



Marine Reserves

It's time for a 30x30 ocean vision: at least 30% of the ocean should be declared marine reserves by 2030, from the Arctic to the Antarctic, coastal to high seas areas and everywhere in between. Protection equals regeneration. The Ocean needs safe havens where nature can replenish, and fortify itself against climate change and other threats, such as industrial fishing. Networking works! Networks of highly connected marine reserves with large coverage are better for ocean biodiversity and climate resilience than isolated islands of protection.

TALKING POINTS: Regenerating Ocean life

- About 70% of our Earth's surface is Ocean, yet despite the declaration in 2016 of the world's largest marine reserves in the Antarctic and the Pacific, according to MPA Atlas.org, roughly just 5.3% of the global Ocean is currently protected, with 2.5% strongly protected from human development as marine reserves. A further 3% of the world's Ocean have been proposed as marine protected areas, including 2% of the high seas. There is still a lot of work to do.
- Marine reserves are highly protected marine protected areas (MPAs) where no destructive or extractive activities such as fishing or mining, can take place.
- Marine reserves can help reduce and buffer the impacts of climate change on the Ocean, and they can help to rebuild species abundance and diversity, restoring and restocking marine life. They are the best tool we have to help the Ocean regenerate.
- For a short summary of marine reserves explained simply check out this great [short animation](#) by National Geographic
- Marine reserves must be declared around the world, from the Arctic to the Antarctic and everywhere in between, covering at least 30% of our Ocean by 2030.
- In September 2016, the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawaii, with the support of 89% of governments and 94% of NGOs, agreed to [Motion 53](#), that urges world leaders to protect 30% of the planet's oceans by 2030.
- We need to deploy more influential voices so that decision makers get the message about the importance of acting. Your voice has been so important on this issue, and now we need to work on how we activate more so that the idea of achieving 30% of the ocean fully protected by 2030 resonates with

political and business leaders in the same way as the 1.5 degree target or achieving zero emissions by 2050.

- EO Wilson recently said: 'If you save the living world, you will save the non-living world; but if you save only the non-living part, you will lose them both.'
- Marine reserves have significant benefits beyond their boundaries, and their size matters.

BENEFITS BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Numerous scientific studies have shown that no-take zones have many long-lasting benefits. These include:

- More fish, bigger fish, and more types of fish both within the reserve but also outside due to the “spill-over” effect.
- The recovery of areas that have been damaged and more marine life (not just fish) within the area.
- The prevention of coastal erosion and mitigation of the impacts of natural disasters (such as hurricanes) through the protection of coastal habitats such as mangroves and coral reefs.
- The sequestration and storage of carbon also through the protection of coastal habitats such as mangroves, seagrass beds and salt marshes.
- Reducing poverty, by providing food and employment for some of the billions of people around the world that directly rely on a healthy Ocean for survival.
- High financial returns. Protecting 30% of the ocean has been estimated to cost between US\$ 223-228 billion, but it has been estimated that the financial net benefits from the increased ecosystem goods and services (once all costs have been taken into account) range from US\$490 billion to US\$920 billion by 2050. In the financial world that is a return on investment no-one would turn down!
- A global review of the impacts of marine protected areas on fish found that fish biomass (weight) increased by 446%, it was denser (more fish) by 166%, species size increased by 26% and there were 21% more types of fish.
- To give an example, over the 18 years that the Apo Island Protected Area has been in place in the Philippines there have been significant benefits. The population of the main local fisheries of surgeonfish and jackfish have tripled, the biomass of large predator fish has gone up 8-fold, and fishermen are now catching 50% more fish in less fishing time.

SIZE REALLY MATTERS!

- Whilst small marine reserves can have local benefits, large-scale marine reserves have been shown to be even more effective, including areas that have already been damaged.
- Large marine reserves are also more cost-effective to implement and manage, and the larger the area, the better the protection from activities outside the boundaries.
- In particular, they play a vital role in enabling the Ocean to withstand the effects of climate change.
- By creating a sanctuary for marine life that protects it from activities - such as fishing and mining- it has a better chance to adapt to the increasingly warmer and more acidic waters.
- Not only is size important but establishing a network of strongly protected areas has also been proven to have greater benefits than isolated pockets of protection.

What needs to happen?

- Governments have committed at the United Nations to protecting at least 10% of ocean areas by 2020. This should be the first step along the way of putting in place a system covering all areas of the globe and amounting to 30% of the ocean.
- In 2020 governments will agree a new ten year plan for nature at the 15th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This must include the target to strongly protect at least 30% of the ocean in marine reserves by 2030 (30x30).
- Click [here](#) to find out how you can support this #Love30x30 vision.