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## National Marine Protected Areas Center Weekly Update July 6, 2010

### National System

#### **List of Existing MPAs Nominated to National System of MPAs Available for Public Comment:**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has received the third round of nominations for existing MPAs to join the national system of MPAs, based on a call for nominations from March 2010 through May 2010. This list of nominated sites has now been published in the *Federal Register* for a 45-day public review period ending August 5, 2010. The group of 4 sites includes Tilefish Gear Restricted Areas nominated by NOAA, in consultation with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. A list providing more detail for each site is available at [www.mpa.gov](http://www.mpa.gov). Following review of public comments, the final nominations will be formally accepted as members of the national system in September 2010. ([Joseph.Uravitch@noaa.gov](mailto:Joseph.Uravitch@noaa.gov), [Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov](mailto:Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov))

**MPA Center Holds Second National System Partners Retreat:** On June 23 and 24, the MPA Center held the second National System of MPAs Partners Retreat in Tiburon, CA. Representatives from federal, state, territorial, and tribal MPA programs met to share information about their capabilities and needs. Specific objectives were to: 1) identify specific priorities for action to strengthen the national system of MPAs and MPA programs and networks in FY11; 2) identify key opportunities for collaboration with other coastal and ocean initiatives, and; 3) identify ways to improve national system coordination and communication. Products from this retreat will help guide the MPA Center in identifying thematic and regional priorities for the next 1-3 years. ([Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov](mailto:Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov), [Joseph.Uravitch@noaa.gov](mailto:Joseph.Uravitch@noaa.gov))

**MPA Center Holds Training on MPA Networks:** The MPA Center partnered with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' MPA Capacity Building Program, NOS' International Programs Office and the Coral Reef Conservation Program to hold a 2-day training session on the development of MPA networks for member programs in the National System of MPAs. The training, the first to target a domestic audience with information and tools on MPA networks, was held in Tiburon, California, and was provided at the request of the National System Partners at their 2009 planning retreat. The course addressed design and operations of ecological, social and institutional MPA networks, and featured speakers on California's Marine Life Protection Act initiative. Ten federal, state and territorial MPA programs participated in the training. Materials will be posted on [www.mpa.gov](http://www.mpa.gov). ([Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov](mailto:Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov))

### Science and Stewardship

**MPA Center Staff Attends International Conference of The Coastal Society:** From June 13-16, four MPAC staff members attended The Coastal Society's 22<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, held in

Wilmington, NC. The Coastal Society is an organization of private sector, academic and government professionals and students dedicated to actively addressing emerging coastal issues by fostering dialogue, forging partnerships and promoting communication and education. This year's conference theme was "Shifting Shorelines: Adapting to The Future." MPA Center Staff in attendance included: Valerie Grussing, Cultural Resources Coordinator, who participated in the workshop "Cape Hatteras: Crossroads of Change," which focused on the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' (ONMS) efforts to develop a program that focuses on Cape Hatteras as an iconic place of regional and national significance; Jordan Gass and Nick Hayden, GIS Specialists, who presented on the MPA Inventory; and Julia Townsend, Policy Specialist, who presented in a panel discussion on human use data for marine spatial planning.

### **MPA Center Staff**

**MPA Center Welcomes New Marine Biologist:** The MPA Center would like to welcome Dr. Robert Brock, the new Senior Marine Biologist for the MPA Center's office in Silver Spring, Maryland, who will oversee the Center's marine natural science programs. Robert comes to us from the NOAA Fisheries Service Office of Science and Technology, where he represented them in matters dealing with corals, deep-sea corals, marine protected areas, international science issues (he Chairs the ICES-NAFO Working Group on Deepwater Ecology), and science quality assurance. Robert previously led the Marine Science Program of Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks. Robert has a BS in Environmental Science/Marine Ecology from Florida International University, an MS in Marine Biology from the Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center, and a PhD in Environmental Engineering Sciences/Aquatic Ecology from the University of Florida. ([Robert.Brock@noaa.gov](mailto:Robert.Brock@noaa.gov))

### **Library Links of the Week**

A recent open access article in Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom discusses international efforts to establish networks of marine protected areas (MPAs) for the purposes of conservation of marine biodiversity. This paper provides descriptions of deep-sea epibenthic megafaunal assemblages based on a broad-scale video and stills image survey of the upper bathyal (200-1000m) regions of the Rockall Trough and eastern Faroe-Shetland Channel. Quantitative data obtained were analysed using cluster analysis and SIMPER analysis in Primer V.6 to identify benthic assemblages and their characterizing species. Thirty-one epibenthic megafaunal assemblages are defined by their characterizing species, and their distribution in terms of site, depth, temperature and substratum type. These 31 'biotopes' are noted for potential use in biological mapping efforts and assessments of representativeness in MPA network design. "Identifying deep-sea megafaunal epibenthic assemblages for use in habitat mapping and marine protected area network design," Journal of the Marine Biological Association (90, 1): February 2010: 33-68 is available as a link from the issue's index page: <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayIssue?jid=MBI&volumeId=90&issueId=01&iid=7285128#> ([Chris.Belter@noaa.gov](mailto:Chris.Belter@noaa.gov))

A Marine Scientific Panel for the Government of Western Australia's Inter Departmental Committee for the Management of the States Marine Protected Areas addresses the scientific basis for and the role of marine sanctuaries in marine planning. The aims of the report were to 1) examine the context of MPAs and marine sanctuaries in marine planning; 2) evaluate the scientific evidence for the effectiveness of marine sanctuaries for conserving biodiversity and in fisheries management from a global perspective and for Western Australia; and 3) make policy recommendations on the scientific basis for and the role of marine sanctuaries in marine planning in Western Australia. The report presents general and specific conclusions in relation to Western Australia marine planning, and provides policy recommendations on the role of marine sanctuaries in the area's marine planning. In addition, the Panel addresses questions of the temporal and spatial scale of marine sanctuaries in relation to biodiversity conservation and

fisheries management. "Report on the Scientific Basis for and the Role of Marine Sanctuaries in Marine Planning" is available at: <http://bit.ly/a766Wa> ([Chris.Belter@noaa.gov](mailto:Chris.Belter@noaa.gov))

## **Events and Conferences**

The following is a listing of events and conferences that the MPA Center is organizing or that MPA Center staff members plan to attend.

### July 2010

12-16: ESRI International User Conference, San Diego, CA (D'Iorio, Gass)

18-22: National Marine Educators Association Annual Conference, Gatlinburg, TN (Schwenke)

### September 2010

7-10: California and the World Ocean Conference, San Francisco, CA (Townsend, Uravitch)

12-16: American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA (Brock, Wenzel)

11-16: Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Houston, TX (Schwenke, Uravitch)

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The mission of the National Marine Protected Areas Center is to facilitate the effective use of science, technology, training, and information in the planning, management, and evaluation of the nation's system of marine protected areas.

The MPA Center's goals are to:

1. Build and maintain the National System of MPAs
2. Improve MPA Stewardship and Effectiveness
3. Coordinate International, National, and Regional MPA Activities

For more information, go to: [www.MPA.gov](http://www.MPA.gov).