

Monthly news, analysis, and guidance on marine protected areas worldwide

Double issue!

Hi everybody,

This is a double issue covering the months of March and April 2018. It is twice the length of our normal ones – a lot of insights on regional MPA manager networks! We'll return to our regular monthly coverage in May.

If you have any questions or suggestions, let me know at mpanews@openchannels.org. Best wishes for your work!



John Davis, Editor, MPA News

Challenges, successes, and lessons from building effective MPA manager networks: Part II, the regional networks

When each of us faces a challenge in life, our first reaction is often to ask a trusted friend or colleague, "Have you also faced this? If so, how did you handle it?"

It's the same in MPA planning and management. Practitioners face a common set of challenges – enforcement, engaging stakeholders, monitoring, fundraising, and more – and an array of solutions have been developed at sites worldwide. It benefits all practitioners for these solutions and other MPA knowledge to be shared widely.

For that reason, the value of MPA manager networks* is substantial. Whether at the national, regional, or global scale, such networks can foster the transfer of knowledge in ways, and at a depth, that other methods – reports, trainings, conferences – cannot match. Effective MPA manager networks are a continuous and ever-growing source of guidance.

Notably, the networks themselves face challenges, too. Transferring knowledge across massive areas and multiple languages and cultures can be difficult. As is finding adequate funding to support years of important but often-unglamorous knowledge-sharing activities. To make MPA manager networks successful in the long term takes dedication and creativity.

* **Editor's note:** In our last issue, we used the term *MPA management networks*. However, we recognize that some regional networks refer to themselves instead as *MPA manager networks* (or *MPA managers networks*) to highlight the human connections they provide. In appreciation of that point, we generally refer to them in this article as *MPA manager networks*.

Last month, [MPA News examined](#) the challenges and successes of *global* MPA manager networks. This month we survey seven *regional* networks:

- MedPAN, the network of MPA managers in the Mediterranean
- RAMPAN, the regional network of MPAs in West Africa
- LMMA Network International, the Locally-Managed Marine Area Network in the Indo Pacific
- CaMPAM, the Caribbean MPA Management Network and Forum
- MPAConnect, a network of Caribbean MPA managers
- NAMPAN, the North American Marine Protected Areas Network
- SMART Seas Africa, a network of MPA managers in the Western Indian Ocean

[This article is not a comprehensive coverage of regional MPA manager networks. There are several other active ones around the world. If you operate a regional MPA manager network and would like it to be profiled in a future issue of MPA News, please let us know: mpanews@openchannels.org.]

A. MedPAN, the network of MPA managers in the Mediterranean

Background: The Mediterranean Protected Areas Network (MedPAN) was at first an informal association of MPA managers in the region. Created in 1990 and led for several years by Port-Cros National Park (France), the

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Thanks!

network had periods of activity and dormancy through the 1990s and early 2000s. Network activities were re-launched in 2004 through an EU project led by WWF France. And in 2008, by request of MPA managers, the formalized MedPAN Association was created, with nine founding members (a mix of MPAs, NGOs, and management agencies). It has been highly active since then, producing dozens of publications, holding workshops and trainings, providing small grants, conducting manager-exchange visits, informing policies, and more.

As of December 2017, MedPAN had 66 member organizations that manage over 100 MPAs in the region, and 47 partners (non-management organizations) from 19 Mediterranean countries. The Secretariat of the Organization has seven employees. [Website for MedPAN](#)

By Marie Romani, Executive Secretary, MedPAN Association

Challenges

Having sustainable financing is key to ensuring networking activities that are, for the most part, recurrent: regular training, exchange events, sharing tools, updating our website and database of Mediterranean MPAs, producing our newsletter, and more.

Since creation of the MedPAN Association, we have been continuously supported by several strong donors: the private [MAVA Foundation](#) and the [FFEM](#) (the French Facility for Global Environment), as well as the French MPA Agency (which is now the [French Biodiversity Agency](#)). We also have continuous support from local public authorities, like the city of Marseille and others. And we receive project-oriented support from various EU programs as well as the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation.

However, our main source of funds, the MAVA Foundation, will end its support for the network by 2022. So we need to find new private donors who believe in the added value of MPA manager networks and who are ready to support recurrent and core costs of the network.

We also need to explore possibilities to attract new public funds from bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies and other public donors. One idea would be to explore these possibilities together with other regional networks of MPA managers to present larger projects operating in different regions.

We are currently developing the 2018-2022 financial strategy for MedPAN.

Successes

MedPAN has produced some marked results:

- From the technical side, our comprehensive MPA assessments, timely and updated technical tools, small grants mechanism, and experience-sharing events are all widely recognized.

- MedPAN has brought the voice of the Mediterranean and its human networks to marine international fora, joining efforts with other regional MPA networks around the world in support of more effective MPA management.

- Together with its regional partners, MedPAN has accomplished important goals, including hosting the [Mediterranean MPA Forum](#) as a major event every four years, and producing the [MPA Mediterranean Roadmap](#) that envisions a comprehensive, representative, connected, and well-managed network of MPAs by 2020. The roadmap has been officially adopted by the [Barcelona Convention](#) for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean.

MedPAN has succeeded in building a regional MPA community by gathering managers, local and regional management authorities, other key national and regional institutions, scientists, local stakeholders and resource users, and donors to share views and learn from each other. And evolution of the network in 10 years has been fast: from 23 members and partners in 2009 to more than 100 today, and from 17 MPAs in 2009 to more than 100 MPAs now. The MedPAN budget has grown from 100,000 euros in 2009 to almost 800,000 euros in 2017.

Lessons learned

We see several strengths of the MedPAN Association, including that it is a science-based organization, possesses technical expertise on multiple relevant MPA topics (fisheries, tourism, funding, enforcement, monitoring, etc.), and has strong partnerships with donors and with other key regional marine institutions (among these the UNEP Regional Activity Center for Specially Protected Areas, WWF, IUCN, Global Council of the Mediterranean, the Mediterranean Small Islands Initiative, and the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area [ACCOBAMS]).

That being said, there remains a lot of work to do with regard to supporting Mediterranean MPAs. In a recent survey of 73 MPA managers in the Mediterranean by MedPAN and its partners, only six sites reported having enough staff members to meet the management requirements of the MPA. In addition, many sites are not actually implemented and there are no regulations in place to curb existing pressures or enough means to enforce them.

The human and financial resources allocated to MPA management in the region are too limited, thereby compromising successful conservation. Considering the high pressures exerted on the Mediterranean marine environment with growing trends (overfishing, land-based pollution, expanding offshore oil extraction, climate change), it is clear that willingness to invest in marine conservation needs to be boosted, and the network can help.

For more information: Marie Romani, MedPAN. Email: marie.romani@medpan.org

B. RAMPAO, the Regional Network of MPAs in West Africa

The acronym RAMPAO stands for Réseau régional d'aires Marines Protégées en Afrique de l'Ouest, or the Regional Network of MPAs in West Africa. Founded in 2007, RAMPAO's mission is to ensure the maintenance of critical marine habitats in the ecoregion that encompasses Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

RAMPAO currently comprises 32 member MPAs. The network aims to promote exchange and learning among members, to create synergies on issues of common interest, to make MPAs of the region operational and functional, and to strengthen the mutual capacities in terms of advocacy. [Website for RAMPAO](#)

By Marie Traoré, General Secretary, RAMPAO

Challenges

West African countries are characterized by a wide range of political, cultural, and social diversity. This diversity at different levels is reflected in different modes of management and types of governance (and their related policies and practices) from one country to another, and from one MPA to another. Thus the main challenge of RAMPAO is to bring the managers together to “speak the same language” to the extent that they can communicate with and learn from each other as effectively as possible.

Furthermore, RAMPAO MPAs do not always have proper finance mechanisms or qualified personnel. This situation leads to inefficient or ineffective management. RAMPAO has conducted a range of capacity-building projects, including on sustainable financing, alternative income-generating activities, scientific research and monitoring of MPAs, and raising local community awareness on environmental protection. In addition, in collaboration with other organizations working in conservation in West Africa (IUCN, the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission, the Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation), RAMPAO has established the RAMPAO Task Force – a team of regional experts with various kinds of expertise in MPA manage-

ment and governance. The Task Force brings technical support to MPA managers as needed. In addition, thanks to the constant and ongoing financial support of the MAVA Foundation, RAMPAO's traditional small grants program is continuing to provide financial support to managers to initiate improved management actions.

Successes

In the 10 years since its creation, RAMPAO has become a network where managers, local communities, small fishermen, policy makers, and scientists from the West African region meet, discuss, exchange, decide, plan, and implement MPAs together. Today the network members are working together on an assessment of the effects of climate change, offshore oil and gas exploitation, and marine pollution on the West African coastal region.

In addition, RAMPAO shows the connectivity, complementarity, and representative and functional characteristics of the region's MPAs. In the context of the general overexploitation of marine resources in West African waters, the MPAs and the network can serve as a basis and inspiration for regional cooperation and harmonization of measures to address overfishing.

Lessons learned

Building an effective network of West African MPA managers promotes exchange and mutual learning among managers by creating synergies between sites on topics of common interest. The diversity and variety of ecosystems within the network enrich and strengthen each manager's knowledge of conservation practices, and establish a culture of continuous learning.

Effectively, each MPA of RAMPAO is no longer managed by one manager but by the 38 managers who compose the network. That's the spirit of RAMPAO.

For more information: Marie Suzanna Traoré, RAMPAO. Email: Marie.Traore@iucn.org

C. LMMA Network International: The Locally-Managed Marine Area Network in the Indo Pacific

In the late 1990s, staff from various conservation organizations working in Southeast Asia and the Pacific recognized there were several initiatives in community-based marine management taking place in the region, but only limited knowledge sharing among them. From this, they proposed bringing the isolated projects together to learn collectively and improve their conservation impact.

Thus, the Locally-Managed Marine Area Network was born in 2000. Starting with a handful of sites in three

countries, the Network has grown to include over 600 sites in seven country networks: Fiji, Indonesia, Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and the Solomon Islands. (The LMMA Network is decentralized: it is a voluntary association of independent country networks of LMMAs.)

The Network has five objectives:

- *Learn about the LMMA approach through systematic monitoring and other assessment approaches*

- *Protect biodiversity at specific sites*
- *Promote the LMMA approach in the Indo Pacific and globally*
- *Build capacity for learning and implementation of community-based adaptive management*
- *Develop the policy environment at local, regional, country, and international levels to support widespread adoption of LMMAs*

[Website for LMMA Network](#)

By Jovy Cleofe, Assistant Manager, LMMA Network International

Challenges

Over the years, we have engaged in a number of strategic partnerships – with NGOs, donors, and other institutions – to achieve Network goals at all levels (site, country, regional, and international scales). These partnerships increase technical support, financial resources, and opportunities for sites and country networks. The Network in turn weighs in on partners' strategies and initiatives, which contributes to improved policy and regional programming for LMMA approaches.

However, getting core Network operational support from these partners remains a challenge. As a result, building and nurturing these strategic partnerships, and moving concepts to the implementation stage, rely on a regional network team that operates largely on part-time schedules.

At the country level, with well-recognized capacity constraints in the region, Country Networks find challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff. To address this, the broader Network assesses the capacity needs of each Country Network and assigns a technical adviser to consult on gaps.

Successes

Improved governance:

In 2010, Network members agreed to establish a council to govern the Network, clarify and improve Network governance and management, and ensure the communities continued to be central to the LMMA Network in the future. All seven Country Networks are represented on the Council.

Regional policy work and government partnerships:

The LMMA Network has forged several strategic partnerships to ensure Network programs and ideas are recognized at appropriate forums in the region. These include the [Secretariat of the Pacific Community](#) (SPC), the [Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation](#), and others.

The partnership with SPC, for example, has resulted in co-production of several information materials and access for the LMMA Network to provide input to regional fisheries policies and dialogues.

Scaling up:

In Fiji, currently 79% of the country's inshore fishing area (from the coastline to the outer barrier reef) is now actively under local management, with 11% of that under permanent or periodically opened no-take reserves, and 71% of coastal villages involved. The Fiji commitment is to achieve 100% inshore management by 2020.

Outreach:

Our dozens of reports, guides, bulletins, policy briefs, videos, and other tools have assessed and reported the experience of the LMMA Network over the years. As the LMMA approach has spread through the Indo Pacific, it has also inspired and influenced a number of other country networks and subnational networks – including LMMA-style designation efforts in Myanmar, Madagascar, and elsewhere.

Lessons learned

We need to develop a larger funding portfolio for the LMMA Network**, both at the international and country levels, and work to leverage existing funding partners with other donors that have similar objectives. To some extent the funding is a chicken-and-egg situation: we need more funding to have the capacity to deliver specific products and outputs, but we probably need more physically tangible products and outputs in order to attract more funding.

The Network will need to remain relevant in terms of the new and emerging conditions that coastal communities face. There is growing recognition, for example, of the need to work from ridge to reef, to empower women, to consider alternative livelihoods, and to prepare for climate change. It's not just the local communities that are learning; the Network is needing to learn, too.

For more information: Jovy Cleofe, LMMA Network International. Email: jovy@lmmanetwork.org

**** Editor's note:** The work of the LMMA Network is made possible through funding support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Although the Packard Foundation ended its funding of the LMMA Network as a whole in November 2017, the foundation has started bilateral partnerships with Country Networks like Fiji LMMA and Indonesia LMMA.

D. CaMPAM: Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum

The Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) was formed in 1997 under the framework of [UN Environment's Caribbean Environment Programme](#) (UNEP-CEP) and the [Specially Protected Area and Wildlife \(SPA\) Protocol](#) of the Cartagena Convention. Since then, CaMPAM has grown to be a comprehensive regional program that uses a variety of mechanisms to strengthen Caribbean MPAs. These include a longstanding email list and [online forum](#); workshops; site exchanges; a regional MPA database; a mentorship initiative that is being replaced this month by a larger Expert Group (described below, in 'Lessons'); a small grants program; and CaMPAM's Training of Trainers courses, which have been in operation since 1999. The courses offer lessons on MPA planning, management, stakeholder participation, research, monitoring, and regional policy, along with general skills in communication and teaching.

In 2016, CaMPAM founder Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury and coordinator Georgina Bustamante received IUCN's Fred Packard Award for their outstanding service to protected areas. [Website for CaMPAM](#)

By Georgina Bustamante, Coordinator, CaMPAM

Challenges

In 2016, UNEP-CEP commissioned [an external evaluation](#) of the CaMPAM program, conducting dozens of interviews with organizers, partners, network members, and training and grants beneficiaries. The assessment identified various challenges facing CaMPAM:

- **Ensuring and increasing funding for the network.** UNEP-CEP does not have permanent funding for CaMPAM, and the grants that typically sustain the network run on two- to three-year cycles. So it requires CaMPAM to scramble every couple years to sustain the network and its activities.
- **Continuing to adapt our Training of Trainers (ToT) courses to the changing needs of managers, and to incorporate evolving technological tools.** We conduct course assessments with participants after each of our ToTs. Some of the changes we've made as a result of the feedback have included adding more field trips to MPA sites; recruiting more regional and local experts as instructors, because many managers in the region have become experts and good lecturers themselves; focusing on emerging issues such as decision support systems, marine spatial planning, community-managed areas, and online communication tools; and adding virtual classes, with some instruction now provided via Skype.
- **We also need to continue developing and improving partnerships.** For example, we have involved other institutions (both national and international) in the

planning and funding of the ToTs. In 2009 the [Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States](#) and [Buccoo Reef Trust](#) partnered with UNEP-CEP to implement the regional course in Tobago. The 2011 course in Guadeloupe was funded by the [IUCN European Overseas Territories office](#), which also provided a translation of the course manual into French. In 2015, IUCN's [Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme](#) (BIOPAMA) organized the course and covered much of the cost. And this year, the regional course will take place in Barbados in partnership with [IUCN's Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean](#) (ORMACC) and University of West Indies-CERMES as part of their [SocMon](#) and BIOPAMA programs.

Successes

The most highly visible success of CaMPAM has been the ToT program. We've conducted 13 training courses to date, alternating among English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking locations. Graduates of the course are required in turn to develop follow-up activities (supported by a small grant) within their home countries, sharing with their peers what they learned in the ToT course. This helps build local capacity while exercising the graduates' communication skills. More than 190 individuals have taken the course since 1999, and an estimated 1500 MPA practitioners and stakeholders have experienced the follow-up trainings. Most countries and territories of the Wider Caribbean have now benefited from the courses via their practitioners. The 2016 external review of CaMPAM interviewed graduates of the ToT courses:

- 98% of graduates reported an increase in their understanding about how MPAs work, from the course;
- 97% acquired skills from the course that improved their communication with staff and stakeholders;
- 99% of graduates said the ToT positively impacted their ability to use and disseminate best practices to solve local problems.

CaMPAM's Small Grant Program has become a popular capacity-building tool in the region. It provides supervised financial support with technical assistance to governmental and non-governmental institutions involved in MPA management.

Another success has involved partnering beyond the Caribbean. Since 2016, CaMPAM has participated in a transatlantic initiative of regional networks of MPA managers ([profiled in MPA News 19:4](#)). After a few exchange workshops of network coordinators, and presentations in several international conferences (IUCN World Conservation Congress, UN World Ocean Conference, International Marine Protected Areas Congress), four members of the

CaMPAM Expert Group (see below) participated in an exchange on coastal resilience in Gabon with MPA managers of Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe.

Lessons learned

What is great about CaMPAM is that the ToT courses are just one of many methods in which knowledge is shared. For example, the CaMPAM mentorship initiative – [created in 2013](#) to assist junior MPA managers one-on-one – has grown up to become the CaMPAM Expert Group. This group serves as a cadre of experts to advise, coordinate projects, lecture, and represent CaMPAM in international meetings. The Expert Group's 31 initial members, from 15 different countries, represent different professional skills related to MPA science, education, and management, and have a record of collaborating effectively with CaMPAM as project and exchange coordinators, course lecturers, project reviewers, etc. Twelve are MPA managers and staff; nine are Training of Trainers graduates; all have Master's

degrees, and 13 hold Doctorate degrees on environmental sciences applied in advancing marine conservation and MPA management effectiveness.

Together, CaMPAM's continually expanding array of programs allows us to understand the region's MPA community. We have a good grasp of what managers' issues and needs are, and we can respond through different mechanisms. Additionally the link to UNEP and SPAW gives us a good understanding of governments' priorities and expectations in the region. I might be biased but I think the CaMPAM structure is pretty close to ideal.

For more information: Georgina Bustamante, CaMPAM. Email: gbustamante09@gmail.com

["The evolution of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum \(CaMPAM\): 20 years of the regional, multidimensional program for strengthening MPA practitioners"](#), Gulf and Caribbean Research (2018)

E. MPAConnect: A network of Caribbean MPA managers

MPAConnect is a learning network of Caribbean MPA managers, managed through a partnership between the [Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute \(GCFI\)](#) and the [Coral Reef Conservation Program](#) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). It is separate from CaMPAM, although there are occasional opportunities to collaborate. Started from a regional management capacity needs assessment in 2011, MPAConnect now coordinates various MPA capacity-building activities in the region, including workshops for peer-to-peer sharing, follow-up site-specific support, and regional and international networking opportunities.

MPAConnect comprises 31 MPA sites in 10 Caribbean countries and territories that were selected based on several factors, including the health of their coral habitats and their governments' commitment to relevant conservation initiatives. The member MPAs are formally nominated by their national protected area agencies to participate in the network. [Website for MPAConnect](#)

By Emma Doyle, Coordinator, MPAConnect

Challenges

At MPAConnect's regional peer-to-peer workshops, managers focus in depth on a specific element of MPA management. They learn new practices and gain confidence to apply them, and receive ready technical support from the MPAConnect network. Our main ongoing challenge as a network has been engaging other organizations to lend the financial support that is often needed to help MPA managers apply new practices for effective MPA implementation.

To help our network and potential partners understand the real needs of Caribbean MPA managers, MPAConnect applies a [self-assessment tool to analyze sites' management capacity](#). The tool helps managers to identify their capacity-building priorities from among 20 different elements of MPA management. We then share the findings about these priorities with potential partners so they can immediately apply that information to design their support for Caribbean MPAs. The most recent management capacity assessment across MPAConnect sites was conducted in 2017.

Successes

First, the management capacity assessment process has given managers the opportunity to provide candid and reliable input about their sites' needs as well as their strengths, and the latter has served to highlight credible mentors within the network. MPAConnect has come to be valued by its members for the motivation and support they receive from these mentors, their peers, and from network coordinators.

To date, we've targeted the highest-priority management needs identified in the 2011 capacity assessment: law enforcement, sustainable financing, socio-economic and biophysical monitoring, and outreach and education. Site-specific technical assistance, small project support, learning exchanges, and networking further reinforce regional sharing to help managers better address their unique local needs and enable the implementation of best practices.

The latest re-assessment underlined core priorities, such as financing and enforcement, and indicated new needs, such as capacity building for fisheries management by Caribbean

MPA managers. The re-assessment also enabled member sites to evaluate where they have made progress. For example:

- **Enforcement:** Our strategy of implementing practical enforcement training for MPA managers and field officers jointly with their local law enforcement partners is producing more active and consistent enforcement of MPA rules and regulations. Compared to the 2011 assessment, in 2017 nearly twice as many MPAs reported having active and consistent enforcement programs.
- **Financing:** Site-specific projects and creative solutions tailored to individual sites are helping managers implement long-term MPA financing mechanisms. In the 2017 capacity assessment, fewer MPAs reported having no reliable sources of financing.
- **Management planning:** In 2017 we found that there are fewer MPAs without a management plan, which is consistent with efforts by MPACONnect to ensure that all member sites are implementing an approved management plan, and we're helping managers update and re-shape plans to achieve their MPA objectives.

Lessons learned

The best way to respond to local capacity needs is to share the extensive knowledge that already exists among Caribbean MPA managers. MPACONnect's members know better than anyone the local context and realities of MPA implementation. While the network certainly benefits from technical guidance and coordination by GCFI and NOAA, MPACONnect's overall approach is to bring managers together, in some cases from beyond the Caribbean region, to share with and learn from other managers.

Keeping our finger on the pulse of members' preferred communications tools has been essential to ensuring their ongoing engagement with the network. MPACONnect is using new tools such as videochat for sharing and networking between face-to-face meetings. Through other tools like ArcGIS StoryMaps we're making the capacity assessment findings readily accessible to anyone looking to provide support for MPA implementation in the Caribbean region. We've learned that focused, sustained assistance, even with limited funding, can have a more consequential impact than larger initiatives that come and go.

For more information: Emma Doyle, MPACONnect. Email: emma.doyle@gcfi.org

F. NAMPAN: The North American Marine Protected Areas Network

NAMPAN is a network of resource agencies, MPA managers, and other relevant experts from Canada, Mexico, and the US. It originated in 1999 under the umbrella of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), a tri-national governmental organization. After working periodically through the CEC to implement projects to enhance knowledge and tools for more effective MPA management, NAMPAN is now establishing itself as an independent regional MPA network, outside of the CEC.
[Website for NAMPAN](#)

By Lauren Wenzel, US Coordinator, NAMPAN

Challenges

The biggest challenge NAMPAN has faced so far is the need to establish itself as an independent, funded network. Although NAMPAN has been around in some form for a decade, it is still in the early stages as a true regional MPA network. We began under the umbrella of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), which funds and implements projects to foster environmental cooperation across the US, Canada and Mexico. While CEC was pivotal in getting NAMPAN off the ground, we now need to develop our organizational structure and funding so we can greatly expand our support to MPA managers across North America. We're currently doing this by working through a strategic planning process, including financing options.

We've also launched the [NAMPAN website](#), so we can share information about the network.

Successes

Our biggest successes so far have been through our partnership with CEC. With CEC and the Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers – a network of aquaria and zoos – NAMPAN worked on [videos to highlight the importance of MPA networks across North America](#). We've also worked through CEC to develop [scientific guidance and practical tools](#) to help MPAs plan for and adapt to climate impacts. In addition, CEC produced [maps of blue carbon habitats](#) and conducted blue carbon research that NAMPAN has helped to promote and share. These are all practical tools that MPAs across North America can use to help inform their management and engage with the public.

Lessons learned

Some of the main lessons we've learned have been through our experience as an informal, project-based network under the CEC, and then engaging with other regional MPA networks. We've learned that a project-based structure isn't a good match for the ongoing needs of a network, and that long-term goals, planning, and funding are needed to sustain regional networks.

In addition, we've learned about the benefits of engaging on issues in person and on site, but also the practical need to sustain our efforts through strong virtual communication tools like our website. We have plans as well to build an online list of experts on specific issues who can assist MPA managers. Our goal for 2018 is to build a basic framework

for NAMPAN, and then work to reach out to a broader group of MPA managers once that's in place.

For more information: Lauren Wenzel, NAMPAN. Email: lauren.wenzel@noaa.gov

G. SMART Seas Africa Programme: A network of MPA managers in the Western Indian Ocean

The SMART Seas Africa Programme works with MPA managers and coastal communities to improve MPA outcomes in the Western Indian Ocean. Its work involves: 1) helping MPAs develop agreed-upon and peer-reviewed objectives with numeric targets; 2) developing monthly MPA-led monitoring of MPA ecosystems and helping MPAs to access external data; 3) building capacity of MPA managers; 4) providing decision-making tools; 5) providing long-term mentoring in a process of change; and 6) building a regional network of MPA practitioners.

SMART Seas is partnering formally with all national MPAs in Kenya, Tanzania, and the Seychelles. It also has a [Facebook group](#) that informally facilitates networking in MPAs across other nations of the Western Indian Ocean (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, and South Africa). The Facebook group has 405 members. [Website for Smart Seas Africa](#)

By Jennifer O'Leary, Co-Founder and Co-Director, SMART Seas Africa

Challenges

We have found three main challenges: institutional adaptive capacity, the need to train entire agencies, and long-term funding to support a sustainable process of system change within MPAs.

Adaptive capacity is a system's ability to adapt to change. Because MPAs are in a constantly changing social and environmental context, adaptive capacity is critical. It requires having adequate knowledge, flexible governance, and an ability to innovate.

To strengthen the adaptive capacity of MPAs in the region, SMART Seas Africa focuses extensively on building knowledge and the capacity to implement innovations. However, in some nations, trust and willingness to take risks – which are part of innovation – are intrinsically low. In these cases we need to engage with social scientists and anthropologists to understand the reasons behind low adaptive capacity and address these before engaging the agency in a larger process of management. We urge conservation groups working with MPAs to first evaluate the culture of communities or agencies and address adaptive capacity before training in other areas.

Another reason we have found that trainings do not always result in uptake of new approaches in MPAs is that they typically focus on a few individuals. Most trainings are single events bringing in 1-2 people from an agency. Those people are then asked to return to their agency to implement new approaches. But often the larger agency, including the trainee's supervisors, does not understand the new skills or approaches and may not be ready for change. Across the three nations with which we've worked over the past decade, we have seen that most MPA managers have been to 5-10 management training events, but the skills they've learned are often not being applied.

Thus, SMART Seas Africa now only partners with a new agency when there is an agreement that we will train the entire agency, including staff from all levels. We have found that this approach is more effective in creating new agency cultures and multiple champions who work together to integrate new ideas from our trainings to management.

Finally, the process of creating sustainable change in complex governmental institutions and coastal communities is not fast. Moving toward effective, evidence-based management as a national institution – from site level to whole-agency level – can take 10 years or more. While a long-term approach is clearly necessary, it is hard to fund it in short-term grant cycles (often 1-3 years). Thus far, we have been able to expand from one nation to three, and to visit each nation twice annually through generous support from the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association, the Pew Foundation, and SwedBio. However, our dream of expanding our formal networking to nine nations will require longer-term investments than grants can provide, and we are still developing our financial strategy.

Successes

MPAs affiliated with SMART Seas have shown dramatic improvement in staff skills, assessment of status, and effective implementation of conservation actions.

One site-level example of success is Kenya's Mombasa Marine National Park and Reserve. It has a no-take zone of 10 km² where fishing and other extractive uses are prohibited. The area is well-protected but very small. Surrounding this area is a 200-km² sustainable use zone in which fishing

is allowed but only with sustainable gears. Gears such as seine nets that rake the seafloor are prohibited by regulation. However, for years the MPA allowed non-sustainable gears to be used because to actively prohibit them would entail a major social and political battle. In addition, MPA staff did not think the gears would cause extensive ecosystem damage.

When the MPA joined SMART Seas Africa, it began instituting our monthly ecosystem monitoring program. Through that monitoring, the MPA staff discovered that seagrass density in the sustainable use zone was less than half of that found in the no-take zone and, in fact, lower than in any other MPA in Kenya. On seeing this, the MPA embarked on a long process of working with communities to remove the illegal gears. After months of preparation, illegal gears were removed in March 2016. Since then, seagrass has recovered to the level of that in the no-take zone, and fishers using sustainable gears report increased catch.

Another success involves something as simple as swimming. Prior to the launch of SMART Seas Africa, only 15-20% of MPA managers in Kenya could swim. This meant they could not see the ecosystems they were managing. Through peer-to-peer training facilitated by SMART Seas, 90% of Kenya MPA managers now swim. Seeing the reef and seagrass ecosystems has instilled a new conservation ethic among practitioners who previously saw themselves more as soldiers.


SMART Seas Africa has also coordinated with MPAs across Kenya and Tanzania on beach cleanup events. Through these efforts, over 1.5 million kilograms of plastic trash have been removed from beaches over the past four years.

Lessons learned

First, prior to launching a formal capacity-building program on specific management skills, social dynamics within organizations should be the original focus. Some of the most dramatic changes we have seen through a long-term mentoring process in Kenya (our longest-running program) have been increases in trust, empowerment, and teamwork. These building blocks help ensure that gained skills get used and transferred through peer-to-peer networks.

We have also found that linkages between MPAs and scientists remain weak in this region. Scientific data rarely gets passed to MPA managers, and when it does, it comes in the form of scientific papers that do not target management needs. We have worked to resolve some of the challenges associated with this by having managers ask scientists for data specific to indicators for clearly defined objectives.

We have also instituted data request forms with a built-in Memorandum of Understanding indicating that data shared by scientists with the MPA will be used simply to assess MPA status, and will not be published or shared by the MPA. However, we find that MPA managers still do not often reach out to scientists with requests; and when they do, the scientists still do not share data. As the scientific community moves more and more to open access data, it would be useful if managers could be involved in conversations on what formats and types of data are the most useful.

We have also found that as MPAs gain access to data, there are increasing needs for adequate data management and analytic support. Some MPAs in our program have lost years of data through poor backup systems and computer crashes. Thus a key need is for a cloud-based data management framework that is flexible enough to be adapted to individual monitoring programs, but that can also provide some formatting and consistency in the way data is entered and stored. Such a system could also greatly help managers view trends through quick, click-button graphing applications. (In our network, where managers in some nations have only a high school level education, even basic averaging and graphing is challenging and poses a major barrier to data use in management.) Having a data visualization system where indicator targets are programmed to appear on graphs, and managers can view data trends – above or below targets, as well as toward or away from them – and variability in data would greatly enhance system understanding. 

For more information: Jennifer O'Leary, SMART Seas Africa and California Sea Grant. Email: jkoleary@calpoly.edu

To comment on this article

<https://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/21993>

Perspective: Key lessons learned on public participation from the process to rezone the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

By Jon Day

Editor's note:

Jon Day served as one of the directors of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) for 16 years, from 1998-2014. Initially he was responsible for conservation, biodiversity, and world heritage. In that position he commenced the Representative Areas Program, a multi-year rezoning process for the 344,400-km² Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Jon is now at James Cook University.

The paper that he excerpts here, from *Coastal Management* journal, is also synopsized in [a one-pager produced by the MarXiv research repository](#) for marine conservation science and marine climate science. MarXiv is a service of [OCTO](#), which also produces MPA News.

The Representative Areas Program (RAP), which rezoned the entire Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in a single planning initiative, was at the time the most comprehensive process of community involvement and participatory planning for any environmental issue in Australia. The outcome was that one-third of the Marine Park was declared as highly protected no-take zones in 2004, with the remainder of the park also zoned to provide various levels of protection.

Many of the lessons learned from RAP remain relevant today. The following 25 lessons are excerpted from a paper published in *Coastal Management* journal in December 2017, "Effective public participation is fundamental for marine conservation – lessons from a large scale MPA". The paper is [available for free here](#). More detail on each of the lessons is in the paper.

A. Lessons to be considered at the commencement of a planning program

1. Ensure all stakeholders know the reason(s) why the planning process is happening, why they should be involved, and how they can get involved.
2. Assume everyone does not have the same knowledge/information base. Keep the messages simple (as far as possible).
3. Ensure anyone who is affected or interested understands the planning process, when they should get involved, and any constraints on the process.
4. Ensure your stakeholders understand the key issues and key terms that will be used during planning. The process may need non-technical language and/or graphics to explain complex issues.
5. Clarify the clear objective of the planning (e.g., in RAP's case, it wasn't about managing fishing; it was about protecting biodiversity). And don't promise what you may not be able to deliver.
6. The media can be a great and influential ally – or a fierce and critical opponent. Therefore a trained media spokesperson on your team who knows the topic and how to present well is an advantage.
7. Most planning processes require political approval at some stage. Start early. Don't wait until the end of the planning process to get political buy-in. Note also that the timelines favored by politicians are often incompatible with comprehensive planning processes.

B. Lessons that apply throughout a planning program

8. Public engagement (both formal and informal) needs to happen throughout the entire planning program, not just during the formal/statutory times.
9. Be prepared to refute contrary claims and misinformation. Address these as soon as possible, as leaving such claims can exacerbate the problem.
10. As far as possible, avoid public meetings. Recognize the 'noisy minority' usually does not represent the silent majority (see also #11).
11. Don't ignore those stakeholders who choose to remain silent. Consider ways to understand and collate their views.
12. Recognize you may be dealing with issues that may impact someone's livelihood. This is a critical requirement: a good understanding of relevant industries is reassuring for those who think their livelihoods might be affected.
13. Reiterate to all stakeholders that, in terms of the submissions, it is not a numbers game.
14. Expect there will be conflicts sometime during your planning process.
15. Recognize that scientific knowledge is often provisional, uncertain, and incomplete.
16. Utilize a mix of traditional and local knowledge, formal scientific knowledge, and expert knowledge.
17. Provide feedback, and show the public that their comments do make a difference. It is also important to be able to show these changes arising from comments to decision-makers.
18. There is rarely a 'win-win' in complex planning tasks. Compromises are often the only possible outcome.
19. No successful public engagement campaign can be conducted solely from within your office.
20. 'Expect the unexpected,' and ensure there is sufficient flexibility in your planning process to cope.

C. Lessons to be applied if/when required in a planning program


21. A two-way flow of knowledge is essential, so create a conducive environment for effective engagement (e.g., community information sessions).

22. Think carefully what you ask in any submission form. Open questions are very hard to code and quantify.

23. It is easier to ask specific questions about a map with areas or blocks that are pre-marked and numbered than to have to code individually submitted maps.

24. Assuming you do engage effectively, be prepared for more submissions than you expected.

25. Recognize many stakeholders are wary of 'black-box' models they do not understand, like analytical decision sup-

port tools. Nor is it possible to get all the necessary planning variables into such models. 

For more information:

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<https://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/21994>

Seychelles, Brazil, and Chile announce significant new MPA designations

February and March were busy months for announcing large new MPAs. Seychelles, Brazil, and Chile all reported significant new sites.

Seychelles: Two new MPAs as part of debt-for-conservation swap

On 21 February, Seychelles announced [two new MPAs covering a total of 210,000 km²](#) as part of a debt-for-conservation deal designed by The Nature Conservancy. The debt swap [converts a portion of Seychelles' debt](#) owed to other countries (UK, Italy, Belgium, and France) into more manageable debt held by a local entity. As part of the agreement, Seychelles has committed to increasing its marine protection from 0.04% of its EEZ currently to 30% by 2022. With the two new MPAs, Seychelles will be over halfway (16%) to that goal.

Both MPAs are no-take. They include a 74,400-km² MPA around the remote islands of the Aldabra Group: the archipelago includes the world's second-largest raised coral atoll — a UNESCO World Heritage Site — that is home to the endangered dugong and over 100,000 rare giant tortoises. The second MPA covers 136,000 km² of deep waters stretching between the Amirantes Group and Fortune Bank, a swath of Seychelles' central ocean that includes areas important to both the tourism and fishing industries. Here, some human activities — research and closely regulated tourism — will be allowed but under strict new conditions.

For more information:

The Nature Conservancy [press release](#)

The Guardian: [Seychelles creates huge marine parks in world-first finance scheme](#)

Oceans Deeply: [Debt-for-Ocean a New Tool for Marine Conservation](#)

Brazil announces MPAs covering 900,000 km² of area

In March, the Brazilian government announced the designation of new offshore MPAs covering a combined area of 900,000 km². As a result, the country's MPA coverage is jumping from 1.5% to over 20% of its EEZ.

One of the MPAs will be around the São Pedro and São Paulo archipelagos, 900 km off the northeast coast of Brazil. It will consist of two parts. One (407,052 km² in area) will allow some sustainable fishing under a plan that is in development. The other part (42,498 km²) will be no-take.

The second MPA will cover waters around the islands of Trindade and Martin Vaz, 1000 km east of the Brazilian mainland. Similarly, this MPA will have two parts: one (402,377 km² in area) will allow sustainable fishing, and the other (69,155 km²) will be no-take.

Both archipelagos are biodiversity hotspots. Their surrounding waters harbor many endemic, vulnerable, and endangered species, including the critically endangered Atlantic goliath grouper and the endangered scalloped hammerhead shark.

For more information:

UN Environment [press release](#)

Mongabay: [Brazil creates four massive marine protected areas](#)

Thomson Reuters Foundation: [Brazil protecting vast sea areas in bid to safeguard biodiversity](#)


Three new MPAs become official for Chile, including Rapa Nui

In February, Chile's President Michelle Bachelet signed into law three MPAs that were [first announced](#) at last September's Fourth International Marine Protected Areas Congress, held in Chile. The sites of the new MPAs are around Rapa Nui, also known as Easter Island; around Juan Fernández Archipelago;

and around the remote Diego Ramírez Islands, Chile's southernmost lands. (When MPA News reported on this last September, the Diego Ramírez MPA was also going to include Cape Horn [Cabo de Hornos] but opposition from commercial fishing interests led to that plan [being scaled back](#).)

Together the three MPAs total over 1 million km². The largest is Rapa Nui at 720,000 km², nearly equal to the land area of Chile. The MPA bans industrial fishing and mining, but traditional artisanal fishing by the Rapa Nui community will continue. The marine park's creation was enabled by a 73% vote in favor from the Rapa Nui community in a referendum, following five years of consultations.

Tempering the news was a study in February that found that most of the 20-plus MPAs in Chile – which now cover

over 40% of the country's waters – lack management plans, and that no Chilean MPAs are effectively managed, as that term is defined by IUCN. The study "Protected areas in Chile: are we managing them?" led by Ignacio Petit of Chile's Catholic University of the North, is [available here](#). 

For more information:

Smithsonian Magazine: [Chile Announces Protections for Massive Swath of Ocean With Three New Marine Parks](#)

The Santiago Times: [Chile creates new marine protected areas](#)

To comment on this article

<https://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/21995>

Australian government moves to reopen large areas of national marine park system to fishing

In a move that has been in the making for the past five years, the Australian government formally announced its plans in March 2018 to scale back protections for the nation's system of marine parks. Overall, 80% of Australia's marine park waters will now be open to commercial fishing, up from 63% under the system's original design. And 97% of Commonwealth waters within 100 km of the coast will be open to recreational fishing.

The new management plans are slated to take effect 1 July 2018. A media release on the plans [is here](#). The new plans [are here](#).

Most impacted is the 1 million-km² Coral Sea Marine Park. In the original design, half of it was to be no-take. Now just 24% of it will be.

A five-year review


The system of parks – planned and designated by the previously ruling Labor Government [in 2012](#), but for which management plans were not implemented before Labor lost power in 2013 – has been under review since then by a series of succeeding (Liberal-National) Coalition governments.

That review process reassessed the science and zoning of the parks, and involved two government-appointed review panels that [released their findings in 2016](#). This was followed by a public consultation period that ended [later that year](#). In the meantime, the parks' boundaries remained but their management plans were in limbo.

The current ruling Coalition government argues the new management plans will still protect important marine habitat while [reducing financial impacts](#) on fishers. But the new plans go even further than the review panels' recommendations: [the panels suggested](#), for example, that no-take

coverage in the Coral Sea be reduced less significantly – to 41% as opposed to the new plans' 24%.

The Labor party, which considered the 2012 marine park system the most comprehensive network of its kind worldwide, has called the new plans "[the largest removal of marine area from conservation, ever](#)." Labor and Green party politicians attempted to disallow the new plans with legal maneuvering [but were voted down](#). They have suggested they will [keep up the fight](#) to disallow the plans in coming weeks. Conservation groups and scientists have strongly criticized the new plans.

MPA News will examine the impacts of this decision in the coming months. 

For more media coverage:

Sydney Morning Herald: [Government winds back marine protections to support fishing industry](#)

Sydney Morning Herald: [Scientists say parks plan guts protections around Ningaloo and beyond](#)

Mongabay: [Australia opens vast swaths of famed marine parks to fishing](#)

The Guardian: [The 'best' outcome? How the marine park plans divided scientists and conservationists](#)

The Ecologist: [Will opening Australia's marine reserves to fishing wreck its ecosystem?](#)

Fishing World: [Commonwealth Marine Park Management Plans – the right balance](#)

To comment on this article

<https://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/21995>


Applying studies of larval connectivity to support MPA planning and governance

By Rene A. Abesamis, Silliman University - Angelo King
Center for Research and Environmental Management

Knowing how far the larvae of fish species disperse can be invaluable to designing effective networks of MPAs. But in a developing nation like the Philippines, where over 1000 community-managed MPAs have been established over the past two decades, such science is often not available, particularly at the community level. So planners have often made educated guesses when planning their MPAs, based on traditional knowledge and what science could be accessed.

To help fill this knowledge gap, researchers from Silliman University studied reef fish larval dispersal along a 90-km stretch of coastal waters in the province of Negros Oriental, Philippines. The study area included multiple MPAs. The research team partnered with four international academic organizations in the fields of genetics, larval connectivity, physical oceanography, and MPA ecological effects. In addition, the team partnered with local fishermen on the field work, deploying barrier nets to catch fish for genetic parentage analysis.

The results showed, for the first time, that many of the existing MPAs were indeed connected to each other by larval dispersal, forming a network that could enhance recovery of populations within MPAs. The results also indicated that some MPAs were likely providing larvae to fishing grounds, too, giving a boost to local fisheries.

The findings were exciting not only to the scientists but also to local MPA managers and stakeholders who had been active in coastal resource management for decades. Stakeholders felt that the results were a vindication of their efforts and sacrifices over many years to manage their MPAs. This case is an example of how applying genetic analysis to MPAs can improve understanding of larval dispersal, strengthen stakeholder confidence in existing MPA locations, and support planning of future MPAs. 

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

To comment on this article

<https://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/21997>

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 published on the Marine and Coastal Solutions portal of the [PANORAMA – Solutions for a Healthy Planet web platform](#). MPA News is drawing from these cases.

MPA Science Corner: Beneficial fish traits in MPAs – Representation and connectivity – Studying very large MPAs

These recent articles or preprints on MPA-related science and policy are all free to access.

• **Article:** [“Coral reef fishes exhibit beneficial phenotypes inside marine protected areas”](#), Fidler et al., PLOS ONE 13, e0193426 (2018)

Finding: Fishing effort is often size-selective, preferentially removing the largest individuals from harvested stocks. This preference can induce shifts toward smaller and earlier-maturing individuals in target stocks. In this study, a comparison of commercially targeted fish stocks on coral reefs in the Philippines indicated that fishes inside MPAs exhibited more advantageous life-history traits than the same species on fished reefs. Inside the MPAs, the fish were larger at maturity, a trait known to confer higher fecundity (i.e., larger fish produce more, larger, and more viable larvae). This suggests that MPAs may provide protection against the impacts of size-selective harvest on life-history traits in coral reef fishes.

• **Article:** [“Biologically representative and well-connected marine reserves enhance biodiversity persistence in conservation planning”](#), Magris et al., Conservation Letters e12439 (2018)

Finding: Much of the current conservation planning literature applies a single set of goals at a time – either connectivity, or demographic persistence, or representation of species – but not all three simultaneously. This study applies all three goals in analyzing potential marine reserve plans for Mediterranean fish species. The findings: 1) combining species' geographic distributions and connectivity modelling provides the best strategy for enhanced biodiversity persistence; 2) including connectivity in planning is fundamental for the persistence of small-ranged species; and 3) inclusion of connectivity does not necessarily increase the total area under protection but provides strong benefits for species over the long term. The study shows the relationships between objectives for representation


and connectivity and the resulting demographic effects on species – a link that can help improve the biological effectiveness of future conservation practices and policies.

• **Article:** [“On the ecological relevance of landscape mapping and its application in the spatial planning of very large marine protected areas”](#), Hogg et al., *Science of The Total Environment* 626, 384-398 (2018)

Finding: There is a disconnect between the global trend in designation of very large MPAs (>100,000 km²) and the data available to underpin their planning and zonation. Biological sampling, especially in isolated locations, is logistically difficult, time-consuming, and prohibitively expensive to conduct over large spatial scales. This study analyzes the use of landscape mapping – mapping the physical attributes of marine environments – as a cost-effective way to predict biological and community distributions

across large areas, using the UK’s 1 million-km² MPA in South Georgia and the Sandwich Islands as the test area.

For a free, weekly list of the latest publications on ocean planning and management, including MPAs, [subscribe to the OpenChannels Literature Update here](#).

In addition, [OCTO](#) – the organization that produces MPA News and OpenChannels – also runs [MarXiv](#), the free research repository for marine conservation science and marine climate change science. Each week the MarXiv team produces [brief, one-page summaries of selected papers](#) in its repository for an audience of managers and policymakers. Share your research in MarXiv now and we may summarize your paper, too. 

To comment on this article

<https://mpanews.openchannels.org/node/21998>

Notes & News

Save the date for IMPAC5 in Vancouver

Organizers of the next International Marine Protected Areas Congress – IMPAC5, to be hosted in Vancouver, Canada – have announced the dates. The conference will be held in 2021 from 27 September - 1 October.

MPA in Dominican Republic to be managed under public-private partnership

A public-private partnership agreement was signed in February 2018 for co-management of the second-largest protected area in the Dominican Republic, the 8000-km² Arrecifes del Sureste (Southeast Reefs) Sanctuary. The co-management body, a non-profit company, will receive major financing for its initial capital expenditures from international impact investors. In time, the company is expected to be financially sustainable and generate its own income from user fees and innovative tourism models.

The company is comprised of local and international NGOs, private sector organizations, and the NGO [Blue finance](#), among others. The company will be responsible for hiring and overseeing staff to carry out the site’s management for a period of 10 years. The company itself will be guided by a multidisciplinary Advisory Council of public and private citizens. A press release on the agreement [is here](#).

A call for half of South Georgia / South Sandwich Islands MPA to be changed to no-take

The 1.07-million-km² MPA around the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI), designated by the UK [in 2012](#), is under review by the local SGSSI government on whether existing conservation measures offer adequate protection. (SGSSI is a British Overseas Territory in the southern Atlantic Ocean.) Although the MPA’s management measures were strengthened [in 2013](#) with various restrictions on fishing gear types, just 2% of the total MPA is currently no-take. The remaining 98% is classified as sustainable use, allowing varying levels of commercial fishing.

A coalition of NGOs – the Pew Charitable Trusts, Blue Marine Foundation, Greenpeace, Marine Conservation Society, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and Zoological Society of London – is calling for half of the MPA to be changed to no-take. The [proposal is here](#), and a [video is here](#).

Global MPA survey seeks participants

A global survey is studying the management of non-native species in MPAs, as well as global perceptions about non-native species in MPAs. The survey is by researchers at Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the University of Victoria (Canada). The researchers seek participants who have two or more years of experience working in, or conducting research on, MPAs. The anonymous survey is designed to take 5-10 minutes to complete, and is available in English, Spanish, and French. To participate or learn more, [click here](#). Knowledge of non-native species, or their presence in an MPA, is not required.

Request for examples of successful co-management of MPAs with Indigenous groups

West Coast Environmental Law in Vancouver, Canada, is looking for successful models of shared governance of MPAs between national (or state) level governments and Indigenous governments or communities. In particular, the organization is looking for examples where Indigenous governments or communities have a lead role in MPA decision-making authority or where decision-making authority is shared equally. If you have examples to share, please contact Linda Nowlan at lnowlan@wcel.org.

US Coast Guard journal features several articles on MPAs

The Spring 2018 edition of Proceedings, the US Coast Guard journal of safety and security at sea, features 21 articles on marine protected areas. They cover aspects such as paper parks, MPA networks, MPAs in a changing Arctic, detecting illegal activity inside MPAs, and much more. The issue [is available for free here](#).

New 30-minute film examines how MPAs can help restore ecosystems

Economist Films, the documentary unit of The Economist magazine, has made a 30-minute film on MPAs. The film *Troubled Water* explores how MPAs can be used to help marine ecosystems recover from overexploitation and to provide an insurance policy for biodiversity. It also examines the different types of management that MPAs can apply, based on site goals. The film features footage from MPAs in Mexico and Madagascar, among other places. [It is available here](#).


Competition to design a postage stamp for Chagos

The British Indian Ocean Territory Administration, which oversees the Chagos archipelago, is running a competition for children to design an official postage stamp for the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). The design theme is "Why are coral reefs and oceans important?" Four winners will be chosen. The closing date for design entries is 11 May 2018. The 640,000-km² Chagos MPA, in which commercial fishing is off-limits, is inside BIOT waters. Information and entry forms for the contest [are available here](#).

Workshop on Important Marine Mammal Areas identifies 46 new candidate sites

In March 2018, the IUCN [Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force](#) conducted its third Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) workshop – this one in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. The workshop resulted in 46 sites identified as candidates for IMMA status in the North East Indian Ocean and South East Asian Seas Region. The 46 candidate IMMAs will now be considered by an independent review panel for official IMMA status.

[IMMAs](#) are defined as discrete areas of habitat, important to marine mammal species, that have the potential to be delineated and managed for conservation. They are intended to spotlight areas that may lead to MPAs or other conservation outcomes, like ship or noise directives or marine spatial planning.

Upcoming IMMA workshops will be held in the Western Indian Ocean and Arabian Seas (2019), the waters of Australia-New Zealand and South East Indian Ocean (2020), and the South East Tropical and Temperate Pacific Ocean (2021). For more information and contact details for the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force and the IMMA work, [click here](#). 

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

Five years ago: [March-April 2013](#)

- Advances in MPA enforcement and compliance: Practitioners describe cutting-edge techniques and tools
- New software tools to encourage compliance, manage enforcement

Ten years ago: [March 2008](#)

- Kiribati Expands Phoenix Islands Protected Area, Creating World's Largest MPA
- MPA Global Database Releases Figures: MPAs Cover Just 0.65% of Oceans

Fifteen years ago: [March 2003](#)

- Building Trust, Empowering Resource Users: Efforts Underway to Educate, Encourage Participation of Fishermen in MPA Processes
- MPA Perspective: Integrity in Management

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

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