
Marine protected areas: policy and implementation plan

- ✓ The full policy and implementation plan is available at:
http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/seas/biodiversity/protected/mpa_policy.html

- ✓ What is the role of the Ministry of Fisheries?

MFish and DOC are jointly responsible for developing and implementing the MPA policy. The flow chart attached shows who can get involved at each stage of the process. DOC and MFish will develop the classification approach so it is nationally consistent. They will also develop the protection standard. There will be consultation on both of these topics. At the implementation stage, marine protection planning forums will be set up. Planning forums will include tangata whenua, commercial and non-commercial fishers, regional councils, interest groups etc.

- ✓ How do Fisheries Act tools fit in?

The Fisheries Act contains tools to manage the actual and potential adverse effects of fishing on the marine environment. These tools include regulatory powers to:

- prohibit all fishing in particular areas; and
- prohibit particular fishing methods.

These tools have to be used in a way that's consistent with the Fisheries Act and statutory requirements – i.e. to address either actual or potential adverse effects of fishing on the environment. With that proviso, these regulatory tools could protect representative sites of marine biodiversity and therefore contribute to the MPA network.

Areas where Fisheries Act tools have already been used will be mapped as part of Stage One of the implementation process. The areas will be compared against a 'protection standard' in Stage Two, to form an inventory of existing MPAs. Some areas where Fisheries Act tools are already in place may meet the protection standard, while others may not.



- ✓ How about customary management tools?



The purpose of mataitai reserves is to provide for customary fishing use and management practices. The purpose of taiapure is to better recognise iwi management rights over areas important for spiritual needs or customary food gathering. Neither can be proposed primarily for biodiversity protection.

However, sustainable use of fisheries resources may contribute to protection of marine biodiversity (the purpose of MPAs). If tangata whenua wish, it is possible that these tools could be applied in such a way that they can contribute to the MPA network.

As with any potential MPA, the management measures in the taiapure or mātaitai reserve would need to meet the protection standard in order to be recognised as part of the network.

✓ What about areas that are already protected, e.g. cable protection zones?

Cable protection zones prevent all marine-based activities that may threaten cables. They could therefore also prevent most marine-based activities that may threaten habitat and ecosystem biodiversity (except for cable laying and maintenance activities). If the protection is sufficient to meet the protection standard, such areas could contribute to the MPA network. This will be assessed during Stage Two, when an inventory of MPAs is developed.

✓ What is the timeframe?

Stage One (developing the classification approach; refining the protection standard; and mapping existing areas) is expected to be completed by June 2006. Firm timetables aren't available for subsequent stages. The policy and implementation plan notes that in the second half of 2006, particularly good progress is anticipated in the offshore area for Stage Two processes (developing the MPA inventory; identifying network gaps; and prioritising new MPAs).

✓ When/how can others get involved?



The flow chart below shows the steps in the process where fishers can get involved. First off, fishers can submit on the classification approach and protection standard (expected to be done by June 2006). Secondly, recreational fishers can submit on the MPA network inventory, network gaps that have been identified, and priorities that have been outlined for new MPAs.

During the implementation phase, recreational fishers can get involved in the marine protection planning forums. Relevant agencies will likely also have additional discussions with tangata whenua, to ensure Treaty obligations are met.

After recommendations are made to Ministers for new MPAs, designation will follow the statutory processes – including consultation – to put them in place.

✓ What is the 'protection standard'?

The draft protection standard outlined in the policy and implementation plan states that a management tool must “enable the maintenance or recovery of the site’s biological diversity at the habitat and ecosystem level to a healthy functioning state.”

The management regime must provide for the maintenance and recovery at the site of:

- a) physical features that support biodiversity;
- b) ecological systems, natural species composition (including all life-history stages), and trophic linkages;
- c) potential for the biodiversity to adapt and recover in response to perturbation.

Maintenance and recovery include, where feasible, “the avoidance of change from human induced pollution, sedimentation, fishing, tourism or visitor-based disturbance, undersea or seafloor commercial activities, or scientific/research activities.”

1. Develop classification approach
 - develop nationally consistent approach to classification of nearshore and offshore areas.
 Status:
 - expert workshop was held in Dec. 06. (with stakeholders invited as observers)

2. Refine the protection standard contained in the planning and implementation policy
 - a workshop may be held to allow for science input.
 - the goal is a protection standard that is practical and not too data heavy

3. Map existing management tools
 Status:
 - All three steps can be worked on at the same time (but must be completed before Stage Two begins in any region).

Who?

DOC/MFish

Expert workshop

DOC/MFish

Expert workshop?

DOC/MFish
 Report circulated for consultation with stakeholders.



Who?

DOC/MFish

DOC/MFish

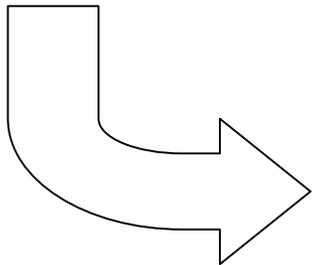
Report circulated for consultation with stakeholders.

Stage Two

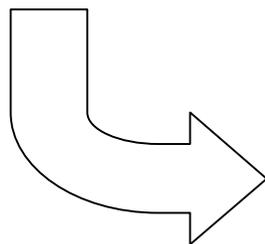
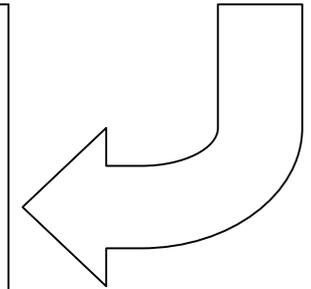
4. Develop the inventory of MPAs
 - The management tools mapped in task 3 will be evaluated against the protection standard.
 - Ideally, this would be completed in all biogeographic regions at the same time.

5. Identify network gaps
 - Those MPAs identified in task 4 will be assessed to see which habitats and ecosystems are adequately represented and which are under-represented.
 - It is anticipated that most progress will be made in the offshore area where the classification system is more advanced (second half of 2006).

6. Prioritise new MPAs
 - Priorities for establishing new MPAs will be determined based on where network gaps have been identified (task 5), and the principles of the MPA policy.



Who?	Stage Three
DOC/MFish and marine protection planning forums (tangata whenua, regional councils, commercial and non-commercial fishers, interest groups etc)	<p>7. Nearshore implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional planning will proceed using marine protection planning forums. Within each biogeographic region, DOC and MFish will convene these forums to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) consider the classification and inventory information from Stages One and Two; b) pull together information on existing uses and interests in the area; c) identify sites and potential tools for area based protection of biodiversity; d) seek to establish consensus on areas to be set aside as MPAs.
DOC/MFish and an expert panel	<p>8. Offshore implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An expert offshore panel with scientific expertise as well as representation of offshore interests will develop the approach for planning and establishing new sites.
	<p>9. Designate new MPAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendations will be made to Ministers for new MPAs. - Designation of new MPAs will then follow the statutory processes required to implement the proposed management tools.
	<p>What about existing work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional planning that has already started (e.g. in Hauraki Gulf and West Coast) can only progress to a stage where it can be informed by the completed work in stages One and Two.



Who?	Stage Four
DOC/MFish (with expert offshore panel and independent science advisors).	<p>10. Monitor and evaluate the MPA network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - progress in implementing the MPA policy will be based on various network design principles outlined in the policy. - review will occur annually