

Introduction to our coverage of MPA financing: New ideas, opportunities, and why the future could be bright

There is perhaps no topic of greater interest to the MPA field than financing. A search through the [MPA News archives](#) reveals that over the years we have covered the subject dozens of times — from how to [diversify funding streams](#), to [starting successful endowments](#), to [building strong fundraising programs](#), and much more.

The fact remains that most MPAs still do not have the funds necessary to address all their management needs. The majority of funding for protected areas still comes from government sources (governments account for [80% of biodiversity finance worldwide](#)), and such funding can fluctuate with changes in government and policy. Furthermore, many MPA managers have no background in business or financing, making it hard to develop robust new revenue streams. As a result, there is still a great need for financial expertise and non-government funds in the global MPA field.

The good news is that this may be changing. Organizations have emerged to help managers navigate the challenges of financing. Creative new opportunities are arising that could generate substantial new revenue streams for protected areas. And the private investment sector is looking at conservation as a chance to fund conservation and make money at the same time.

These developments signal substantial opportunities for growth in MPA financing. Perhaps most exciting is that they are already coming into practice.

Dear reader,

If you have any questions or suggestions for MPA News, or if you just want to say hello, please contact me any time at mpanews@u.washington.edu.

Best wishes for your work!



John Davis, Editor

This MPA News coverage of financing is broken down into four parts:

This issue:

- How organizations with financial expertise are partnering with protected areas to develop new revenue streams;
- A library of resources for more information on MPA financing in general;

January 2017 issue:


- The potential for private investment in the MPA field, including how some investors are already looking for good marine conservation projects to fund; and
- A new revenue stream that could help fight wildlife crime while funding MPAs at the same time. 

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How financial experts are partnering with protected areas to launch new revenue programs

There are some excellent publications available to guide protected areas in developing new revenue streams, including IUCN's [Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas](#), several reports by [the Conservation Finance Alliance](#), and more.

But implementing new revenue strategies based simply on guidelines from a report may not always be easy. This is particularly the case if your management team does not

already have a background in business or financing. In this situation, having a partner institution to serve as an experienced guide can be a great help in diversifying revenues successfully.

A growing number of institutions is providing such guidance. Here we examine cases in which institutions with financial expertise are helping protected areas put new revenue streams into practice.



A. The RESCCUE Project: Applying a range of economic and financial tools to support Pacific MPAs and coastal communities

In the Pacific region, there is a five-year project underway to help increase the resilience of the region's ecosystems and societies facing climate change. Called [RESCCUE](#) (its French acronym translates to English as Restoration of Ecosystem Services and Adaptation to Climate Change), the project is implemented by the [Pacific Community](#), with funding from the French Development Agency and French Global Environment Facility.

RESCCUE is operating at pilot sites in four countries and territories — New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, and French Polynesia. In addition to partnering with local institutions to strengthen coastal management and climate adaptation, the project aims to ensure those activities are financially sustainable in the long term. That involves developing new and durable revenue streams.

RESCCUE Project Coordinator Raphaël Billé holds advanced degrees in environmental economics and regional planning. He spoke with MPA News about how RESCCUE is partnering with protected areas on financing.

MPA News: How important are economic and financial mechanisms to the RESCCUE project, and how has RESCCUE partnered with MPAs so far?

Raphaël Billé: Economic and financial mechanisms to support integrated coastal management in the long term are a key component of the RESCCUE project. RESCCUE is actually the first regional initiative in the Pacific to put such innovative mechanisms to the test at all its pilot sites.

Some of these mechanisms concern MPAs. An example includes backing the creation and management of the Vatu-i-Ra Conservation Park located in the Ra Province of Fiji. A voluntary contribution scheme for the park is being developed through a partnership between local communities and dive operators, and which also involves the Ra Provincial office and customary resource owners. (The process is being facilitated by the Wildlife Conservation Society with support from RESCCUE.) Through this marine conservation agreement, dive operators visiting the park will contribute voluntarily to an administrative body; that body, in turn, will manage and disburse the funds to the park in return for agreed conservation objectives, including a permanent no-take area within the MPA.

On the island of Moorea, one of the two RESCCUE pilot sites in French Polynesia, we are working with the Government, the local municipality, and the French MPA Agency to deploy managed mooring areas in the most sensitive and visited parts of a 5000-ha lagoon that is an MPA. It is anticipated that user fees will apply to sailboats using these moorings and will contribute to implementation of the MPA's management plan.

Those are just two examples. We are also looking at:

- A payment-for-ecosystem-services scheme between tourism operators and pineapple producers in Moorea;
- Ecolabelling for black pearl production in the Gambier archipelago, our other French Polynesian site;
- The establishment of conservation funds in North Efate, Vanuatu, to sustainably and efficiently manage tourists' contributions to the two networks of locally managed areas; and
- Public-private partnerships to ensure financial sustainability of management committees and associated MPAs set up under UNESCO World Heritage designations in the Northern Province of New Caledonia.

Our understanding is that RESCCUE is also looking to apply broader economic tools across the region.

Billé: Yes, we have put two emerging issues on the regional agenda. We would like to strengthen the implementation of the mitigation hierarchy, including the use of biodiversity offsets to counterbalance the impacts of development.

[Editor's note: MPA News [reported on the concept of marine biodiversity offsets](#) in 2014.] And we would like to reform, or "green", harmful taxes and subsidies. The main sectors with harmful taxes and subsidies in the Pacific include mining, real estate, tourism, energy, agriculture, and fisheries. Although these are mostly land-based activities, they can have significant impacts on the marine environment from a ridge-to-reef perspective. Like in most parts of the world, taxes and subsidies often contradict environmental policy objectives and hamper environmental law implementation.

In your view, what are the main challenges to implementing innovative financing mechanisms for marine conservation in general, and for MPAs in particular?

Billé: In the Pacific, and based on our experience so far, key challenges include:

- The complexity of marine and land-sea ecological processes, and the lack of data to assess ecosystem functions, services, and interconnections in a robust way. This does make it harder to bring stakeholders to the negotiation table to discuss how their interconnectedness can translate into innovative financial mechanisms.
- The relatively low population density combined with a subsistence economy — not everywhere but in a majority of islands. Economic and financial mechanisms as we know them are often better suited for places where the beneficiaries of ecosystem services are plenty and inserted in a market economy.
- Legal obstacles. In Fiji, for example, the so-called "[surfing decree](#)" prohibits applying compulsory entrance fees to any marine area, whether it is protected or not.

- The key role that customary land and marine resources tenure still plays in many Pacific countries and territories. While not an obstacle in itself, cohabitation between customary and common law can complicate efforts toward innovative financial mechanisms, or at least prevent the replication of successes met in different contexts around the world.
- Last, funding needs for coastal MPAs do require innovation given the structural weakness of support that most environmental administrations are able to provide. But such needs are often quite low in small, scattered islands. This makes the issue of transaction costs a key one: in other words, are expected benefits high enough to justify external support by projects like RESCCUE? We need to closely monitor transaction costs and actual impacts of the mechanisms we are implementing.

Does the Pacific region offer particular opportunities for innovative finance for marine conservation that other regions do not?

Billé: In the Pacific, some key opportunities relate to the overall good status of coastal and marine ecosystems, and to the importance of a tourism industry that depends heavily on ecosystem services. In addition, most Pacific nations rely heavily on coastal and pelagic fisheries, and there are

definitely opportunities to examine the actual use and the potential of various fisheries-related mechanisms such as transferable quotas, subsidies, license fees, etc. In the Northern Province of New Caledonia, for instance, RESCCUE is working with local authorities to implement license fees and transferable quotas for sea cucumber fisheries management.

International climate talks have also progressively put the fate of Pacific islands under the spotlight. This translates into increasing funding being made available for climate resilience and disaster risk reduction in the region. This can provide massive opportunities for sustainable marine and coastal resources management, including more effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative, and well-connected networks of MPAs — if nature-based solutions are promoted wherever possible. In addition, blue carbon could also provide interesting funding perspectives in the future should the demand for carbon credits increase as some anticipate.

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B. WWF and the Project Finance for Permanence model: Looking to apply a funding model from the Amazon to protected areas elsewhere, including MPAs

The [Amazon Region Protected Areas Program](#) (ARPA) is an enormous endeavor. An initiative of the Brazilian Government with support from WWF, other NGOs, and major donors, its purpose is to expand protected area coverage of the Amazon rainforest and ensure the long-term financial viability of those protected sites. The ARPA system now encompasses 114 protected areas covering 583,000 km², including both strict conservation areas and sustainable-use reserves supported by local communities.

To carry out a program of this size and to ensure the protected areas are sustainable for the foreseeable future, a relatively new planning model was applied — the Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) model. Drawing upon private finance practices, it was originally applied to conservation to [support a protected area network in Costa Rica and forest conservation on the Pacific coast of Canada](#). The PFP model was adapted by WWF and partners for the Amazon project in 2014.

Key to its application in Brazil is the establishment of a sinking fund that guarantees financing for the Amazon protected areas until the Brazilian government can cover the full costs of the protected areas by itself. To draw from the fund, protected areas must demonstrate compliance in meeting the project's rigorous management standards. This helps ensure that the money does not go to waste.

ARPA's Protected Areas Trust Fund is US\$215 million, which was raised from multiple large donors including the Global Environment Facility, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the German development bank, and the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, among others. MPA News [has reported on the establishment of trust funds](#) before but none of them have been of the scale of ARPA, and none have applied the PFP model.

Meg Symington formerly served as the managing director of WWF's Amazon program (she is now Senior Director, Forests, for WWF-US) and Carlos Pineda is WWF's Senior Director for Conservation Areas Financing. They spoke with MPA News about the PFP model and its potential applications elsewhere.

MPA News: In your view, what was the biggest challenge WWF encountered in making ARPA happen, and what will be the main challenge in implementing it?

Meg Symington: Maintaining a focus on what was needed to make ARPA successful over the long term and then prioritizing those things for the donor resources was a challenge. There are always so many needs that being disciplined about what activities and costs should be covered is difficult.

In terms of challenges going forward, the current economic recession in Brazil will pose challenges for increasing government revenue at the rate anticipated in the ARPA financial model. Bringing online innovative sources of revenue — like environmental compensation for infrastructure development, and payment for the hydrological services provided by intact forests within protected areas — will be critical to increasing state and federal government budgets to help implement ARPA.

Carlos Pineda: In ARPA, as in every PFP initiative, viable sustainable financing mechanisms are central for governments to meet their commitments to funding PAs in perpetuity. This is key because without them there would be no ‘permanence’ to this innovative PA financing approach.

In that context, would you generally recommend that planners consider the existence of natural revenue streams when deciding where to place new protected areas?

Symington: I definitely think that the various kinds of ecosystem services that natural areas provide should be taken into account in the design of national protected areas systems. That means not only looking at areas important for biodiversity representation and endangered species, but also looking at areas that are important for economically valuable species like pollinators, areas that are important in securing water quality and quantity for cities, etc. These ecosystem services can not only generate revenue streams for PAs, but also build strong constituencies for protected areas in government and nearby communities.

What plans does WWF have to apply the PFP model to marine protected areas in the future?

Pineda: We hope to include MPAs in our portfolio of PFP projects, especially as we create the first global platform for PFP development. Our goal is to help nations meet the Aichi targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which include national territory targets of both 17% terrestrial and 10% marine protected areas. We are evaluating the potential of several exciting project concepts — and we are at the stage of beginning to socialize these endeavors internally — but we have not begun project-specific work. We look forward to working with our partners and other important stakeholders in the months to come.

With PFP and other financing models, WWF has a lot of experience in developing sustainable funding plans for protected areas. What would you say is the most common mistake that protected area managers make when it comes to financing for their sites?

Symington: In my experience, protected area managers are so used to making do with limited resources that they don’t stop to think about the level and kinds of resources they need to achieve effective management. They are so used to an economy of scarcity that developing a real cost estimate of what they need to do their jobs seems like a fruitless exercise. But having this information — “I need x to achieve y” — can be the key first step toward long-term financial sustainability.

For more information:

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C. Conservation Finance Alliance: Providing guidance on financing for 14 years

The Conservation Finance Alliance (CFA) was formed in 2002 to increase collaboration on the sustainable financing of biodiversity conservation. It now has more than 600 members, including government agencies, for-profit companies (including global financial firms), NGOs, donors, and academic institutions worldwide. The CFA has produced multiple useful publications over the years, and currently has three working groups — on innovative financing mechanisms, protected areas financing, and environmental funds.

Sylvie Goyet is on the CFA executive committee. In her day job she serves as the director of environmental sustainability and climate change with the Pacific Community. She spoke with MPA News about how MPA practitioners can benefit from the CFA.

MPA News: The CFA has a great amount of information at its fingertips. What advice do you have for MPA managers on how they can approach the CFA for assistance?

Sylvie Goyet: [The CFA website](#) is a very rich source of information. Its library, toolbox, experts’ blog, and various reports and publications can all be accessed, and they provide a great amount of information on conservation finance, including on ocean and marine issues. In addition, by joining the CFA (it is free of charge), members receive regular newsletters and can participate in topic-specific webinars and discussions. Guidance at present is mostly in the form of learning from others’ experiences, although links can be made with the institutions being referenced — NGOs, consultants, aid agencies, and others.

However, in the near future — the second or third quarter of 2017 — the CFA will be able to provide more specific assistance to members. This will include our launching an incubator to encourage the development and testing of innovative conservation finance initiatives, tailored guidelines, and other information. Watch the website!

The CFA has been in operation for 14 years. In what ways have financial opportunities changed in marine conservation over that span?

Goyet: We have seen an increased number of protected areas, and MPAs in particular, develop business plans. This is a key first step to developing a proper financial plan for a protected area. It involves costing the management plan, assessing existing revenue, identifying possible other sources, reviewing options for sustainable channeling of funds to the protected area, and setting up a monitoring system for the flow of funds. This provides clarity and transparency, and also allows for a sound forecasting of the financial situation of the MPA over the medium term.

Over the past 10 years, we have also seen growth in conservation trust funds, some of them dedicated entirely to MPAs. These include the Banc d'Arguin and Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Trust Fund (BACoMaB) in Mauritania; the [MAR Fund](#) to support MPAs of Central America; and the [Caribbean Biodiversity Fund](#) for marine ecosystems in the Caribbean. More recently, the establishment of [PACÍFICO](#), consolidating the collaboration of five environmental funds in Central and South America, is entirely dedicated to coastal and marine protection. These instruments go a long way in channeling sustainable funding to marine and coastal conservation. They deploy creative outreach to collect endowment money and should be encouraged to do even more, such as by tapping into biodiversity compensation payments, shares of fisheries agreements or shipping licenses, tourism fees, and fines from illegal activities.

Finally, I would like to highlight that we are seeing more and more innovative finance initiatives at MPAs, piloted by various groups, NGOs, and institutions. These include working with diving operators in Central America to generate revenues; investment in sustainable fisheries practices; and blue carbon-related actions in Madagascar. Recently as well, the development of blue bonds in the Seychelles has been associated with a full range of [marine planning, a trust fund, and debt swaps](#) in the context of developing a blue economy strategy. This all confirms a promising outlook for MPA financing.

In what ways have the financial challenges of MPAs changed over time?

Goyet: Challenges remain, whether for individual MPAs or for networks:

- Setting up sustainable financing mechanisms like conservation trust funds is no easy task;
- The pool of official development assistance (ODA) funding that is channeled to marine conservation is not growing at a pace to match the increasing number of MPAs;
- Impact investing in monetized sustainable resource exploitation (like fisheries or tourism) is still timid, and may

New US\$48-million MPA fund will be managed by Wildlife Conservation Society

This past September, a new fund to support the expansion, planning, and management of MPAs worldwide was launched. Jointly announced by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the [Waitt Foundation](#), the [blue moon fund](#), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the fund is anticipated to grow eventually to US\$48 million or more.

As part of the fund, WCS, Waitt, and the blue moon fund have together [committed a minimum of \\$15 million toward MPA designation and expansion efforts](#). GEF has committed an additional \$33 million toward projects to expand or improve the effectiveness of MPAs. WCS will continue to solicit additional donations to the fund beyond these commitments.

MPA News spoke with Caleb McClennen, Vice President, Global Conservation, of WCS about the new fund.

MPA News: WCS is a partner in many existing MPA-related projects worldwide. Will the new fund be open to applications from non-WCS projects, or is it solely intended to support WCS-associated MPA work?

Caleb McClennen: We do not anticipate being a new funder for non-WCS projects. The fund is intended as more of a funding commitment for WCS to finance MPA expansion projects in at least 20 countries where we have existing projects.

However, depending on the scale of resource raise — in other words, if WCS raises more than \$15 million (not including the GEF contribution) — we may open up the fund to non-WCS projects in the countries we work, and beyond.

The fund's ultimate purpose is to help countries and the world get to 10% MPA coverage by 2020. The countries in which WCS has MPA programs are currently around 1-2% MPA coverage.

The 2020 target is coming up relatively soon. What is your timeline for disbursing the fund?

McClennen: We are capitalizing the fund through the end of the year. Then Year 1 of the fund will be dedicated to science and planning, including creating spatial plans and conducting Marxan-type optimization of MPA sites. Year 2 will focus on stakeholder engagement and community outreach on the MPA plans. And Year 3 will involve putting together legal instruments and management plans for the new MPAs.

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not be in a position to cover MPAs where there is little to no natural resource use (e.g., remote no-take areas);

- Blue carbon, while promising, requires much more attention and methodology to become as reliable an instrument as the [REDD facility for terrestrial systems](#); and
- Large MPAs may pose unique funding challenges, such as to finance the cost of surveillance across very broad areas.

The CFA would welcome hearing more from MPA News readers of initiatives in marine conservation finance, in order to share lessons, bring support, or publicize the work. 

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Library on MPA financing

From *MPA News*:

[Building sustainable financing for MPAs by diversifying funding streams](#) (2014)

[Building successful endowments to support MPAs: Malpelo and the Mesoamerican Reef](#) (2014)

[Paying for MPAs: Examples of Large-Scale Fundraising for Planning and Management](#) (2012)

[Creating Endowments for Sustainable Funding of MPAs: Experts Describe the Opportunities and Challenges](#) (2008)

[Study: Global MPA Network Would Cost \\$12-14 Billion Annually](#) (2004)

[Tools and Strategies for Financial Sustainability: How Managers Are Building Secure Futures for Their MPAs](#) (2003)

[Problem Is Shortage of Capacity, Not Revenue Sources: Proposing a New Approach to Financing Protected Areas](#) (2003)

[Stretching Your MPA Budget: How to Do More with Less Funding](#) (MPA News, 2002)

From *Marine Ecosystems and Management (MEAM)*:

[Impact investing for ocean ecosystems and users: Capital available, but projects needed!](#) (2016)

[Money matters: Financing multi-sector ocean planning and management](#) (2016)

[Paying for EBM: Insights on Building Sustainable Financing for EBM over the Long Term](#) (2011)

Reports:

[Conservation Finance from Niche to Mainstream: The Building of an Institutional Asset Class](#) (Credit Suisse Group AG and McKinsey Center for Business and the Environment, 2016)

[Conservation Finance: Moving beyond donor funding toward an investor-driven approach](#) (WWF, Credit Suisse Group AG, and McKinsey Center for Business and the Environment, 2014)

[Guide to Conservation Finance: Sustainable Financing for the Planet](#) (WWF, 2014)

[The Little Biodiversity Finance Book](#) (Global Canopy Programme, 2012)

[International Guidebook of Environmental Finance Tools](#) (UNDP, 2012)

[Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas: A Global review of challenges and options](#) (IUCN, 2008)

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Important Marine Mammal Areas: A new tool for MPAs with marine mammals

The first workshop to implement a new tool for conservation — Important Marine Mammal Areas, or IMMAs — was held in Chania, Greece, from 24-28 October. The workshop was organized by the IUCN WCPA-SSC Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force, which devised IMMAs to represent the priority sites for marine mammal conservation worldwide.

Although IMMAs are not necessarily protected areas, they could inform a variety of conservation outcomes, including the siting of MPAs, creation of directives on shipping or underwater noise, and increased monitoring.

The October workshop brought together experts from across the Mediterranean to identify sites in the region important to marine mammals. It was the first of a series of regional workshops convened by the Task Force that will eventually take place around the world.

Here, Erich Hoyt and Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (co-chairs of the IUCN WCPA/SSC Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force) and Michael Tetley (Task Force IMMA Coordinator) describe IMMAs and their relevance to MPA managers.

On how managers of MPAs with marine mammals can be of use to the IMMA workshops, and how the workshops can be of use to managers:

“The Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force — the ‘Task Force’ — welcomes nominations with evidence supporting new Areas of Interest (Aols) from marine mammal and MPA professionals. Such evidence may be in the form of data from both inside and outside of existing MPAs. Anyone can submit evidence to recommend an Aol but assessing the evidence to turn an Aol into a candidate IMMA (cIMMA) requires a regional workshop of experts. Following the workshop, an independent review panel will then examine each cIMMA to see if it can become a full-fledged IMMA.

“In terms of what the Task Force can do for MPAs with marine mammals, we hope that the selection of IMMAs will inform managers about opportunities for zoning as well as possible extensions to their MPA. We also hope to expand their knowledge and interest in the marine mammals that may be largely outside their MPA but, for example, use the MPA seasonally. IMMAs can also be useful as a monitoring tool against various threats to marine mammal habitat such as ocean acidification, overfishing, and climate change.”


On the global map of IMMAs:

“There will not be a final global map of IMMAs. Instead the map will be a living document and adaptive. Each region will need to be reviewed and further workshops held perhaps every decade. It may take 10 years or more to do the initial work to cover the world.”

On the relationship between IMMAs and other classifications of important marine habitats, including Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs):

“Unlike KBAs, IMMAs are not necessarily identified on the basis of numerically based thresholds. However, we are already finding that some IMMAs may be able to meet the IUCN standard for identifying KBAs. In that case, those IMMAs could also become KBAs for marine mammals. A statement jointly signed in 2015 by our Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force and the IUCN Biodiversity and Protected Areas Task Force [provides the background for the integration of these two conservation tools](#).

“Incidentally, we also expect that IMMAs will be valuable for the selection and refinement of [ecologically or biologically significant areas](#) (EBSAs) under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Members of the Task Force have been participating in CBD EBSA workshops for several years and contributing marine mammal data and expertise. This was in part what made us realize that we needed a systematic tool and method for organizing and submitting marine mammal datasets so that they could be used effectively and that marine mammals would benefit. Of course, we also realized that there were challenges with marine spatial planning (MSP) and for the designation of new MPAs, as well as the management of existing MPAs. Having an accepted tool to identify and monitor marine mammal habitats would be valuable.

“Summing up, we hope that IMMAs, through the regional workshop process, will be able to serve as tools for conservation and monitoring. This will happen through the existing channels of EBSAs and KBAs, as well as various national and international (i.e., high seas) MPA and MSP processes. We hope that national and international agencies will use the tool not only for the conservation of marine mammal species, but for the habitats for which they serve as umbrella species. In this way IMMAs could be essential tools to help conserve biodiversity. With the UN deliberations on the high seas over the next few years, we hope that IMMAs will be able to step into a much wider role throughout the world ocean.” 

For more information:

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Blue Solution: The Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Act and effective governance

Editor's note:

The [Blue Solutions](#) initiative supports the exchange of successful approaches to marine and coastal conservation and development — sharing what worked where and why. Each case is authored by a practitioner and is published on the Marine and Coastal Solutions portal of the [PANORAMA web platform](#). MPA News is drawing from these cases.

By Angelique M. Songco, Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (adapted by MPA News)


The Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (TRNP) Act showcases the successful management of a remote no-take reserve in the Philippines. The formulation of policies for TRNP involved multiple consultations with a cross-section of society, from village to national level. The consultative process ensured that the impacted communities and stakeholders were able to shape the contours of the law, thereby embedding fairness in rule-making and inspiring voluntary compliance.

The Tubbataha ecosystem serves as a source of larvae for coral and commercially valuable fish species that are harvested outside the park boundaries in the Sulu Sea. The park's status as an important nursery site makes it imperative that its resources are sustained in as natural a state as possible.

Threats to the park include illegal fishing and damage to reefs by ship groundings. To protect the site, the TRNP Act features a penalty scheme that guides managers in assessing the cost of damages and applying a range of penalties.

An example of the scheme in practice: in January 2013, TRNP rangers discovered that the USS Guardian, a US

Navy ship, had run aground on the reef. The 224-foot ship damaged an area of 2345 m², and the vessel had to be removed from the reef in segments, an operation that took about 10 weeks. Based on a damage assessment conducted by the University of the Philippines, Tubbataha Management Office, and WWF-Philippines under the provisions of the TRNP Act, and applying the Act's penalty scheme, the Tubbataha Protected Area Management Board issued a total fine to the US Government of 58 million Philippine Pesos (equal at the time to US\$1.4 million). The violations included unauthorized entry, destruction of resources, non-payment of conservation fees for entering the park area, and obstruction of law enforcement officers.

Other Philippine provinces have since adopted the TRNP penalty scheme to charge ship owners for damaging reefs. The TRNP Act is a model for other MPAs in the Philippines on how legal instruments enable effective governance. 

For more information on this case, [please visit the PANORAMA web platform](#).

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Notes and news

Mexico designates three marine biosphere reserves

On 5 December the Mexican Government designated three new marine biosphere reserves totaling more than 647,000 km². All three sites are multiple-use, with some zones that are strictly protected and others that are sustainably managed:

The 11,600-km² Pacific Islands Biosphere Reserve, off the west coast of the Baja Peninsula, will protect the habitat of marine mammals and seabirds while sustainably managing fishing grounds on which local fishing cooperatives depend;

The 578,000-km² Pacific Biosphere Reserve is Mexico's largest MPA and focuses on the deep ocean. Mining and deep-sea fishing will be off-limits in certain zones of the MPA but will be allowed in other areas.

The 57,500-km² Mexican Caribbean Biosphere Reserve is off the east coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and includes coral reefs, coastal wetlands, and deep-sea habitats. The exploration and extraction of petroleum will be off-limits in the MPA.

The new MPAs were announced during Mexico's hosting of the 13th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (held 4-17 December 2016). The Nature Conservancy partnered in planning the new biosphere reserves, and a press release from The Nature Conservancy [is here](#).

Trump and MPAs, continued

The November 2016 issue of MPA News contained an article that speculated whether the election of Donald Trump as President of the US [might bring a rollback of some MPAs](#) — namely three large MPAs that were designated or expanded by current President Barack Obama using executive powers contained in the US Antiquities Act. For readers interested in the legal issues involved in such a rollback, MPA News Editor John Davis added a comment to the article that [explores the potential obstacles that President Trump could face](#) if he attempts to abolish or otherwise modify these protected areas.

23% of US waters now closed to commercial extraction

The US has set aside 23% of its federal and state waters in MPAs that are off-limits to commercial extraction, according to the latest *SeaStates* report from the Marine Conservation Institute. That compares to 13% coverage at the end of 2015. The increase in 2016 was largely due to President Barack Obama's [expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument](#) in August. The *SeaStates 2016* report is the latest installment in an annual accounting of strongly protected marine areas in federal, state, and territorial waters of the US.

Canada to designate its first marine National Wildlife Area

On 3 December, the Canadian Government announced its intent to designate the 11,546-km² Scott Islands National Wildlife Area, located off the northern end of Vancouver Island on the country's Pacific coast. It will be the first marine area protected under the *Canada Wildlife Act*. (Canada already has several marine protected areas designated under other national laws.) The site contains five islands and their surrounding waters. Although the islands already have varying degrees of protection under laws of the province of British Columbia, the surrounding marine environment has not been previously protected. The site provides habitat for more than two million seabirds. A background on the Scott Islands National Wildlife Area [is here](#).

News from the Great Barrier Reef

- On 1 December, the Australian and Queensland governments released [an update on progress so far](#) in implementing the actions of the Reef 2050 long-term sustainability plan for the Great Barrier Reef. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee requested such an update [at its meeting in 2015](#).
 - In late November, the ARC Centre for Excellence in Coral Reef Studies released a report that [assesses bleaching damage to the Great Barrier Reef](#) in 2016.
 - Graeme Kelleher, AO, who served for 16 years as the first chief executive of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, has called for a ban on new coalmines in Australia as a move to protect the Great Barrier Reef from climate change. Kelleher is [leading a petition](#) calling on Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to implement such a ban.
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Study: Five key attributes of MPAs for small-scale fisheries management

A study in *Scientific Reports* offers guidelines for planning and managing small-scale fisheries within MPAs. From a review of 25 Mediterranean MPAs, the authors identified several attributes that appear to determine 'win-win' results: effective conservation *and* productive fisheries (as measured by healthy fish stocks, increased fishermen incomes, and greater social acceptance of management practices).

The five key attributes are:

- Strong MPA enforcement;
- The presence of a management plan;
- Engagement by fishermen in MPA management;
- Representation of fishermen on the MPA board; and
- Promotion of sustainable fishing.

The study "Five key attributes can increase marine protected areas performance for small-scale fisheries management" is [available for free here](#). The lead author is Antonio Di Franco of the Université Côte d'Azur in France.

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- In an Era of Climate Change, How Can Managers Ensure that Today's MPAs Remain Relevant Over Time?
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