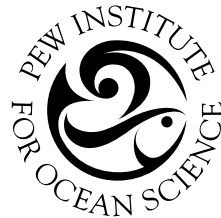


IN SUPPORT OF NO-TAKE ZONES
AND
OTHER MARINE PROTECTED AREAS:
A POLICY STATEMENT BY
THE PEW FELLOWS IN MARINE CONSERVATION

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WE URGE THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD to fulfill their commitment to the future of the oceans as agreed at the World Summit for Sustainable Development. At this meeting, 192 countries called for “the establishment of networks of representative Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in all major marine habitats and climatic regions throughout the world’s oceans by 2012”. We agree that a system of MPAs, incorporating partially and fully protected areas, is essential for long-term survival of marine life and resources. In this document, we offer policy guidelines to achieve this global objective.

We use the term MPA to refer to a place in the sea where human activities are regulated. MPAs embrace a broad array of zones, from areas where most forms of extraction and activity are permitted under precautionary management, to areas where all extraction is banned (no-take).

MPAs are among the most powerful and reliable tools available for marine conservation, whether along the coast or in the open ocean. They help maintain populations and protect habitats, while revealing (through comparisons) how areas outside their borders are changing. MPAs serve as elements of a larger, integrated strategy of ocean management that includes precautionary approaches to fisheries exploitation, pollution control, and negotiations among multiple users.

Many forms of zoning will make significant contributions, but no-take MPAs are essential components of any marine conservation strategy.

By protecting all parts of the ecosystem, they allow us to evaluate our impact elsewhere.

MPAs are most effective when linked into networks, which are sets of individual MPAs connected by movement of marine life across space and time. A network should enable populations of marine animals and plants to persist in the face of diverse threats. Networks are valuable in all marine habitats, including seagrasses, mangroves, coral reefs, estuaries, sea mounts, abyssal plains and open oceans.

Generating MPAs and melding them into functioning networks requires regional, national and local engagement. By combining MPAs that vary in size, spacing and level of protection, communities can establish MPA networks that meet their own conservation needs. We recommend the following sixteen priority actions to achieve the MPA goal set at the Johannesburg meeting in 2002.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SUPPORT LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF MPAS

- 1) Assess the effects of MPAs, then use the findings to build support and agreement for their creation.
- 2) Ensure that all interested or affected parties are involved in the MPA process.
- 3) Develop a policy and legislative framework for local communities to engage in the establishment and management of MPAs, especially coastal MPAs.

SUPPORT LOCAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT OF MPAS

- 4) Provide resources for local communities to be involved in designing, implementing, monitoring, promoting, and ensuring compliance with MPAs.
- 5) Set performance objectives and indicators for MPAs, then ensure that they are effectively managed and enforced to realize these goals.
- 6) Monitor and report regularly the ecological, social and economic effects of MPAs against these performance indicators.
- 7) Ensure that a high proportion of the benefits of coastal MPAs flow to local communities.

LINK MPAS INTO NETWORKS

- 8) Set performance objectives for national and regional networks of representative MPAs to meet the combined needs of marine populations, fisheries, and ecosystem stabilization.
- 9) Formulate a comprehensive plan for representative networks of MPAs (including no-take MPAs) that meet stated objectives by 2012.

10) Place no less than 10% and as much as 50% of each ecosystem in no-take zones, according to identified needs and management options in a particular ecosystem.

11) Formally declare and legally protect as no-take MPAs all areas incidentally closed to fishing or habitat damage (such as coasts near military bases, national borders, and prisons).

EVALUATE NETWORKS OF MPAS

12) Work with interested parties and other levels of regional government to identify and fill gaps in networks of MPAs.

13) Assess the effectiveness of networks of MPAs for populations, fisheries and long-term ecosystem objectives. Adjust the number, placement, size or management of MPAs as necessary.

14) Provide public and regular evaluations of progress towards establishing national or regional networks of MPAs, and of their effectiveness.

PARTICIPATE IN GLOBAL ACTION

15) While developing and sustaining MPA networks, ensure that other appropriate and precautionary tools are also employed to restore marine populations and fisheries, in all waters.

16) Cooperate with global efforts to implement effective and enduring networks of MPAs that maintain populations and protect marine habitats, within and beyond national control.

