ENABLING EFFECTIVE AND EQUITABLE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS:

guidance on combining governance approaches

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1 INTRODUCTION

About this guide

This guide provides evidence-based advice on how to use the governance of marine protected areas to promote conservation and share sustainable marine resources. It has been developed using marine protected area (MPA) case studies from around the world.

People who can benefit from this guide include planners, decision makers and practitioners engaged in marine protected area development and implementation, or those who have a general interest in protected area governance. It provides a governance framework and highlights key issues to address specific governance situations. It can be used as part of an adaptive management cycle.

The case studies (page 12-13) highlight different governance approaches, challenges faced, and solutions implemented to achieve conservation objectives. Some marine protected areas are more effective than others, but they all highlight areas for improvement and indications of what could be implemented to enhance their effectiveness.

All MPAs display unique characteristics and face their own complex combination of challenges. There is no "one size fits all" solution. This guidance recognizes this and provides a flexible approach to governance that can be relevant to any MPA and used on an ongoing basis. The case studies cover a variety of MPA types, including no-take, multiple-use, small, large, remote, private, government-led, decentralized and community-led MPAs.

The global and varied examples used to support this guidance have demonstrated and highlighted the differences in the various roles that are taken within the governance and management of MPAs, between men and women as well as between different classes and ethnicities. These differences are identified across a variety of regions and cultural contexts, where there is not always equal opportunity to voice concerns and influence decisions and the benefits from protected areas are not equally distributed, frequently resulting in marginalization (Box 1). Global in scope, it recognizes the essential aspects of gender, class and ethnicity-related equality, as fundamental factors to achieving sustainable development goals and delivering effective and equitable governance of MPAs. This should be taken into account for all MPA governance projects to provide equality across all gender class and ethnicity-related characteristics.

Box 1

Addressing marginalization

The marginalization of particular groups of people based on gender, ethnicity, class, etc. is a recurring issue in environmental governance that must be addressed if the outcomes are to be equitable as well as effective. The importance of "considering gender-related issues within protected areas and the delivery of SDGs" is emphasized in protected area governance (Box 7.2, UNEP-WCMC and IUCN 2016). Studies of participatory development emphasize the importance of recognizing the potential for 'tyrannies of localism' (Cooke and Kothari 2001, Lane and Corbett 2005), i.e. governance processes being captured by local elites. This leads to less advantaged people being marginalized from access to decision-making processes, including losing many benefits and bearing many costs that may arise, potentially reinforcing local inequities (Jones 2014). The analyses of the MPA governance case studies in this guidance recognize the importance of addressing marginalization through ensuring that certain sectors of society, particularly women, ethnic minorities and disadvantaged classes, are not unfairly excluded from decision-making processes and do not bear an unfair share of any costs related to conservation restrictions. It is not feasible, however, to discuss the specifics of such marginalization issues and initiatives or to address them all in this global overview of case studies and summary guidance, though the focus on achieving MPA governance outcomes that are equitable as well as effective implicitly recognizes this.

Why governance is important

Most of the impacts on our oceans result from human behaviour and understanding governance approaches can help steer people's behaviour to provide for more effective achievement of a protected area's goals.

A Convention on Biological Diversity target and two United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Box 2) tasked countries with implementing effective and equitable protection of marine and coastal areas. Significant progress has been made on achieving the coverage target of 10 per cent by 2020, with 15,292 MPAs covering 5.7 per cent of the global ocean area or 14.4 per cent of coastal and marine areas under national jurisdiction, as of July 2017 (UNEP 2017, Data source: UN Environment – World Conservation Monitoring Centre), designated in response. However, there is still insufficient consideration and action on effective governance, which continues to undermine the overall ability to achieve conservation goals.

This guide was developed to address the limited practical guidance on how to effectively approach marine protected area governance, and to tackle the difficulty in translating and implementing decisions made at an international level to a local context.

"Well-governed and effectively managed protected areas are a proven method for safeguarding both habitats and populations of species and for delivering important ecosystem services"

Convention on Biological Diversity

How to use this guide

This document provides guidance for implementing an effective governance strategy. It also provides a practical framework to support the analysis of the governance of existing MPAs and for establishing governance approaches for the first time. The individual sections can be used as required during MPA design and implementation.

A Marine Protected Area Governance framework (www.mpag.info) is provided as a key element of the guidance and provides a flexible approach to support analysis of the governance of an MPA. Such governance analysis can provide insight into effectiveness and indicate areas that need strengthening. The case studies provide evidence of how this framework has been applied in various locations around the world.

Summary descriptions of the 34 case studies form a Compendium of governance analyses to support this guidance, and provide further insight and understanding: https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/marine-protected-area-governance. Each case study provides a brief context of the MPA, the challenges it faces and a clear view of what has been implemented and what is needed, to strengthen the governance and address the challenges for effective achievement of conservation objectives and sustainable use.

Box 2

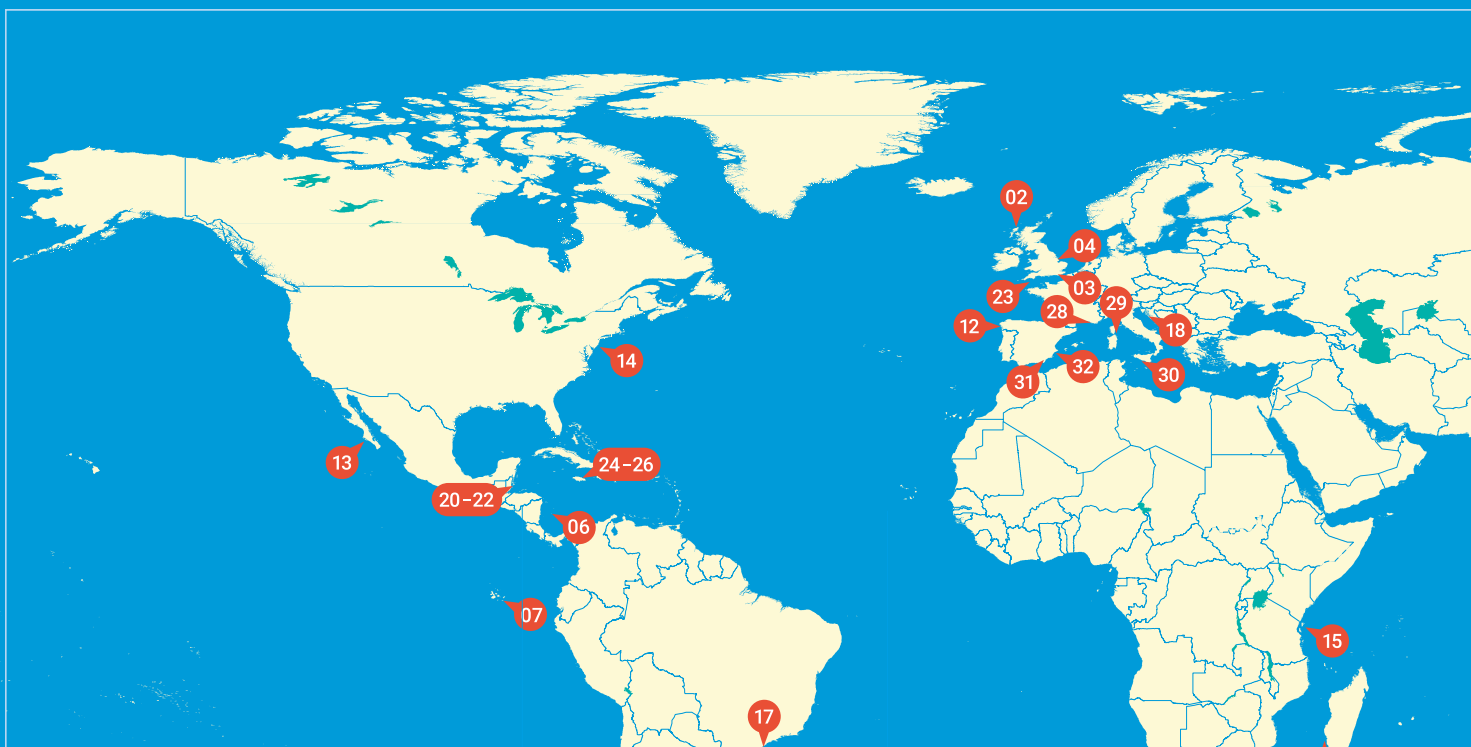**UN Sustainable Development Goals 14.2 & 14.5**

By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.

By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11

By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.

See **Appendix 1** (p.40) for case study summaries and **Case Study Compendium** for full details:
https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/marine-protected-area-governance