

Editorial: Sticks, carrots, and the future of MPAs (and the future of MPA News, too)

The next three years will lay much of the groundwork for the MPA field for years to come. As nations gear up to meet the UN's [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) as well as [Aichi Target 11 under the Convention on Biological Diversity](#) — both of which call for 10% of coastal and marine areas to be protected by 2020 — they will face some decisions. Namely:

- Should each nation just designate enough area to meet the 10% target and be done with it? Or should they take more time to try to apply good practices for planning and management?
- If the latter, what *are* the good practices for planning and management?

To some extent the 2020 targets present a stick or a carrot, depending on the country. For coastal states without the capacity to plan and manage effective MPAs, SDG 14 and Aichi Target 11 might feel like a stick. If these countries don't reach 10%, they run the risk of being criticized or embarrassed for that failure. So simply designating enough MPAs to reach the targets, without solid planning and management, may seem preferable to falling short — whether the resulting MPAs are effective or not.

But for countries with the capacity to plan and manage effective MPAs, the targets can function as more of a carrot. By applying good science and strategies to help sites meet their conservation and socioeconomic goals, those MPAs can *benefit* communities, stakeholders, policymakers, and the environment. Nations that plan and manage their MPAs with such practices may find that once they reach the 10% MPA target, it is in their interest to continue designating more.

Moving toward 2020, the ideal is that as many countries as possible will apply the good practices in MPA planning and management (viewing MPAs as a carrot) and not simply go through the motions (viewing the targets as a stick). Right now the challenge before the international MPA community is to gather and deliver those good practices — including for robust MPA financing — to the people and institutions that need them these next three years and beyond.

It is a big task. But in the interest of MPA effectiveness, it is a critical one.

The future of MPA News

MPA News has been covering the MPA field for 18 years now. For the first time, we are taking a three-month break, returning this October.

During this break we will re-examine how we can serve the field better.... How we can be more applied and manager-focused.... *And how we can gather and deliver the good practices that governments and practitioners will need as we head to 2020.*

At this time, I don't know exactly what MPA News will look or feel like in three months. But I can assure you it will be useful to you and to your peers in the field worldwide. I will be reaching out to you in the next month to ask for your input and would be grateful for your feedback and suggestions. Thanks.

During the break, if you would like to continue to receive MPA-related news and information, we offer several options, all of them free:

- [OpenChannels Weekly Update](#), which summarizes global news on ocean planning and management
- [OpenChannels Literature Update](#), which summarizes the latest academic literature and reports on ocean planning and management
- [Marine Ecosystems and Management \(MEAM\)](#) newsletter, which covers ocean planning and ecosystem-based management, including a fair amount of coverage of MPAs
- [MPA List](#), an email-based discussion forum for the global MPA community

To subscribe to any or all of those services, follow the links. Thank you for being part of the MPA News community. I look forward to continuing to serve you for years to come, and to seeing at least a few of you at the [Fourth International MPA Congress](#) in Chile in September!



John Davis, jdavis@openchannels.org
Editor, MPA News

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UN Ocean Conference results in several MPA-related commitments by governments, organizations

From 5-9 June 2017, the United Nations Headquarters in New York hosted its [first-ever Ocean Conference](#), attracting thousands of government officials and institutions to discuss implementation of [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans. The conference's main outcome — a [Call for Action](#) — included MPAs within a broader call for the “use of effective and appropriate area-based management tools” to better conserve marine biodiversity.

Arguably the more newsworthy outcome of the conference was the hundreds of commitments and announcements made by governments and organizations, several of which pertained to MPAs. For a full list of the 1374 voluntary commitments (MPA and non-MPA), [click here](#). A synopsis of the MPA-related ones, including several to designate or expand protected areas, [is here](#).

The UN announced that commitments made at the conference indicate the world is on track to protect over 10% of the globe's marine areas by 2020. (This does not mean that all coastal nations will meet the target for their own waters; rather, some individual nations are protecting much more than 10%.) According to the conference's [closing press release](#), conference commitments will add 4.4% of the world's marine area to existing MPA coverage when eventually designated.

Some of the announcements and commitments made during the conference included:

- [Canada designated a 4364-km² MPA off its East Coast](#), the St. Anns Bank Marine Protected Area. Three-quarters of the MPA (its ‘core protection zone’) is off-limits to commercial fishing.
- [Chile announced plans to designate two MPAs](#) totaling more than 500,000 km². Together with the nation's existing MPAs, more than 1 million km² of Chile's waters will be in MPAs.

- [Cook Islands announced that a bill to formally designate the nation's 2 million-km² Te Marae Moana marine protected area](#) would go to Parliament in mid-June. Prime Minister Henry Puna said Te Marae Moana was the largest commitment by any country to integrate ocean conservation and management from ridge to reef and beyond.

- [Costa Rica announced designation of an 800-km² MPA](#) off its Pacific coast. The percentage of the nation's waters under protection increased from 12.7% to 15.7%.

- [French Polynesia pledged to designate its entire 4.7 million-km² EEZ as a protected area](#), called ‘The Great Far Ocean’ MPA.

- [Gabon announced plans for a 53,000-km² network of multiple-use MPAs](#) along its coast. The network will include 20 new MPAs.

- [Myanmar formally designated its first three Locally-Managed Marine Areas \(LMMAs\)](#).

- [South Africa reiterated its intent to designate 24 new MPAs](#) as part of its ‘Operation Phakisa’ national ocean planning effort.

In addition, various new MPA-related publications were launched at the conference, including:

- [Marine Protected Areas: Economics, Management and Effective Policy Mixes](#) (OECD, 2017)

- [Partnering for a Sustainable Ocean: The Role of Regional Ocean Governance in Implementing Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) (Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance, 2017) 

To comment on this article:

<http://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/18069>

Perspective:

Amid uncertainty over UK MPAs' future, reasons for optimism emerge

By Chris Williams, Sue Wells, and Matt Doggett

The inter-relationships among science, policy, and management were the focus of a [UK conference on MPAs](#) organized by the Poole Harbour Study Group and the Estuarine and Coastal Science Association in May. This brought together a wide range of academics, practitioners, and regulators to discuss key issues and challenges facing MPAs both globally and nationally (full details available here: <http://www.pooleharbourstudygroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Programme.pdf>).

Despite the timing of the conference (occurring just weeks before the start of Brexit negotiations on the UK leaving the European Union), it was remarkable for its optimism and for the positive case studies that were presented. Brexit is leading to considerable anxiety about the fate of the UK's European Marine Sites, [as was eloquently laid out by Jean-Luc Solandt, Bryce Stewart and Alice Puritz](#) in *MPA News* in April 2017. And at the time of the conference, the UK national election had not taken place and government commitments were unclear. For decades, MPA establishment and management in the UK have lagged behind other countries, and there are genuine concerns about the future. So it was very good to see some celebration of the positive steps that are being taken, reflecting the theme of this year's April Earth Day when conservationists promoted "optimism", and which was carried through to Oceans Day in June.

In England, progress is now being made to develop a framework for effective MPA management in inshore waters, where the [ten regional Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities](#) (IFCAs) are the main regulators. IFCAs are unique management bodies, comprising both paid staff and voluntary members from local councils, other regulators and civil society. Management is undertaken through bylaws and also voluntary agreements, all of which go out to public consultation before being adopted.


Beachy Head West MCZ, at the foot of the iconic Seven Sisters cliffs in Sussex, is an example where such combined forms of management are now underway. This MCZ also has two intertidal zones designated as Educational Conservation Areas, where the focus will be on interpretation and awareness raising. The Medway Estuary in Kent, a designated MCZ and Special Protection Area, is unusual in that the fishing rights were granted in 1729 to the Rochester Oyster and Floating Fishery (ROFF), a local guild that has had responsibility for managing the fishery to this day. In partnership with the Kent and Essex IFCA, ROFF [has established an intertidal no-take zone](#) (NTZ) to protect the salt marsh and mud flats that form a nursery area for a

range of commercial fish species. At 12 km², this is now the largest NTZ in the UK.

Building community support for MPAs

The conference venue was the Poole Harbour Authority, and the nearby Poole Rocks MCZ provided a good example of what is happening on the ground. The bylaw for the site is being finalized and the Southern IFCA will then consult on management measures.

A major problem in the UK has been communicating the value of MPAs. Much as we love the coast, the memories of our childhood seaside holidays, and our rich maritime heritage, the British have been slow to appreciate its underwater marine life. So a highlight of the conference was the presentation of the interactive website <http://poolerocksmcz.uk/> and supporting [3-minute YouTube video](#) that have been produced for Poole Rocks MCZ. These provide models of the kinds of communication tools needed for all MPAs, and were created through a partnership project involving the [Southern IFCA](#), two NGOs ([Dorset Wildlife Trust](#) and the [Marine Conservation Society](#)), and the think tank the [New Economics Foundation](#), or NEF. (NEF's ['Blue New Deal' action plan](#) was also showcased at the conference: this presents a road map for coastal communities, demonstrating how they can thrive by making sustainable use of their natural assets, including MPAs.)

This is the start of a wider engagement plan by those involved to get coastal communities to support their local MPAs, just as they would support terrestrial sites. The video and website make the underwater realm more accessible to those who do not dive or fish, but who are nevertheless still stakeholders and need to be involved in stewardship of the sites. 

For more information:

Chris Williams, New Economics Foundation, UK.
Email: Chris.Williams@neweconomics.org

Sue Wells, IUCN WCPA – Marine.
Email: suewells1212@gmail.com

Matt Doggett, UK. Web: www.mattdoggett.com

To comment on this article:

<http://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/18070>

Editor's note:

Chris Williams is project lead for fisheries and the marine environment at the New Economics Foundation, a UK-based think tank. Sue Wells is a marine conservation consultant to the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas – Marine. Matt Doggett is a marine biologist and photographer who was instrumental in creating the Poole Rocks MCZ video and website mentioned in this piece.

Financing spotlight:

Blue Abadi, a \$38-million trust fund to support MPAs in the Bird's Head region of Indonesia

In September 2016, several institutions — Conservation International (CI), The Walton Family Foundation, the Global Environment Facility, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) — [announced a joint effort](#) to support long-term protection of Indonesia's Bird's Head region, a highly diverse marine area in West Papua, Indonesia. The centerpiece of the effort is a new trust fund called Blue Abadi, for the Indonesian word for "forever".

Once fully capitalized with a target of US \$38 million, the fund will be among the largest dedicated marine conservation funds in the world. Its goal is to provide self-sustained financing for the region's MPA network, which covers 36,000 km² of locally managed sites. The first money is already arriving. In February of this year, CI, TNC, WWF, and the Indonesian government [announced their initial capitalization of the fund](#) with \$23 million.

For insights on how the fund is structured and what drove its development, MPA News speaks with Laure Katz, director of the Seascapes Program at CI.

MPA News: Some conservation funds are designed to provide financing in perpetuity, while others spend down their money (or capital) over time. Which model does the Blue Abadi Fund use?

Laure Katz: The Blue Abadi Fund is a multi-account fund, with both a sinking component and an endowment component. The sinking portion will be spent during the initial 3-5 years of fund operation, allowing the endowment capital to grow. Revenues generated from investing the Blue Abadi endowment capital on a yearly basis will be disbursed to local grantees to ensure adequate protection of the Bird's Head Seascape in perpetuity.

What drove the development of the fund, aside from wanting to sustain MPAs in the Bird's Head region?


Katz: For several years, the primary anchor donor for the Bird's Head Seascape has been the [Walton Family Foundation](#). After 12 years of extremely generous support for MPAs in the Bird's Head Seascape, the foundation has embarked on an exciting new strategy for Indonesia that focuses on fisheries reform. The establishment of the Blue Abadi Fund was motivated in part by this anticipated transition and to incentivize other long-term sustainable funding sources for the seascape so as to not be reliant on international philanthropy forever.

Who will be in charge of managing the Fund?

Katz: The Blue Abadi Fund will be governed by a multi-stakeholder governance committee, with representation from local and national government, local indigenous communities, conservation NGOs, donors, the private sector, and the finance sector. In turn, the governance committee will be supported by three expert committees, including a science and conservation technical advisory committee, a Papua advisory committee, and a financial advisory committee.

The day-to-day administration of the fund will be led by [the Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation](#) (KEHATI). KEHATI brings over 20 years of experience administering conservation trust funds in Indonesia and is excited to work on its first ocean project.

Grants from the Fund will be available to Bird's Head communities and agencies to support local stewardship of protected areas. When will communities and agencies be able to apply for such grants, and how should they do that?

Katz: The Blue Abadi Fund will have two granting tracks — a primary granting facility and INOVASI, a small grants facility — to support smaller local Papuan organizations actively participating in the conservation and sustainable development of the seascape. For the primary granting facility, KEHATI will issue requests for proposals on an annual basis to targeted local agencies and organizations filling core functions within the seascape, such as MPA management, monitoring and science, or environmental education. The first round of requests for proposals was in April 2017. For the INOVASI small grants facility, KEHATI will issue an open call on an annual basis. The first open call for proposals is expected to be in September 2017 for grants starting in January 2018. 

For more information:

Kipp Lanham, communications, Conservation International, US. Email: klanham@conservation.org

To comment on this article:

<http://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/18071>

Public comments still sought on marine national monuments in US

The public comment period remains open on the [federal review that could result in major changes to five of the US's largest MPAs](#): the 250,000-km² Marianas Trench Marine National Monument; 12,720-km² Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument; 490,000-km² Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument; 1.5 million-km² Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument; and 34,000-km² Rose Atoll Marine National Monument.

Upon completion of the review, the US Secretary of the Interior will recommend to President Donald Trump whether any changes should be made to each site — from boundary alterations, to reopening of commercial fishing, or even a full overturn of designations. Trump ordered the review in April as part of a larger review of national monument designations (including 21 terrestrial sites) made by prior Presidents under the US Antiquities Act.


Public comments will be accepted before 10 July 2017. To submit your comments, [click here](#).

Comments so far

To view what comments have been received so far, [visit this page](#). A large majority of the comments favor continued protection of the sites.

A search by MPA News on 19 June revealed that more than 29,000 comments have been received regarding the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument alone, and more than 25,000 comments have been received on Papahānaumokuākea (currently the largest protected area in the world). Meanwhile there have been roughly 4000 comments each for the Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, and Rose Atoll. The similarity in numbers among the last three sites reflects that many of the comments have grouped all three in their messages.

Separately the Marine Conservation Institute has released a [letter signed by more than 500 scientists](#) expressing their support for continuing, or strengthening, current protections in the marine national monuments. More scientists are invited to add their names to the list.

Pacific Environment, a US-based NGO, has launched an [online petition on each of the four Pacific MPAs under review](#), supporting their continued protection. 

To comment on this article:

<http://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/18072>

MPA Science Corner Coral reef tourism - Public preferences - Reserve effects - Testing MPA boundaries

These recent articles on MPA-related science and policy are all open access.

- **Article:** "[Mapping the global value and distribution of coral reef tourism](#)", Marine Policy 82, 104-113 (2017)

Finding: This study calculates that the annual value of coral reef tourism worldwide is US \$36 billion, equal to 9% of all coastal tourism value in the world's coral reef countries. This figure may provide an incentive for sustainable reef management. Over 70 countries and territories have "million dollar reefs", or reefs that generate approximately \$1 million in tourism value per square kilometer.

- **Article:** "[Using choice models to inform large marine protected area design](#)", Marine Policy 83, 111-117 (2017)

Finding: This study of households on the US West Coast analyzes public preference for the size of MPAs and restrictions on use within their boundaries.

- **Article:** "[Consistent multi-level trophic effects of marine reserve protection across northern New Zealand](#)", PLOS ONE 12, e0177216 (2017)

Finding: This study of eight marine reserves across northern New Zealand and the Kermadec Islands found that reserve sites were characterized by higher abundance and biomass of large fishes compared to fished sites. Overall, reef food webs in these well-enforced temperate marine reserves showed complex but consistent responses to protection from fishing.

- **Article:** "[Determining conservation potential of an opportunistically defined MPA boundary using fish telemetry](#)". Biological Conservation 211, 37-46 (2017)

Finding: This study examined whether the opportunistically defined boundary of an MPA (drawn on the basis of adjacency to public versus privately owned lands rather than any ecological criteria) was consistent with the MPA's conservation goals. Transmitters attached to reef fish in the MPA determined that in fact the boundary was coincidentally aligned with a deep sandy area that acted as a natural barrier to movement of several species, effectively keeping them inside the MPA.

To comment on MPA Science Corner: <http://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/18073>

Upcoming webinars

• [PANORAMA - Solutions for a Healthy Planet webinar: Scaling community-led MPA management](#)

Wednesday, 28 June 2017
3 pm US EDT / noon US PDT / 9 pm CET

• [Green Fins: A Tool for Reducing the Direct Impacts of Diving and Tourism Industries](#)

Thursday, 13 July 2017
1 pm US EDT / 10 am US PDT / 5 pm UTC

• [Bringing Finance and Conservation Together: The Coalition for Private Investment in Conservation](#)

Tuesday, 25 July 2017
1 pm US EDT / 10 am US PDT / 5 pm UTC

• [Satellite Tracking Sharks and Fishing Vessels to Assess a Remote MPA](#)

Thursday, 14 September 2017
1 pm US EDT / 10 am US PDT / 5 pm UTC

For more upcoming webinars hosted by OpenChannels.org and partners, [click here](#).

Notes & news

Waitt Foundation offers funding to help MPA projects “get over the finish line”

The Waitt Foundation is [requesting proposals from MPA projects worldwide](#) where an additional 6 to 12 months of funding would result in legally binding, successful MPAs. The primary goal of the grant program is to help MPAs “get over the finish line”, either as newly designated sites or newly expanded ones. Awards will range from US \$50,000 to \$150,000. No-take MPAs are strongly preferred. The submission deadline for proposals is 8 September 2017. For more information, [click here](#).

Registration for IMPAC4 is open

Registration for the 4th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC4) is now open [at the conference website](#). Early registration rates are available up to 15 July. In addition, reduced rates will be available to young professionals and nationals of certain countries — details are on the site. The conference program will be posted to the site in July.

Marine protection, illegal fishing, and reason for hope in the Eastern Tropical Pacific region

The June 2017 issue of Marine Ecosystems and Management (MEAM) newsletter features an essay by Tundi Agardy on the status of [marine protection and illegal fishing in Costa Rica's Cocos Island MPA](#) and the broader Eastern Tropical Pacific region.

GLORES initiative announces first Global Ocean Refuge nominees

The Global Ocean Refuge System (GLORES) — an initiative to incentivize designation of strongly protected MPAs across 30% of the world ocean — has [published its first five nominees for Global Ocean Refuge status](#). The five sites are Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (US); South Orkney Islands Southern Shelf Marine Protected Area (Antarctica); Tubbataha Reef National Park (Philippines); Twelve Apostles Marine National Park (Australia); and Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary (Colombia). Public comment on the nominees is welcome at the link above. Global Ocean Refuge status is intended to award MPAs that meet a series of [science-based criteria](#) on their design and management. GLORES is led by the Marine Conservation Institute.

Canada identifies new Area of Interest for potential MPA designation

In May, Canada [identified a new ‘Area of Interest’ off its Pacific Coast](#) that will be examined for potential designation as an MPA by 2020. The Area of Interest covers roughly 140,000 km² and contains several seamounts and hydrothermal vent fields. It would be the largest MPA in Canada if designated. Identifying an Area of Interest is the first step in a multi-step process toward establishing a new MPA under Canada's *Oceans Act*.

United Arab Emirates stocks MPAs with fish; sites will serve as nurseries

The environment ministry of the United Arab Emirates is partnering with a private fish hatchery [to stock seven MPAs nationwide with tens of thousands of fish](#). The purpose is to support the UAE's fisheries sector: the fish (Qabit and black seabream, both commercially targeted species) will grow and reproduce in the MPAs and their larvae will spill over into fished areas. "The initiative is aimed at increasing the number of local fish during this year and providing an ideal environment in different regions of the country's protected areas," said Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment. Each of seven MPAs is being stocked with 30,000 fish.

Poachers sentenced for taking lobsters in California no-take marine reserve

Poachers who were [caught taking lobsters from the no-take South La Jolla State Marine Reserve off the coast of Southern California](#) were recently sentenced to a series of penalties for their crimes. Three poachers who as a team took 74 lobsters were placed on three years' probation, ordered to stay away from the reserve, and fined amounts ranging from US \$10,000 to \$500. Two of the poachers must also perform 10 days of public work service. In a separate case, another poacher who was caught poaching 185 lobsters will be fined \$11,250, jailed for 120 days, and serve five years' probation, and must forfeit all his fishing gear and sell his boat.


MPA director wins prestigious biodiversity conservation award

Andrew Zaloumis, CEO of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority, which manages South Africa's first UNESCO World Heritage site, has received the 2017 KfW-Bernhard-Grzimek Award. The award honors individuals and organizations for their work in protecting the world's globally significant biodiversity, and comes with a prize of 50,000 euros (US \$56,000). More information on Zaloumis, iSimangaliso, and the award are in [this UNESCO press release](#). Zaloumis also won the [John J. McNulty Prize](#) in 2016, which honors individuals addressing the world's toughest social, economic, and environmental challenges.

New web portal available on Chagos

A web portal is now available on the Chagos Archipelago and its surrounding waters, one of the world's largest marine protected areas (640,000 km²). The portal features over 300 publications, 600 videos and photos, 24 data sets, and information from 50 expeditions. The Chagos Information Portal, or CHIP, [is here](#). It was developed by the Chagos Conservation Trust.

Reports on state of Arctic biodiversity and protection

The biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council has released three reports on the state of [marine biodiversity](#), [protection](#), and [invasive species](#) in the Arctic region. The report on Arctic protected areas calculates that 4.6% (or 860,000 km²) of the region's marine area is currently in MPAs. There are 334 Arctic MPAs. 

To comment on any of these notes & news items:

<http://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/18074>

From the MPA News vault: Features and news items from yesteryear

Five years ago: [May-June 2012](#)

- Paying for MPAs: Examples of Large-Scale Fund-raising for Planning and Management
- Marine Protected Areas in Fisheries Management: A West African Perspective

Ten years ago: [June 2007](#)

- Planners Discuss Role of Science and Socioeconomics in California MPA-Planning Process
- MPA Tip: On Managing Visitor Impact

Fifteen years ago: [June 2002](#)

- Financial Support for Fishermen Who Are Affected by Marine Reserves: Examining the Merits
- Perspective: Dangerous Targets and Inflexible Stances Threaten Marine Conservation Efforts

For these and all other issues of MPA News, go to <https://mpanews.openchannels.org/mpanews/archives>