

MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING

Balancing the Needs of Nature and People

The ocean is complex and extremely important. More than 40 percent of people live within 100 kilometers (60 miles) of the coast, and the ocean contains hundreds of thousands of species, many of which contribute trillions of dollars in global trade and commerce. For centuries, people have exploited the ocean, but we need to take care of this ecosystem now and for future generations. As our use of the ocean grows in both scale and complexity, new and increased stressors are affecting both the ocean and the people that depend upon it.

Today, the cumulative effects of human activities in and on the ocean shine a spotlight on known and new threats to ocean health that need to be addressed. Coastal aquaculture, new forms of tourism and marine renewable energy all create some form of new pressure on coastal ecosystems. When coupled with existing ocean uses like local and industrial fishing, this can lead to conflicts and reduces the resilience of these areas.



Photo Credit: "Fish Farm" by Artur Rydezewski, Flickr, CC by 2.0



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New or updated management frameworks and governance structures are essential to ensure that coastal communities and nations continue to thrive alongside a healthy ocean. To this end, marine spatial planning (MSP) is a public process to decide how a marine area will be used. MSP brings together different ocean users to participate and contribute to decisions about the use and protection of the ocean. It provides governments, local communities and marine industries with transparent, equitable and participatory processes to navigate challenges, develop effective and durable solutions, and plan for the future.

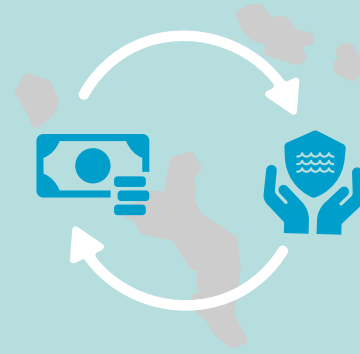
Over the last 10 years, MSP has evolved considerably and now supports a broad suite of objectives including marine protection, supporting local economies, addressing climate change impacts and developing long-term innovative financing mechanisms. It is considered a best practice by large public lending institutions for nations to have a marine spatial plan to create resilient and sustainable ocean economies. By 2025, more than 77 nations are likely to have an MSP covering at least 50 million square kilometers.

GLOBAL OCEAN: MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING

MSP is effective for identifying long-term issues related to coordination and integration in ocean governance and, when necessary, can spur new governance arrangements and integrated management plans for multiple sectors, such as fisheries, tourism, renewable energy and non-renewable energy. Best practices in MSP use evidence-based approaches to design participatory and transparent approaches with relevant stakeholders, thereby developing buy-in for implementation and balancing the needs of nature and people.

Since 2006, when the first MSP initiatives were established, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been at the forefront, working closely with governments and stakeholders across the globe to create tailored, multi-use marine plans that help nations and communities advance sound ocean management.

As a leader in the science and practice of marine spatial planning, TNC has developed a range of new technologies, tools and strategies, and has designed best practice guidebooks and objectives. Working alongside partners on the ground, we have developed expertise in facilitating complex, multi-year MSP processes at both small and large scales. Always bringing new knowledge of ocean benefits, and creating new financial mechanisms to fund planning, TNC is committed to the creation and implementation of marine spatial plans that benefit people and nature.



DEBT-FOR-CONSERVATION IN SEYCHELLES

In 2016, The Nature Conservancy completed the world's first debt swap aimed at ocean conservation and climate change adaptation with the Government of Seychelles and its Paris Club creditors. As a condition of the debt restructuring, TNC is leading the facilitation of the award-winning marine spatial plan for the entire Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone and Territorial Sea, an area of 1.37 million square kilometers. The plan will ensure approximately 400,000 square kilometers (98.9 million acres) will be allocated to marine biodiversity protection zones by 2020, provide strategies for climate change adaptation and support the Seychelles' Blue Economy.



Photo Credit: © The Ocean Agency

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ABOUT THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground

solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at an unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in 72 countries, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more, visit www.nature.org or follow @nature_press on Twitter.