentations, and Posters.

- Workshops will emphasize dialogue with the audience. Knowledge Cafés will be roundtables gathering six to twelve speakers sharing common concerns. Ocean+ Presentations will be interactive, multimedia presentations with broad appeal.
- To help attendees keep track of what is happening, web broadcasts will deliver background information and breaking news from all corners of the meeting.
- For an overview of day-specific topics and streams, go to www.impact3.org/en/program/program-overview

To comment on Notes & News items:
<http://openchannels.org/node/4006>

World Heritage Committee addresses East Rennell (Solomon Islands) and Great Barrier Reef


At its annual meeting in June, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee did not add new marine sites to its World Heritage List. However, it did address concerns about two sites that are already inscribed:

- **East Rennell, Solomon Islands:** This site — part-terrestrial, part-marine — was added to the List of World Heritage in Danger due to substantial commercial logging activity in East Rennell's forests. The danger listing is intended to serve as a “wake-up call” to the international conservation community and the Solomon Islands, indicating the need to preserve the site's outstanding universal value, says Fanny Douvere, Coordinator of the World Heritage Marine Programme. She notes the World Heritage Centre has financed the first survey of East Rennell's marine portion, which will provide a baseline for the analysis of conservation efforts. Fishing activity in the park is increasing, she says.
- **Great Barrier Reef, Australia:** One of the most iconic MPAs in the world remains under threat of being added to the List of World Heritage in Danger, due to plans in the region for significant new coastal development, including large ports and liquefied natural gas facilities. As described in MPA News, the World Heritage Centre has mandated that the Australian and Queensland governments develop and apply a highly precautionary process to consideration of coastal

development proposals (MPA News 14:1). The Centre wants to ensure that no port development is permitted outside of existing major port areas along the reef.

“The proposed developments haven't happened yet but still could,” says Douvere. “The Australian and Queensland governments must come up with a strategic plan for long-term sustainability of the Great Barrier Reef.” The Great Barrier Reef site will have to report its progress to the World Heritage Centre in February 2014. In the absence of “substantial” progress, the site could be inscribed on the danger list next year.

For more information including documents and decisions on individual marine World Heritage sites, visit the World Heritage Marine Programme at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme/>

Note: The latest report card on Great Barrier Reef water quality was released on 10 July. *Report Card 2011* says the reef's condition declined “from moderate to poor” in 2011 due to extreme weather events and high rainfall. The report is at www.reefplan.qld.gov.au/measuring-success/report-cards/report-card-2011.aspx 

To comment on this article:
<http://openchannels.org/node/4005>

Canada designates new sponge closures

In June, Canada designated two new fisheries closures off its Atlantic Coast to protect a rare species of sponge. The species *Vazella pourtalesi* is known to exist in only two other locations worldwide, the Gulf of Mexico and the Azores. In Canadian waters, the species forms particularly large aggregations, and the two largest aggregations are now included in the closures. The closures cover a total of 259 km² on the eastern Scotian Shelf, and are off-limits to fishing with bottom-contact gear, including drags, traps, barrels, bottom-set trawls, longlines, and gillnets. Fishing gear that does not contact the seafloor will continue to be allowed. For more information on the sponges and closures, go to www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/back-fiche/2013/hq-ac22a-eng.htm

Bermuda government proposes no-take zone in EEZ

The Bermuda Government will conduct a national consultation this year on a proposal to create a no-take marine reserve in the country's EEZ. In a statement to the Bermuda House of Assembly on 7 June, Environment Minister Sylvan Richards said the consultation would help the Government decide whether there should be a no-take zone, and, if so, what the size, shape, and location should be. The Minister's full statement is available at <http://bernews.com/2013/06/proposal-to-establish-marine-reserve-on-eez>

Meeting spurs set of new commitments for Caribbean MPAs

The inaugural Caribbean Summit of Political and Business Leaders, held in the British Virgin Islands in May, resulted in an extraordinary set of commitments from governments and corporations to protect the region's marine and coastal environment. Co-hosted by the Prime Minister of Grenada, the Premier of the British Virgin Islands, and Richard Branson of the Virgin Group, the commitments included approximately US \$64 million in announced funding to support marine and coastal conservation, along with commitments to take new actions and to put in place more sustainable business practices.

A focus of the event was the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, in which countries commit to protect at least 20% of their marine and coastal environments by 2020 (www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/caribbean/caribbean-challenge.xml). At the meeting, six Caribbean governments announced new commitments for MPAs in their waters: Bahamas, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Jamaica,

and Puerto Rico. In addition, government funding agencies and NGOs announced several new programs, including Germany's \$50 million for marine conservation in the Caribbean. For more information on the Summit and a complete list of commitments made, go to www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/caribbean/caribbean-summit.xml

Several new publications on Mediterranean MPAs

MedPAN, the network of Mediterranean MPA managers, continues to produce a remarkable number of high-quality reports on a variety of MPA management and planning topics. Here are four new ones, all released in July 2013:

- **Visitor Use Observation and Monitoring in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas: A Manager's Handbook**
Describes the impacts of tourism, the scientific monitoring of tourist use, and appropriate management measures.

- **Recreational Fisheries in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas**
Synthesizes all scientific studies, regulations, and management activities on recreational fishing in Mediterranean MPAs, and recommends strategies for managing this increasingly popular activity.

- **Guide for Quick Evaluation of Management in Mediterranean MPAs**
Provides a series of 18 indicators to assess all dimensions of MPA management, from management approaches to final outcomes. This evaluation tool is meant to encourage adaptive management by pointing out the areas in which actions are most needed.

- **Status of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean 2012**
Analyzes MPAs in the region according to level of protection, representativeness, connectivity, management, uses, and pressures. The report updates the first *Status of Marine Protected Areas* study, conducted in 2008.

Each of these publications is available at www.medpan.org

Study seeks examples of private MPAs

A new research project funded by the Linden Trust is collecting evidence about the extent and variety of private protected areas (PPAs) around the world. The project, which is collaborating closely with IUCN-WCPA, will build up a series of national and themed case studies, working with in-country partners. It will also seek to strengthen and expand the definition of PPAs, building on the 2008 IUCN protected area

Coming up on OpenChannels.org

Drawing the Line: Visualizing global MPA distribution using practical protection categories with MPAtlas.org

A webinar with Lance Morgan and Russell Moffitt of the Marine Conservation Institute
Date: 8 August 2013
Time: 5pm GMT / 1pm EDT / 10am PDT

For more information:
<http://openchannels.org/node/2806>

category guidelines. Anyone with information to share or questions about the project should contact Sue Stolton of Equilibrium Research at sue@equilibriumresearch.com

Paper: status and scientific needs of MPA implementation in Europe

An independent board of European ocean researchers — the European Marine Board — has released a position paper on MPAs in Europe, including on the status of MPA implementation at the European level and the scientific needs for achieving coherent MPA networks across the continent. The 88-page paper “Achieving Ecologically Coherent MPA Networks in Europe: Science Needs and Priorities” is available at www.marineboard.eu/news-archive/155-towards-marine-protected-area-networks-in-europe

Most coastal US states have zero no-take areas

A review of coastal states and territories in the US has found that a majority of them have zero no-take areas, meaning they allow at least some form of extractive use throughout their waters. The report *SeaStates: How Well Does Your State Protect Your Coastal Waters?* concludes that most states are failing to safeguard their marine life, seafood, and coasts. The study was conducted by the Marine Conservation Institute (MCI).

The US has 28 coastal states and territories. Of these, 15 have 0% no-take coverage. An additional ten have only a very small amount: 1% coverage or less. Just three states or territories — Hawaii (22.95%), California (8.74%), and US Virgin Islands (5.69%) — have significant no-take coverage. “No-take marine protected areas are the gold-standard for healthy oceans,” said Lance Morgan, President of MCI. “But far too few states and territories are designating them.” The report is available at www.seastates.us

Comparative analysis of US marine conservation law praises Sanctuaries Act

A new report provides a comparative analysis of US domestic legal mechanisms for protecting marine ecosystems, including the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA), the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and other laws. The publication concludes that the NMSA is the most effective and comprehensive approach currently available to protect specific areas in coastal and ocean areas. The NMSA’s advantages over other authorities include the authori-

zation of comprehensive, ecosystem-based approaches to solving problems; the allowance of various compatible uses, including fishing, boating, diving, and other forms of human activity; comprehensive law enforcement authority; and significant stakeholder involvement. The report *Area-Based Management of Marine Resources* was published by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and the National Sea Grant Law Center, and is available at <http://nsglc.olemiss.edu>

UK study: MPA network would be worth billions of pounds to economy

A study of divers and anglers in the UK has determined that designating a network of 127 protected areas in the country’s waters — as proposed last year by the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs — would hold an annual value to the UK economy of billions of pounds. The calculations were based on a combination of current recreational use value of the sites, added recreational use value resulting from heightened protection, and non-use value. Non-use value includes the option of enjoying a site in the future, as well as the value of knowing a site is protected for generations. Conducted by researchers at four universities, the study *The Value of Marine Protected Areas in the UK to Divers and Anglers* is at <http://bit.ly/UKMPAvalue>

Paper: screening process needed for what should count as MPAs in global tallies

A recent paper in the journal *Aquatic Conservation* questions whether some sites being included in global MPA coverage calculations should, in fact, be considered legitimate marine protected areas. Tyler Eddy of Dalhousie University in Canada takes particular issue with New Zealand’s Benthic Protection Areas (BPAs), which cover 1.2 million km² and account for 20% of total global MPA coverage, according to recent calculations. Although the BPAs were designated with nature conservation as their stated primary objective — consistent with IUCN guidelines for being considered as MPAs — Eddy says the planning involved no expert scientific opinion and the resulting sites provide little real protection. He suggests a screening system be put in place to gauge whether sites being counted in national and global calculations were designated with conservation in deed, not just in word. The paper “On the need for meaningful marine protected area (MPA) standards” is at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/aqc.2381/abstract>. You can also email Tyler Eddy for a copy at tyler.eddy@dal.ca
