A Conservation Gap Analysis
for
the National System of MPAs

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MPA Federal Advisory Committee
November 19, 2008
Executive Order 13158 directs NOAA and DOI to create a US national system of MPAs that:

- Comprehensive -> multiple goals + mgm approaches
- Science-based
- Stakeholder-informed
- Created and managed with transparency to all
- Includes existing MPAs meeting NS criteria
- Will include new or enhanced MPAs created by action agencies to meet specific conservation needs
Long-Term Development Process for the US National System of MPAs

Gap Analysis Process to Strengthen and Expand the National System of MPAs

Step 1: Establish the Initial National System of MPAs

Step 2: Identify Ecologically Important Places

Step 3: Identify which of these places are currently protected

Step 4: Identify the Gaps in Protection

Step 5: MPA Agencies Fill Gaps in Protection
Step 1: Establish the Initial National System of MPAs

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Gap Analysis Process to Strengthen and Expand the National System of MPAs

Inputs

MPA Inventory of ~1,700 Sites

Identify existing MPAs that meet National System criteria

Nomination of existing MPA Sites
Step 1: Establish the Initial National System of MPAs

Step 2: Identify Ecologically Important Places

Maps and analyses of region's ecologically important places and NS PCOs

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Spatial data on priority conservation objectives

Gap Analysis Process to Strengthen and Expand the National System of MPAs
Priority Conservation Objectives
- ex. Spawning Areas -

Illustrative example
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PCO Areas In and Outside of Existing MPAs

[Map showing spawning areas inside and outside of existing MPAs in the California waters.]

- Spawning Areas Inside of Existing MPAs (green)
- Spawning Areas Outside of Existing MPAs (orange)
- Existing MPAs (white)
- State waters boundary (red dashed line)

Locations include Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Diego.
Step 4: Identify the Gaps in Protection

Where are the actual gaps in existing spatial protection? Consider:
- Ocean uses, impacts and threats
- Governance data
- De Facto MPAs
- Other spatial management

Maps & Analyses of comprehensive gaps and conservation priorities
Potential Applications in Regional MPA Planning Processes

[Map showing areas designated for spawning, including existing and potential new MPAs, with indications of boundary and state waters]
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Strengthen existing MPAs and establish new MPAs where needed

Analytical products for MPA agencies to develop new, or strengthen existing, MPAs to fill identified gaps

Gap Analysis Process to Strengthen and Expand the National System of MPAs
Examples of Public Engagement

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Conduct Public Review and Comment Process on Nominations

• Public outreach process
  • Information available online
  • Technical input from diverse experts, FAC + stakeholders

• Public input as required by action agency processes
  • FAC + public input on NS inclusion of new sites
Gap Analysis Activities for FY09

- ID key partners, resources and data sources for initial West Coast effort
- Convene expert workshop to design national gap analysis process
- Plan initial data and mapping workshop(s) for FY10