

**Great Lakes, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Coast State  
MPA Workshop:  
*Developing the National/Regional System of MPAs from  
the State and Territorial Perspective***

**June 28-29, 2005  
Shedd Aquarium, Chicago, IL**

This workshop, the third of three scheduled U.S. regional meetings, was held on June 28-29, 2005 at the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, IL. Eleven state agency representatives (including fisheries, cultural resource, and coastal and natural resource managers) joined state participants from NOAA's National MPA Center, National Marine Sanctuaries Program and Coastal Services Center to discuss the development of a national/regional system of MPAs. The specific goals of the workshop were to:

1. Initiate a dialogue among the federal MPA Center and the Great Lake, Mid-Atlantic and East Coast state decision-makers on their roles, opportunities, concerns, and considerations as it relates to participation in a national/regional system of marine protected areas.
2. Provide a forum for state managers to discuss current and future efforts, challenges, successes, and state-federal coordination in marine protected area planning and management, and to network with one another.
3. Foster a greater understanding for the development of the national/regional system of marine protected areas among the Great Lake, Mid-Atlantic and East Coast state agencies that will be part of this system.

I. Overview of the National System of MPAs

The complexity of MPAs and their recognition as vital tools for marine conservation and management are the foundation of Presidential Order 13158 on MPAs which was signed on May 26, 2000. The Executive Order directs NOAA and the Department of the Interior to work with other federal agencies and consult with states, territories, tribes, and the public to develop a scientifically-based, comprehensive national system of MPAs. The Executive Order does not create any new authority to establish or manage MPAs. As a result, the national system will rely entirely on existing MPA programs, authorities, and sites that represent the nation's diverse marine ecosystems, including marine, coastal, estuarine, and Great Lakes waters. The national system of MPAs will be

developed using three themes that will identify existing MPAs and effective regional systems:

- **Natural Heritage:** sustaining natural and biological communities, habitats, ecosystems and processes, and the ecological services, uses, and values they provide to current and future generations.
- **Cultural Heritage:** protecting, understanding, and interpreting submerged cultural resources that reflect the nation's maritime history and traditional cultural connections to the sea.
- **Sustainable Production:** supporting the continued sustainable extraction of renewable living resources (e.g. fish, shellfish, plants, birds or mammals) within or outside the MPA by protecting important habitat and spawning, mating or nursery grounds, or providing harvest refuge for by-catch species.

While national in scope, the system will allow existing agencies and programs at the regional level to continue to meet their specific objectives and define ecosystem goals for MPAs that are relevant to the resources and their use. The national system will help build partnerships to provide tools, technologies, and other assistance to agencies and stakeholders to enhance the stewardship capabilities of sites.

The format for this meeting built on the information from the other two state and territorial meetings. Following opening remarks and state case studies, two break-out sessions focused on challenges, opportunities and recommendations.

## I. Primary State Challenges and Opportunities

### A. Challenges

- Federal funding and other support to states. This is the highest priority. Develop matching grants with money for outreach and stakeholders.
- Communication. To be full partners states and federal agencies must end general broad discussions and provide needed specifics. Overlap efforts:
  1. solicit information at local and regional levels
  2. disseminate the information similar to 'train the trainer'
  3. develop strategy for non-receptive groups
  4. Use positive regional examples
  5. Use consistent terminology
- Don't be captive to needing complete science before acting. We should use our best judgment and then move forward.

- Process message concerning money and science, i.e., translate between levels and bring local, regional and national efforts together.
- Clear state goals are needed.
- What is a national system? The definition of a national system cannot be too rigid.
- Need to demonstrate the benefits of a national system to the States

## B. Opportunities

- Cultural heritage issues cannot be ignored.
- Leverage shoreline-water interface as recommended in Oceans Policy Report (link between land management and marine management).
- Show that MPA's can be an effective management tool.
- Build groups which support MPA's -- show the linkages and follow-up on the working state-national models which now exist.
- Gaps and patterns: use the MMA Inventory and other information sources to demonstrate return on investment to states and others.
- Improve communications.

## II. Recommendations

- Gaps: look at the West Coast Pilot model and determine the best information gathering effort. Provide stakeholders with good examples of what's working and what is not (use case studies). Include international examples.
- Keep communication alive through regular reports, documents and NOAA/state networks.
- Show relevance and return on investment to other agencies, i.e. Homeland Security for emergency response, oil spills, etc. These include sustainable development, and direct and indirect benefits.
- Define the minimum level of protection in a MPA -- what does it mean to nominate state areas into a federal MPA system?
- Complete the MMA Inventory with good GIS mapping.
- Demonstrate what data is good or bad and why. Don't just offer a collection of information.
- Incorporate all values in MPA fisheries, cultural, marine and cross communication into final national system report.
- Build on existing partnerships and get them to work together.

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