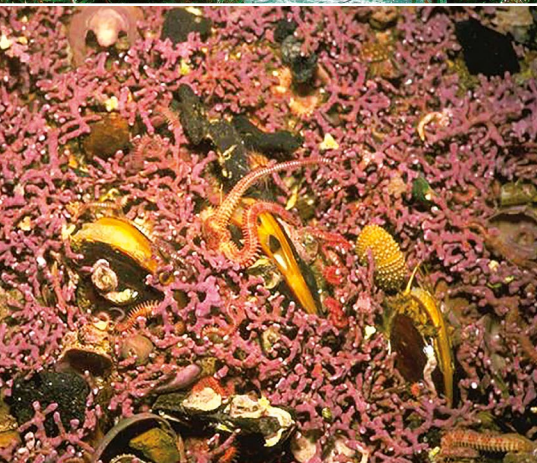




International Partnership on **MPAs, Biodiversity** and **Climate Change**



OUR STORY

At the UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) in 2019, we came together to explore the question: “What is the role of marine protected areas in tackling climate change?”

With a range of answers provided, we committed to continuing to work together to address common evidence gaps and to exchange knowledge and expertise. Framed around a shared vision and common objectives, the International Partnership on MPAs, Biodiversity and Climate Change was formally launched in 2021.

The International Partnership on MPAs, Biodiversity and Climate Change is an alliance of government agencies and organisations from across the world, working together to progress the evidence base around the role of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and biodiversity in tackling climate change.

Our vision is for global decision-makers to implement MPA networks as nature-based solutions for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

For further information about the Partnership please visit www.mpabioclimate.org

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OUR WORK

Collectively we have the following goals:

- Decision-makers understand the link between the ocean, MPAs, and climate change and have the support needed to implement MPAs as a nature-based solution.
- Decision-makers link MPAs, biodiversity and climate change as a contribution to national and international commitments.
- Countries globally have the evidence and tools they need to implement effective MPA networks that mitigate climate change, conserve biodiversity, and increase resilience.

WHY ARE MPAS, BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPORTANT AND HOW ARE THEY CONNECTED?

The ocean covers over two-thirds of the Earth's surface and is critical in regulating the global climate. It is home to a vast array of species and habitats, many of them still unknown. Ocean biodiversity and a healthy ocean are interlinked, together they promote ecosystem resilience. Everyone relies on healthy marine ecosystems to support life on this planet.

The ocean helps reduce the impacts of climate change, capturing nearly a third of the anthropogenic carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere, and absorbing 90% of the excess heat trapped by those emissions. The carbon captured and stored in the ocean's ecosystems is often referred to as blue carbon.

However, the ocean is being impacted by capturing and absorbing our excess carbon dioxide and heat. The impacts include increased water temperatures, ocean acidification, deoxygenation and sea level rise, triggering severe changes in global marine ecosystems.

Marine Protected Areas (or MPAs) are areas which have been designated to protect marine habitats and species. If created, monitored, and managed correctly, MPAs or networks of MPAs can protect marine ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, and can provide a nature-based solution to help mitigate, adapt, and build resilience to the effects of climate change.

MPA networks can protect blue carbon habitats, which can include a wide range of habitats including sediments, mangroves, salt marshes, seagrass beds and kelp forests. MPAs can prevent loss and degradation of those habitats, and their associated blue carbon reserves. They may also enable new carbon sequestration through the restoration of degraded marine habitats or carbon storage within sediments. By conserving or enhancing marine biodiversity, MPA networks can increase the resilience of marine habitats and ecosystems to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Additionally, there is the potential for the increased biodiversity and biomass of certain species within the MPA network to spill-over into other areas, potentially supporting the resilience of surrounding ecosystems.

Effectively managed MPAs are one of the most cost-effective strategies the world has to protect the ocean's biodiversity. However, there are many evidence gaps in the global understanding of how to maximize the benefits of MPAs as nature-based solutions.

Urgent action is required to produce the evidence needed to inform decisions-makers, safeguarding the ocean and the services it provides to nature and people.

Climate change is a global challenge which requires global responses. As the evidence gaps are filled by the global community, there is much we can do to learn from each other, working collaboratively to share evidence, knowledge, and solutions.



OUR MEMBERS

The founding members of the Partnership are Chile's Ministry of the Environment, the United Kingdom's Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Costa Rica's Ministry of Environment and Energy, the French Biodiversity Agency and the United States' NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, with scientific support from representatives of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland.

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