

MARINE PARKS

POLICY BRIEF BY
KALIE MCGRATTEN

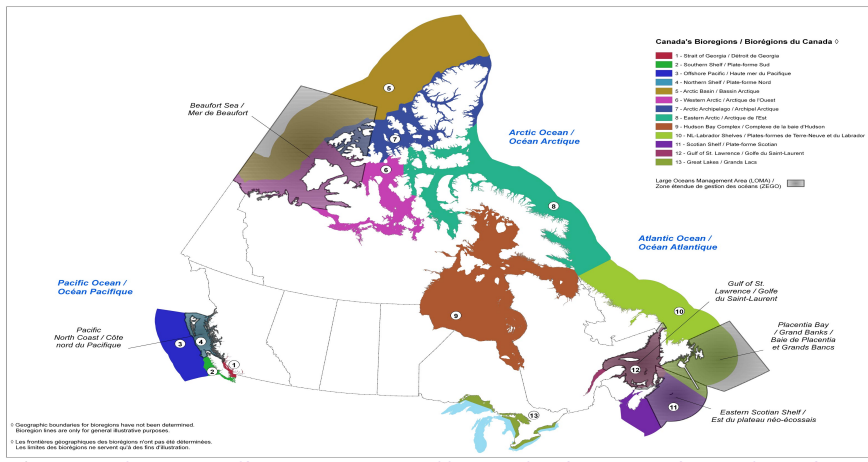


Photo source: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/publications/dmpaf-eczpm/img/framework2011_fig1.jpg

Canada essentially has the framework but has failed at taking any further steps. Bioregions have been mapped out.

NO-TAKE MARINE PROTECTED AREA'S IN CANADA

Summary: Increased reliance on the marine environment has led to the exploitation and increasing development of the oceans. Canada currently only has 0.5% of its oceans under Marine Protection, and even within this percentage these areas are not no-take zones. As Canada is a developed country with the potential resources to implement protected areas this is something that can be changed. Increasing the number of MPA's present can create a network of protected areas that can work together to fulfill goals more efficiently than individual reserves. MPA's can be

linked by the ecology or function of the region. Linked areas may be necessary for migratory mammals or birds that need to complete their lifecycle in different habitats and will further aid the conservation of species¹.

Recommendations: Canada needs to establish protected no-take areas as well as improve the management, implementation and legislation for the existing ones. The goal should be set to protect 10% of Canada's oceans by 2020 and 20% by 2035. At present it is the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) under Canada's Oceans Act (COA) that are in charge of

managing the oceans. Canada should adopt a cooperative policy approach, instead of its current legislative one³. A bottom up approach would involve Aboriginal, economic, and community stakeholders that need to be involved. Current MPA's that are considered marine are actually terrestrial with a small marine component. The new area's being established should be marine no-take zones where fishing, trawling and extraction of marine resources are not permitted. This area should enforce these laws with marine rangers and through partnership enforcement from the community.

What is a Marine Protected Area (MPA)? A MPA is a clearly defined geographical area that is managed through legal or effective means with the goal of achieving the conservation of nature within the area. This definition is for the context of Canada. MPA's can restore and protect marine environments from any more degradation and destruction².



Photo source: http://awsassets.wwf.ca/img/scr_201189_23706.jpg

Introduction: Networks of MPA's have ecological benefits; help mitigate climate change as well as provide social and economic advantages. MPA's protect ecosystem and species biodiversity as well as threatened and endemic species in the area. They can protect key ecological processes such as spawning, gene flow and connectivity. Protected coastal systems can buffer against extreme weather events. Protected areas can be somewhere for marine species to go that have been displaced by habitat destruction or change. Recreation and tourism opportunities are enhanced, more effective education can be achieved and as well as research and monitoring opportunities to learn from these area's. The no-take rule and protection of the habitat replenishes the fish stocks therefore also greatly helping the industries.

Canada has already determined where its bioregions are and a minimum amount of 3 no-take zones should be represented in each region to capture as many distinct ecosystems as possible. To minimize edge effects the aim should be to have the areas be a least 20 km's long.

1. Government of Canada, 2011. Canada's Oceans. Retrieved from: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/publications/dmpaf-eczpm/docs/framework-cadre2011-eng.pdf>

2. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2013. Canada's National Network of MPA's. Retrieved from: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/management-gestion/marineprotection-protectionmarine/boofram2011/faq-eng.htm>

3. United Nations, 2007. A comparative study on Marine Protected Area's. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unff_progamme_home/fellows_pages/fellows_papers/akwilapo_0



Source: http://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-shcjbPwDxmk/Uj42MF2s1ZI/AAAAAAAAU3s/kMGd_YD2CF4/s0/IMG_2248-2013.JPG

Key Factors for Successful Implementation

Focusing communication on the problems being addressed: public understanding for these areas is crucial to gain support for the projects.

Application of the precautionary principle: more evidence is always going to be needed; however proceeding without the perfect understanding is key in being successful because at least some action will be taken.

Use of independent experts and legislative power: policies to be implemented need to be transparent and available for input, as well as these policies need to be made into laws.

Input from stakeholders: this issue of displaced fishers and industry

should be addressed as well as Aboriginal rights³.

For the MPA to be successful using the legal framework that has been drafted and enforcing the no take zone is important. The MPA should be constantly monitored and evaluated with an adaptive management approach being taken to change things if something isn't working.

In conclusion Canada's current policy needs some major changes. Marine MPA's with no-take zones need to be created following several steps to aim for success. Action needs to be taken sooner rather than later and can be corrected if better management practices are discovered or previous policies are not successful.