MarineMap Approach

Photo © MarineMap

Enabling Users to Develop Solutions

MarineMap enables users to explore data, weigh tradeoffs among conservation and fisheries objectives, and develop their own solutions. They can share their proposed solutions with other stakeholders and submit their proposal for consideration by government decision-makers. The MLPA Initiative has found this approach to be very successful in building stakeholder support, compared to previous approaches that presented them with predefined solutions.
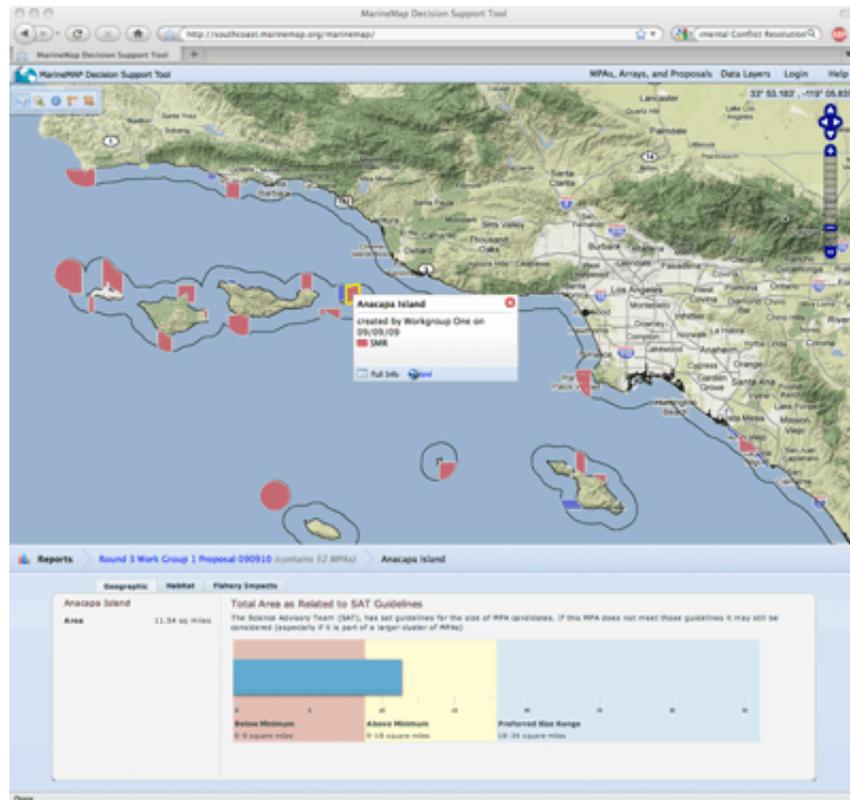
Easy-to-Use, Transferable Technology

MarineMap was designed to be readily accessible and usable by a wide range of people including government agency staff, elected and appointed officials, academic scientists, maritime industry representatives, community groups, and individual citizens. MarineMap is available on the Web and operates in a standard Web browser. It is very easy to begin using with no technical expertise, although training may be required for some advanced functions. The DSS was built with free, open-source code that provides cross-platform functionality. It could be adapted to other geographic areas and reengineered for decision-making processes other than the MLPA Initiative.

Platform for Multi-Objective Planning

In its first incarnation, MarineMap enabled multi-objective planning implicitly without providing an online web mapping application, tools or functionalities explicitly dedicated to that purpose. It did not provide users with a way to analyze socio-economic impacts of their proposed set of marine protected areas. However, by collecting proposals from a diversity of stakeholders, each with their own objectives, MarineMap provided a platform for multi-objective planning.

Released in March 2010, the second version of MarineMap provides functionality for analyzing the socio-economic impacts of proposed marine protected areas. This application expands the potential for explicit multi-objective planning, such as balancing conservation and fisheries interests.

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