

# TNC's Approach

The Nature Conservancy's leadership in marine spatial planning (MSP) builds upon the growing political and social momentum that began in 2006 with the first MSP workshop hosted by IOC-UNESCO. With the goal towards integrated ocean management (IOM) and improving management of the oceans from the high tide line to the high seas, MSP is an effective approach to engage communities, stakeholders and governments to expand marine protections, meet conservation goals, and improve sustainability of economic and non-commercial activities.

Since about 2007, TNC has been at the forefront of marine spatial planning in the NGO community in terms of spatial data catalogues, spatial analyses using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and conservation planning tools, and process facilitation. TNC has contributed to the global evolution of MSP by being an active participant and practitioner on-the-ground in more than 34 geographies to improve ocean management over 7,000,000 square kilometres.

We work with governments and stakeholders to facilitate or support multi-objective marine plans and improve ocean management for existing and future uses. TNC facilitates complex, multi-year MSP processes at both small and large scales, bringing new knowledge of ocean benefits to resource management including ecosystem goods and services through Mapping Ocean Wealth. Most recently, TNC has developed innovative financial mechanisms to reduce national debts in developing countries in exchange for conservation and climate change goals – debt swaps for conservation and climate change adaptation.

This website contains resources and information related to the development of marine spatial plans including best practices guidebooks and a range of new technologies, tools and strategies. It also provides a summary of past and current TNC projects related to marine spatial planning, ranging from support for Marxan analyses and zoning designs to facilitating national spatial planning efforts.

As a leader in the science and practice of MSP, TNC brings innovative decision-support tools, financial expertise, and global best practices to support the development of marine spatial plans that benefit people and nature.

Visit [Projects](#) to view our current portfolio of work for examples of how these approaches are being implemented.