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- **Webinar: Solving the Mystery of MPA Performance — Linking Governance to Ecological Outcomes.** With Helen Fox (RARE) and David Gill (National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center). August 13 at 5 pm UTC / 1 pm EDT / 10 am PDT

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

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A brief examination of "other effective area-based conservation measures" and what they mean for MPAs

In 2010, delegates to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity agreed to extend the deadline for signatory countries to reach the target of conserving 10% of their marine and coastal ecoregions in protected areas. Instead of aiming for the year 2012 as originally targeted, delegates delayed the deadline to 2020 (MPA News 12:3).

They also agreed to a reframing of the target, now known as Aichi Biodiversity Target 11. To meet the percentage-based protection goal, countries no longer need to do it with only protected areas. They can also count "other effective area-based conservation measures" toward the goal. Aichi Target 11 reads:

"By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services,

are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and *other effective area-based conservation measures*, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape."

(www.cbd.int/sp/targets/rationale/target-11)

This begs the question, what exactly are "other effective area-based conservation measures"? And how will they impact how countries tally their progress toward Aichi Target 11, since protected areas are no longer the only areas being counted?

The short answer to both questions is, "We don't really know yet." But processes are underway, at the international and national level, to define the term and its use.

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MPA News

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CORRESPONDENCE:

MPA News
School of Marine &
Environmental Affairs
University of Washington
3707 Brooklyn Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105, USA.
mpanews@u.washington.edu
Tel: +1 425 788 8185

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WCPA task force

The IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) has instituted a task force to provide advice to the Convention on Biological Diversity on Aichi Target 11. Not only will it examine what "other effective area-based conservation measures" may entail, but also what additional thorny phrases like "effective and equitably managed" mean.

"This is critically important," says Dan Laffoley, vice chair – marine of WCPA. "At present there is a real lack of clarity among countries on what counts. There is also a great need to connect MPAs and sites that meet 'other effective means' into wider measures such as marine spatial planning."

WCPA's *Protected Planet Report 2014*, which tracked progress toward global targets for protected areas (<http://bit.ly/ProtectedPlanet2014>), described the term as "poorly defined and largely undocumented." It said:

"A key challenge in recognizing 'other' sites is to acknowledge their value for conservation without overestimating the level of protection. Any definition must therefore include those sites that truly complement protected areas in conserving biodiversity in the long term, and exclude those that have no conservation value or no security of protection into the future (e.g., areas temporarily set aside for conservation before use for commercial forestry)."

IUCN's "A primer on governance for protected areas conserved areas", released in 2014 (<http://bit.ly/MPAgovernanceprimer>), also covers other effective area-based conservation measures, which it calls OECMs. (Others abbreviate it as OEABCMs). The primer suggests such areas can be defined as "geographical space where de facto conservation of nature and associated ecosystem services and cultural values is achieved and expected to be maintained in the long-term regardless of specific recognition and dedication." This could include, for example, a voluntary conservation area that the national government does not wish to recognize as a protected area.

Laffoley says WCPA – Marine is pushing for greater clarity with the new task force leading the way. "We've made defining this term a priority," he says.

Defining it at the national level

While global guidance on the term is still in the works, countries have set about developing their own guidance. David MacKinnon is chair of the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas (CCEA; www.ccea.org), a nongovernmental organization. CCEA is coordinating the development of science-based guidance on interpreting and reporting of OEABCMs within Canada's protected area community of practice. That community includes practitioners from Canadian

provincial, federal, and territorial protected area agencies, as well as NGOs and academic experts. CCEA does not necessarily represent the views of any one agency or organization, but cooperates with Environment Canada and all provincial, federal, and territorial agencies to manage the Canadian Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System (www.ccea.org/tools-resources/carts).

Asked if he anticipates that each country may interpret OEABCMs differently, MacKinnon answers yes. "There are likely to be differences," he says. "Nations may believe that their progress toward the targets is being compared against others primarily on the basis of their percent coverage of protected areas and OEABCMs. These numbers, while simple to communicate, can mask big differences in actual progress toward the conservation of biodiversity. A nation that does a good job of conserving 10% of its territory may be more effectively slowing biodiversity loss than one that does a poor job of conserving 20%. With all our demands on the planet's ecosystems and resources, it's not always easy or cheap to establish and maintain new, well-conserved areas, especially in the places where they are needed most. So the focus on a single number can create a temptation to interpret OEABCMs quite broadly, and to report areas and measures that aren't necessarily very effective or durable, but which may already be in place or easy to establish. And it's probably more tempting to do this when decision-makers see themselves as having fewer options to achieve the numerical targets with well-conserved but difficult-to-establish areas." [Note: The views expressed here are those of MacKinnon speaking on behalf of CCEA, and do not necessarily represent the views of Nova Scotia Environment or any other Canadian government conservation agency or non-governmental conservation organization with which CCEA cooperates.]

MacKinnon says we should keep in mind why the global targets were established in the first place. "The primary purpose of both protected areas and OEABCMs is to effectively conserve ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity in situ, thereby helping to stem biodiversity loss," he says. "That is clear from the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (www.cbd.int/sp) and the Convention on Biological Diversity itself, as is the need for the targets to be pursued as a unified package. If areas of limited conservation effectiveness are reported toward the numerical targets, it means that important conservation gaps are perhaps being masked, and conservation needs may be going unmet."


CCEA has conducted four national workshops on the question of OEABCMs over the past four years with experts from across Canada. MacKinnon suggests it may be more useful to define how protected areas and OEABCMs are alike rather than how they are different.

“We have concluded that protected areas and OE-ABCMS must have a core set of shared traits in order to be effective for conserving biodiversity in situ,” he says. “If one of those core traits is absent, it elevates the risk that an area won’t be effective over either the short or long term. Briefly, some of the core traits we’ve identified include:

- 1) They should be well-defined geographically;
- 2) They should have objectives for biodiversity conservation, achieved through conservation of biodiversity as a whole;
- 3) Their conservation objectives must receive first priority when in conflict with other objectives;
- 4) The mechanisms by which the areas are established must have the comprehensive ability to exclude, control, and manage all activities likely to

have impacts on biodiversity, and must compel the prohibition of incompatible activities;

- 5) They should be in place for the long term;
- 6) The mechanisms by which they are established must be difficult to reverse; and
- 7) They should be in effect year-round.

“If an area has these core traits,” says MacKinnon, “we’re not so concerned whether it is called a protected area or an OEABCM, because we can be confident it’s likely to be effective in contributing to the targets. Nevertheless, we can apply the IUCN guidance to determine whether an area fits the definition of a protected area (http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_categoriesamp_eng.pdf). If it doesn’t, we suggest reporting it as an OEABCM.” 

For more information:

Dan Laffoley, WCPA – Marine, UK. Email: danlaffoley@btinternet.com

David MacKinnon, CCEA, Canada. Email: David.MacKinnon2@novascotia.ca

To comment on this article:
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New group aims to engage young professionals in MPA field, involve them in high-level decisions

The IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas – Marine has launched a new task force to engage and network young professionals in the global MPA field. Designed in part to support WCPA-Marine’s work, the task force also seeks to raise the profile of young practitioners and involve them directly in communications and decision-making at regional and global levels.

The Young Professionals Marine Task Force defines young professionals as being 35 years old and younger. The group is co-chaired by Kathy Zischka and Mariasole Bianco and supported by Rebecca Koss, all active members of WCPA – Marine. It grew out of the 2014 World Parks Congress, where there was a dedicated stream on intergenerational partnerships and shared decision-making.

“Young professionals tend not to be as constrained by traditional approaches,” says Zischka. “They bring fresh, creative, and innovative initiatives to the marine arena. They also bring new perspectives and skills with regard to social media. This allows for greater flexibility and interconnectivity and the potential to add value to current decision-making frameworks.”

Young professionals, or YPs, also speak the language of their age group, says Bianco. “YPs are generally more effective in communicating with passion the importance of marine conservation to younger generations in a peer-to-peer approach,” she says. “Building a solid global network of YPs working in marine conservation represents a significant step in addressing current and future challenges for the field.”


A framework to empower YPs

The task force will work in two directions: empowering young marine leaders by supporting their contributions to marine conservation, and communicating new potential solutions and inspiration to a broader audience. The group is developing a framework to facilitate increased connectivity between YPs and senior professionals within WCPA and IUCN more broadly. It will also put YPs in contact with regional MPA initiatives as contributors to programs of work.

“In its first year, the task force will focus on creative communication for MPAs and ocean conservation,” says Koss. “This will include a strong focus on the role of the ocean as our life support system, and on solutions to problems.”

The task force has the buy-in of WCPA leaders. Dan Laffoley, Vice Chair – Marine of WCPA, notes that a gifted team of YPs already runs much of the institution’s public presence, including its social media and blog. “Their involvement is essential,” he says. “I hope to see many more young professionals in key roles in WCPA in coming years.”

If you are a young professional and want to apply to be a member of the task force, read the MPA Blog to find out more (<http://bit.ly/YPtaskforce>). For additional information, contact Zischka, Bianco, and Koss via the YP Marine Task Force email address:

wcpamarineyp@gmail.com 

Perspective Reflecting on marine territory: Seaflower MPA, the Raizal people, and the International Court of Justice

Editor's note:

Marion Howard is long-time advisor to the Seaflower Marine Protected Area and associate professor of the Practice in International Development Management at the Heller School, Brandeis University (US). Elizabeth Taylor directed CORALINA when the MPA was established and for its first eight years. Fanny Howard coordinated the recent Global Environment Facility project to strengthen implementation of the Seaflower MPA (2011-2015).

By Marion Howard, Elizabeth Taylor, and Fanny Howard

The San Andres Archipelago is a department of Colombia in the western Caribbean made up of three small inhabited islands and coral banks, atolls, and cays that comprise the largest open-ocean coral reefs in the Americas. Descendants of the first settlers, known as Raizal people, are defined as a national ethnic minority by Colombia and recognized as indigenous by the UN. Raizals descend from English settlers who started arriving in 1630 on the *Seaflower* (sister ship of the *Mayflower*), African slaves, and migrants from other Caribbean islands. They have a long sociocultural and economic history distinct from mainland Colombia. Besides having a different language, religion, and ethnicity, the archipelago's isolation meant that the people had a high level of self-determination for over 300 years, mostly controlling their natural resources and marine-based economy until the middle of the 20th century.


In 1953, Colombia declared San Andres a free port. After the free-port declaration, San Andres developed into an inexpensive tourism and shopping zone controlled by continental Colombians. Losing control of their economy and natural resources, Raizals experienced a severe decline in quality of life, which they have been struggling to restore for 50 years. A major initiative to foster sustainable development and improve well-being that the community identified, put in place, and has worked on since 2000 in partnership with Colombia's regional environment agency, CORALINA, is the locally managed Seaflower Biosphere Reserve and MPA. Not only was the MPA designed to conserve marine biodiversity and promote sustainable use, but it legally designated marine territory to be managed and conserved for the benefit of the Raizal people and ensure long-term access to resources needed to sustain their livelihoods and continued identity as a distinct people.

Meanwhile, because of its proximity to Central America, Nicaragua had been claiming the archipelago for decades, finally filing a formal international claim in 2001. In 2012, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) awarded much of the archipelago's marine territory to Nicaragua, including over half the community-designed Seaflower MPA. According to the ICJ ruling, the MPA would be reduced from 65,000 km² to 30,655 km². Furthermore, boundaries defined by the ICJ are not contiguous so to reach traditional fishing grounds, Raizal fishers must pass through Nicaraguan waters. Although

Colombia does not accept the legitimacy of the ruling and Nicaragua has submitted a follow-up claim for more marine territory, Nicaragua has stationed military patrols in the MPA and is proceeding with plans to explore for oil and natural gas, mount large-scale fisheries, and build a cross-country canal requiring these waters for transit of mega-cargo ships to and from the canal.

Obviously there are serious implications to Raizal livelihoods, particularly for the many traditional fishers, but also severe is the impact of loss of marine territory on the people's identity. People relate to the ocean in many ways, but the role of the sea in defining the identity of human communities is rarely acknowledged in maritime law, policy, or decision-making. For example, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) defined a State's territorial seas, contiguous and exclusive economic zones, but do such boundaries align with any reality, vision, or connection coastal and island people have to the sea and its place in their lives?

Historically islanders had no role in defining maritime borders and often were unaware of them. However, the 21st-century case of Nicaragua vs. Colombia is being played out in a globalized world with internet, TV, and radio. Raizals are deeply aware that loss of access to the ocean territory that supported and defined them for centuries resulted from a ruling by a panel of judges in The Hague who have never visited San Andres or spoken to a Raizal. Raizals were not consulted, represented, nor even acknowledged as stakeholders who would be affected by reapportionment of these waters. Not only were their voices not heard, their very existence was not mentioned to the ICJ by Colombia or Nicaragua, nor was the existence of their legally established, internationally recognized biosphere reserve and MPA. It remains unclear why Colombia pursued this strategy.

Although this is an immediate issue for the Seaflower MPA and Raizal people, it is not peculiar to them. With the growth of open ocean oil and gas exploration, offshore renewable energy installations, large-scale international fisheries, ocean dumping and waste disposal — to mention only a few practices that cross and extend beyond maritime borders and impact MPAs — we know as MPA managers and scientists that the relationship of people to the sea goes beyond environmental science, economics, and international law and into the realm of identity, heritage, culture, and social and spiritual well-being. Seeking arguments and methods to recognize and protect these human dimensions is a legitimate concern, and perhaps even responsibility, of the MPA community. 

For more information:

Marion Howard. Email: mwhoward@brandeis.edu

Elizabeth Taylor. Email: elitajay@gmail.com

Fanny Howard. Email: frhoward11@gmail.com

To comment on this article:

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World Heritage Committee welcomes progress but keeps Great Barrier Reef on watchlist

At its annual meeting, which is ongoing as this issue of MPA News goes to press, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee has unanimously voted to keep the Great Barrier Reef on its watchlist due to an array of challenges facing the protected area, including poor water quality from runoff, habitat loss, impacts from coastal development, and climate change.

However, the committee welcomed Australia's 2050 long-term sustainability plan for the reef, which includes an 80% cut in water pollution by 2025 and an extra AU \$200m to accelerate that progress in the next five years (<http://bit.ly/GBR2050plan>). The committee also greeted Australia's moves to limit new port development and ban the dumping of capital dredge spoil from those port developments in reef water.

Fanny Douvère, director of the World Heritage Marine Programme, called the meeting a milestone for the reef's protection. "The committee recognized and welcomed the 2050 Reef Plan that will now guide the future management of the reef," said Douvère. "But it also stressed that a plan is just a plan. It is now key to concentrate on implementation." Australia and the state of Queensland must report back to the Committee in 18 months with an update on progress.

No "in danger" status

The committee did not apply "in danger" status to the Great Barrier Reef. The committee uses its World Heritage in Danger list to draw attention and resources to threatened World Heritage sites, and has voiced openness since 2012 to adding the Great Barrier Reef to the list if necessary (MPA News 15:6).

The 2014 *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report*, produced by the Australian and Queensland governments, acknowledges that the ecosystem is not in good condition. The Great Barrier Reef has lost half of its coral cover in the past 30 years, and populations of dugongs, breeding seabirds, and other wildlife are in decline. Meanwhile, plans to expand port infrastructure adjacent to the reef — allowing for greater export of coal — create an increased risk of ship accidents and will ultimately result in carbon emissions from that coal's combustion.

Responses

The decision by the World Heritage Committee followed a draft decision that was released in late May, developed by the World Heritage Marine Programme and IUCN (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/3234>).

Upon release of that draft decision, Australian Environment Minister Greg Hunt thanked the World Heritage Centre and World Heritage Committee for

their oversight, which he said had been valuable to Australia and Queensland. "They have allowed us to do things on our respective watches that we may never have been able to do," Hunt said. It would have been difficult, he said, to ban capital dredge spoil dumping in the marine park without the focus of the international community. (Note: dumping of *maintenance* dredge spoil — from port maintenance as opposed to port development — will still be allowed in the park.)

WWF-Australia CEO Dermot O'Gorman said of the committee, "WWF welcomes this strong decision. Australia is on probation and the real work to turn around the decline of the reef starts now."

Tim Badman, director of IUCN's World Heritage Programme, agreed. "The [2050 reef sustainability] plan now needs to translate into action, backed by adequate finance and rigorous science," he said.

Jon Day of James Cook University — who previously served as director of conservation, heritage and indigenous partnerships for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority — has questioned whether the Australian Government's financial commitments will be enough to stem the reef's decline (<http://bit.ly/GBRblogJonDay>). "The real test of the strength of the World Heritage Convention will come if the 2016 report [from Australia and Queensland] does not show the necessary progress," he told MPA News.

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UNESCO releases best practice guide for proactive MPA management

A new publication from the UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme guides MPA managers on taking a proactive, future-oriented approach to managing their sites. *Managing effectively the world's most iconic Marine Protected Areas: A best practice guide* leads readers through the steps of defining a clear vision of what their sites should look like in 10-20 years' time, then achieving that vision.

The guide is written in particular for World Heritage site managers but should be useful for all MPA managers, says Fanny Douvère, director of the World Heritage Marine Programme. "Everyone in the MPA field is struggling with balancing the conservation of a site's irreplaceable values with development and use, particularly in the context of climate change," she says. "Because World Heritage sites are so visible, they are well-positioned to serve as an example for other sites in addressing that challenge."


The 122-page guide outlines how using area-based tools, such as marine spatial planning, can help to plan for and achieve environmental, social, and economic objectives that lead to sustainable use and effective management over time. The guide is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1300>

For more information on the World Heritage Marine Programme, which comprises 47 sites in 35 countries, go to <http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme>

Great Barrier Reef as a catalyst for other WH sites

As perhaps the highest-profile marine World Heritage site, the Great Barrier Reef serves as a catalyst for other World Heritage properties, says Douvère. “Doing a good job of supporting the Great Barrier Reef sets a precedent for our work on other sites,” she says.

The 2015 meeting of the World Heritage Committee has also examined the state of conservation of 10 other marine World Heritage properties facing chal-

lenges. Some of the sites, including the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, are already on UNESCO’s “in danger” list. The World Heritage Marine Programme and the Belizean government have worked together in the past year to address the challenges that put the site on the list, including the sale of public lands for development within the World Heritage area and the issuing of new offshore oil leases within and adjacent to the reef system. 

Perspective Improving MPA protection through crowdsourcing and compliance assistance: The EPIC 805 Project

Editor’s note:

Gordon Hensley is executive director of Environment in the Public Interest, an NGO dedicated to enforcement of water quality, watershed, and marine protection regulations along the central coast of California, including the county of San Luis Obispo. Gale Filter is a MPA consultant and retired California prosecutor.

For more information:

Gordon Hensley,
Environment in the Public Interest and San Luis Obispo Coastkeeper, US.
Email: coastkeeper@epicenteronline.org

By Gordon Hensley and Gale Filter

Morro Bay is a 9.3-km² estuary along the central coast of the US state of California. It is protected by overlapping layers of local, state, and federal governance. Most of the bay is a State Marine Recreational Management Area under California law: all commercial fishing activities are prohibited, with the exception of shellfish farming in designated areas. A smaller portion of the bay is completely no-take, the Morro Bay State Marine Reserve. And the entire bay and its feeder creeks are overseen by a local/federal partnership under the National Estuary Program, which provides federal financial and technical assistance to address local conservation issues.

Morro Bay’s mud flats, eelgrass beds, tidal wetlands, and open water are home to more than a dozen threatened or endangered species, including the peregrine falcon, brown pelican, sea otter, and steelhead trout. Keeping this ecosystem healthy requires balancing its needs with those of the adjacent coastal communities. More than 30,000 people live in the coastal town of Morro Bay and communities of Los Osos-Baywood Park, and the bay draws thousands of tourists each year. The city sustains a working harbor that supports recreational boating, commercial oyster-harvesting operations, and multiple bayside restaurants and shops.

Despite the bay’s MPA status, pollution in various forms threatens its ecosystem. Morro Bay is subject to storm water runoff, invasive species, oil spills, sedimentation, fecal coliform bacteria, algae blooms, loss or degradation of habitat, litter, debris from boat maintenance, heavy metals, and other challenges. Although an abundance of anti-pollution laws and regulations are in effect, compliance has not always been high. As a result, the Morro Bay estuary is listed as an “impaired waterbody” by the federal government, meaning its water quality does not meet regulated standards for safety.

Helping the community to comply with regulations

In 2013, Environment in the Public Interest (EPI) and its San Luis Obispo Coastkeeper program created a voluntary compliance assistance project called EPIC 805. (EPIC stands for *Environment in the Public Interest Crowdsourcing* and 805 is San Luis Obispo County’s telephone area code.) EPIC 805 addresses pollution violations in Morro Bay. Its beauty is in its simplicity: the program uses crowdsourcing and low-cost technologies to locate, document, monitor, and report pollution violations in Morro Bay’s two MPAs.

The project trains students from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly) and community volunteers to patrol the bay via dockwalking or kayak, and to use smartphones to visually record pollution violations. The photos and videos — as well as the location of each violation and a written description — are then uploaded directly to San Luis Obispo County government agencies via the EPIC 805 website (<http://epic805.org/reports>). The system is closed: no MPA violation reports appear publicly on the program website prior to resolution.

EPIC 805 was developed with input from the San Luis Obispo District Attorney, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the California Coastal Commission’s Boating Clean and Green Program, Resources Legacy Fund, and local environmental agencies. The idea is to educate community members and motivate them to comply, all in a cost-effective manner. For first-time minor offenses, for example, violators are contacted by appropriate authorities and informed about the relevant regulations and best management practices. The violators are then allowed to improve their compliance. For repeat offenders, traditional enforcement remains an option.

The program provides a viable alternative to formal enforcement, fines, penalties, legal costs, and possible criminal prosecution. It is a win-win situation for the violator, government, and environment.


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Results

Morro Bay has no dry-dock facilities for boat maintenance. Partly as a result, in-slip boat maintenance — with debris and chemicals from sanding and painting entering the water — is often observed in Morro Bay harbor and has been reported by EPIC 805. The California Clean Marina Best Management Practices Program Manual advises marinas and boat owners on how to protect water quality during in-slip boat maintenance. This includes minimizing the use of solvents, varnishes, and paints that can release heavy metals, and advises that sawdust from sanding be disposed on land.

Nearly all of the boat sanding and painting violations reported by EPIC 805 have resulted in voluntary

compliance. Furthermore, boat dismantling is now conducted on land, and trucks are no longer washed on the docks. A restaurant no longer discharges grease into the storm drain that empties into the Morro Bay. The project also contributed to decisions that led to acquiring two environmentally friendly boat sanders that are available for use free of charge.

A single minor pollution violation might not seem like much. But we think of it as a broken window: if the window is not fixed, more broken windows tend to occur. When an environmental management system fails to respond to every violation, cumulative offenses can become an epidemic. There was a time when one of Morro Bay's docks was a floating, polluting boatyard. Thanks in large part to EPIC 805, that situation no longer exists. 

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<http://openchannels.org/node/10124>

Perspective A new start to effectively managing fishing in England's European Marine Sites? [excerpt]

By Jean-Luc Solandt, senior biodiversity policy officer for the Marine Conservation Society, UK

Over 100 European Marine Sites (EMS) have been designated in the UK under EU laws since 1994, covering 7.6% of UK seas. Yet until recently, they have not been systematically effective at managing destructive fishing practices.

Since 2008 the Marine Conservation Society (MCS; www.mcsuk.uk) and Client Earth (www.clientearth.org) have been collaborating on a national campaign to effectively protect EMS from damaging fishing. Initial letters written by our organizations to regulators highlighted that fishing by any means in EMS required proof of a lack of damage to the seabed habitats inside the protected sites *before* being permitted. This is important because scallop dredge fishing intensity has grown in the UK over the past 20 years since whitefish stocks have declined.

English government and its local fisheries regulators initiated a new approach to deliver protection to vulnerable habitats in 2012. Since then a number of laudable initiatives have been enacted:

1. Scientific tables of the (likely significant) impact of fishing gears on protected features of marine sites, to guide management decisions (<http://bit.ly/FisheriesEMS>).
2. A timetable to deal with the most damaging activities affecting the most vulnerable features by Spring 2014. The system codes this combination of factors "red".
3. A timetable to deal with other fishing activities that are less damaging, or where data on distribution or vulnerability of natural features are less known,

by the end of 2016. The system codes this combination of factors "amber".

4. A clear structure of spatial responsibility for different regulators.


5. Funding to determine better spatial resolution of habitat to better inform management decisions, thus allowing management measures not to be overly precautionary.

6. The oversight of decisions by a central stakeholder Implementation Group that meets every four months to review progress on management. This is composed of statutory nature conservation advisors, regulators, eNGOs and the fishing industry.

7. The timing of the new approach was when there was the introduction of a new regulator to manage inshore fisheries — the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (there are 10 around the English coast). These bodies have emerged from the "old" Sea Fisheries Committees (SFCs) that, until 2009, were effective only to preserve local short-term fishing interests. Now they are more balanced.

8. The emergence of cheap cost-effective monitoring / enforcement technology (<http://succorfish.com/fisheries>) using mobile phone technology for inshore vessels. This has yet to be systematically put on every fishing boat, but it is a logical step.

Editor's note: On 14 July 2015, Solandt and Catherine Weller of ClientEarth will present a webinar on applying England's experience with reducing destructive fishing in Natura 2000 sites to other sites across the EU. To register, go to <http://bit.ly/Solandtwebinar>

To read the rest of this piece, in which Solandt discusses why IFCAs offer promise as a tool for managing fishing in European Marine Sites, go to www.openchannels.org/node/9415. The complete piece was first published on OpenChannels.org in April 2015. 

Notes & News

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Expanded marine sanctuaries off California take effect

The expansion of two adjacent federal MPAs off the coast of California — which more than doubles the combined area of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (MPA News 16:4) — is now official, following a review period that ended 9 June. The expansion is the result of a decade of public consultation and research by NOAA and its scientific partners. Gulf of the Farallones has also been officially renamed to reflect its expanded boundary; it is now called Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. For more information, go to <http://bit.ly/Farallonsexpansion>

UK Conservative party wins election; no final announcement yet on Pitcairn MPA

In March 2015, the ruling UK Government at the time — a coalition of the Conservative Party and Liberal Democrats — announced its intent to designate an MPA around the Pitcairn Islands, a UK territory in the South Pacific (MPA News 16:4). The MPA would encompass the islands' entire 834,334-km² marine area, and most of it would be no-take.

The announcement of intent was delivered in a pre-election budget ahead of national elections in May. The budget laid out the Government's governing plan should it win the election. The Conservative Party ended up winning the election handily, gaining enough seats to form its own single-party Government.

The new Government has not yet designated the MPA. The pre-election budget provided several enforcement-related caveats for designation, including “reaching agreement with NGOs on satellite monitoring and with authorities in relevant ports to prevent landing of illegal catch, as well as on identifying a practical naval method of enforcing the MPA at a cost that can be accommodated within existing departmental expenditure limits.” A UK Government source told MPA News in June that the Government is actively working out these details. “[Designation] is contingent on us having the necessary level of detailed plans in place,” said the source. “Our position is that there is no point having an MPA which is unenforceable.”

Nearly 100,000 km² of US Mid-Atlantic waters placed off-limits to bottom contact gear

In June 2015 the US Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, which manages marine fisheries off the Mid-Atlantic coast of the US, approved a plan

to designate multiple “deep sea coral zones” in areas where corals have been observed or where they are likely to occur. The designation would ban the use of almost all bottom contact fishing gear (trawls, dredges, bottom longlines, and traps) in these areas, to protect vulnerable and slow-growing corals. Together, the protected areas would total nearly 100,000 km² of seafloor. The plan will take effect pending approval by the US Secretary of Commerce, which is expected.


Most of the deep sea coral zones are located around underwater canyons or slope areas along the continental shelf edge. Boundaries for the zones were developed cooperatively by members of the Council's advisory panels, deep sea coral experts, industry members, and other stakeholders. The new rules would not impact fisheries that operate higher in the water column. For more information on the designation, go to www.mafmc.org/newsfeed/2015/council-approves-deep-sea-coral-amendment

Study: Expanding global no-take MPA coverage could generate significant net benefits

An ambitious new study has sought to calculate the net economic benefits to be generated by expanding the global coverage of no-take MPAs, including to 10% or even 30% of the world ocean. Examining multiple scenarios in which no-take areas could be designated — such as by targeting sites with low biodiversity and low human impact, or sites with high biodiversity and high human impact, and so on — the study found that all scenarios would be economically advisable.

For example, under the scenario of achieving 10% global no-take coverage while targeting areas with high biodiversity and low human impact, each dollar invested in establishing and managing the MPAs — including the cost of displaced fisheries — would yield a return of around 20 dollars in benefits. Such benefits could include direct employment in the MPAs, coastal protection, enhanced fisheries (via spill-over or export from the reserves), tourism, recreation, and carbon storage. Under all scenarios, the accrued benefits are more than triple the costs.

The study was conducted by an international team of experts in ecosystem valuation and was published by IVM Institute for Environmental Studies in the Netherlands. It was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and WWF Netherlands. The study is available at <http://bit.ly/MPAbenefits>

A WWF report — “Marine Protected Areas: Smart Investments in Ocean Health” — that draws significantly on the above study is at <http://bit.ly/MPAsmartinvestments> 

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- MPA Education Spotlight: Taking Students Snorkeling in MPAs

Ten years ago: May 2005 (MPA News 6:10)

- Sportfishing, MPAs, and the Debate Over Management
- The Seaflower MPAs, Colombia: Cooperative, Consensus-Based Planning with Stakeholders

Fifteen years ago: May 2000 (MPA News 1:8)

- Mapping and MPAs: Practitioners Work to Define Resources, Boundaries
- Closing 20% of the Ocean: Pro-Reserve Target Is Finding Way into Policies

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