

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

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To: MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
From: MLPA I-Team
Subject: Revised Draft Regional Goals and Objectives and Design and Implementation Considerations for the MLPA South Coast Study Region for Discussion and Potential Adoption at the January 13 -14, 2009 SCRSG Meeting
Date: December 30, 2008

Introduction

Consistent with previous Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) study regions, regional goals and objectives are developed by the regional stakeholder group and put forth as recommendations for adoption by the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force, to highlight what is desired to help meet the broader goals of the MLPA for each study region.

Regional goals are the MLPA goals to be accomplished within the study region. Objectives are specific aims or statements of intent that collectively work toward achieving a broader goal. For purposes of marine protected area (MPA) planning under the MLPA, objectives for MPAs within each study region are intended to be relevant to that particular study region. These “regional objectives” are the potential ways for individual MPAs, MPA clusters, or MPA arrays in that region to help meet particular goals of the MLPA. Site-specific rationales explain the various reasons why a single MPA is placed in a particular location or designed in a particular manner. Members of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group will have the opportunity to develop site-specific rationales as they generate draft MPAs.

Process for Revising Regional Goals and Objectives

Attached to this memorandum is a revised version of the draft *Regional Goals and Objectives and Design and Implementation Considerations for the MLPA South Coast Study Region*. This draft has been revised by MLPA staff based upon a synthesis of the comments received from members of the SCRSG at the November 18-19, 2008 meeting. Many of the comments were identified on Day 1 of the SCRSG meeting and served as the basis for revised text that was presented to the SCRSG on Day 2. Additional comments were raised on Day 2 that suggested further refinements of the regional objectives. The SCRSG agreed to move forward with the drafting process with the understanding that outstanding comments on the regional goals and objectives needed to be discussed and accounted for in another iteration, but that new issues would not be raised at the next revision.

The attached revised document takes account of the SCRSG member comments and balances them with the strong interests of implementation, management and clarity expressed by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). DFG is the state agency tasked with responsibility to implement the statewide MPA program. DFG will assist the SCRSG with developing regional objectives and site-specific rationales, and will provide feedback and advice regarding their consistency with MPA design and regulations.

Consideration of SCRSG Interests in Revised Synthesis

SCRSG members, in its Day 2 deliberations on the regional goals and objectives, raised a number of both specific and broad interests, including:

- emphasizing the importance of MPAs to the broadest range of species;
- stressing the importance of specific species and habitats (such as pelagic species and kelp forests);
- identifying key management and implementation issues related to coordination with local entities, public education, outreach and enforcement;
- identifying specific strategies or management options that might support goals;
- providing appropriate specificity and inclusiveness to describe the users of MPAs; and
- defining cultural uses of particular note (such as submerged sites).

The MLPA I-Team reviewed comments from the regional stakeholder group members and aspired to strike a balance between how best to incorporate specific interests while not overly narrowing the applicability of the regional goals and objectives. In most cases, the interests were able to be incorporated without overly narrowing or limiting the objectives. However, in some cases (such as language on specific habitat types or species), the interest was not incorporated in the revised draft as it would be best incorporated in the site-specific rationales, which the SCRSG will create for each proposed MPA.

Next Steps

The attached document will be presented to the SCRSG at its January 13-14, 2009 meeting for discussion and potential adoption.

During the MPA design process, DFG will assist the SCRSG with applying regional objectives and developing site-specific rationales, and will provide feedback and advice regarding their consistency with MPA design and regulations.

Attachment: *Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests Related to the Regional Goals and Objectives and Design Considerations for the MLPA South Coast Study Region*
(revised December 23, 2008)

ATTACHMENT

Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests Related to the Regional Goals and Objectives and Design and

Implementation Considerations for the MLPA South Coast Study Region

Revised December 23, 2008

Note: This synthesis document has been prepared for discussion at the January 13-14, 2009 meeting of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG).

Regional Goals and Objectives

The marine protected area (MPA) design process begins with setting regional goals and objectives that are consistent with the MLPA, then identifying site-specific rationales for individual MPAs. Once set, regional goals and objectives influence crucial decisions regarding MPA size, location and boundaries, as well as management measures and the focus of monitoring and evaluation programs.

Goal 1 (G1): To protect the natural diversity and abundance of marine life and the structure, function and integrity of marine ecosystems

Goal and Objective #	Version Presented to the SCRSG on November 19, 2008	Revised Version Based Upon Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests
G1-Objective 1	Protect and maintain species diversity and abundance consistent with natural fluctuations, areas of high native species diversity and representative habitats.	Protect and maintain species diversity and abundance consistent with natural fluctuations, <u>including</u> areas of high native species diversity and representative habitats.
G1-Objective 2	Protect areas with diverse habitat types in close proximity to each other.	Same as Nov. 19 version
G1-Objective 3	Protect natural size and age structure and genetic diversity of populations in representative habitats.	Same as Nov. 19 version
G1-Objective 4	Protect biodiversity, natural trophic structure and food webs in representative habitats.	Same as Nov. 19 version
G1-Objective 5	Promote recovery of natural communities from disturbances, both natural and human induced.	Same as Nov. 19 version

Goal 2 (G2): To help sustain, conserve, and protect marine life populations, including those of economic value, and rebuild those that are depleted.

Goal and Objective #	Version Presented to the SCRSG on November 19, 2008	Revised Version Based Upon Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests
G2-Objective 1	Help protect or rebuild populations of rare, threatened, endangered, depressed, depleted, or overfished species, where identified, and the habitats and ecosystem functions upon which they rely.	Help protect or rebuild populations of rare, threatened, endangered, depressed, depleted, or overfished species, where identified , and the habitats and ecosystem functions upon which they rely.
G2-Objective 2	Sustain or increase reproduction of species most likely to benefit from MPAs and promote retention of large, mature individuals	Sustain or increase reproduction <u>by</u> species most -likely to benefit from MPAs and promote retention of large, mature individuals.
G2-Objective 3	Sustain or increase reproduction by species most likely to benefit from MPAs through protection of breeding, spawning, foraging, rearing or nursery areas.	Sustain or increase reproduction by species most -likely to benefit from MPAs through protection of breeding, spawning, foraging, rearing or nursery areas <u>or other areas where species congregate.</u>
G2-Objective 4	Protect areas that are critical or essential to particular life history stages (such as breeding, rearing, nursery grounds, or other areas where species congregate).	Same as Nov. 19 version (This objective is duplicative of G2-Objective 3 and has been deleted).
G2-Objective 5	Protect selected species and the habitats on which they depend while allowing the commercial and/or recreational harvest of migratory, highly mobile, or other species.	Same as Nov. 19 version

Goal 3 (G3): To improve recreational, educational, and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems that are subject to minimal human disturbances, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity.

Goal and Objective #	Version Presented to the SCRSG on November 19, 2008	Revised Version Based Upon Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests
G3-Objective 1	Ensure some MPAs are close to population centers, coastal access points, and/or research and education institutions and include areas of educational, recreational, and cultural use.	Same as Nov. 19 version and moved to design considerations
	<i>[MOVE TO DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS]</i>	
G3-Objective 2	Sustain or enhance cultural, recreational, and educational experiences by improving catch rates, high scenic value, lower congestion, or increased size or abundance of species.	Sustain or enhance cultural, recreational, and educational experiences <u>and uses (for example, by improving catch rates, maintaining high scenic value, lowering congestion, or increased size or abundance of species, and protecting submerged sites).</u>
G3-Objective 3	Provide opportunities for scientifically valid studies	Provide opportunities for scientifically valid studies, <u>including studies on MPA effectiveness and other research that benefits from areas with minimal or restricted human disturbance.</u>
G3-Objective 4	Develop collaborative scientific monitoring and research projects evaluating MPAs that promotes adaptive management and links with fisheries management, seabird and mammals information needs, classroom science curricula, cooperative fisheries research and volunteer efforts, and identify participants.	Provide opportunities for Develop collaborative scientific monitoring and research projects <u>that evaluate</u> MPAs that promotes adaptive management and link with fisheries management, seabird and mammals information needs, classroom science curricula, cooperative fisheries research and volunteer efforts, and identify participants.

Goal 4 (G4): To protect marine natural heritage, including protection of representative and unique marine life habitats in [south coast] California waters, for their intrinsic values

Goal and Objective #	Version Presented to the SCRSG on November 19, 2008	Revised Version Based Upon Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests
G4-Objective 1	Include within MPAs key and unique habitats identified by the SAT for this study region.	Include within MPAs key and unique habitats identified by the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team for this study region.
G4-Objective 2	Include and replicate to the extent possible [practicable], representatives of all marine habitats identified in the MLPA or the <i>California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas</i> across a range of depths.	Same as Nov. 19 version

Goal 5 (G5): To ensure that [south coast] California’s MPAs have clearly defined objectives, effective management measures, and adequate enforcement, and are based on sound scientific guidelines.

Goal and Objective #	Version Presented to the SCRSG on November 19, 2008	Revised Version Based Upon Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests
G5-Objective 1	Minimize negative socio-economic impacts and optimize positive socio-economic impacts for all users and if consistent with the Marine Life Protection Act and its goals and guidelines.	Minimize negative socio-economic impacts and optimize positive socio-economic impacts for all users <u>including coastal dependent entities, communities and interests, to the extent possible</u> and if consistent with the Marine Life Protection Act and its goals and guidelines.
G5-Objective 2	For all MPAs in the region involve interested parties to help develop objectives, a long-term monitoring plan that includes standardized biological and socioeconomic monitoring protocols, a long-term education and outreach plan, a strategy for MPA evaluation, and ensure that each MPA objective is linked to one or more regional objectives.	<u>Provide opportunities</u> for all MPAs in the region involve interested parties to help develop objectives, a long-term monitoring plan that includes standardized biological and socioeconomic monitoring protocols, a long-term education and outreach plan, <u>and</u> a strategy for MPA evaluation, and ensure that each MPA objective is linked to one or more regional objectives
G5-Objective 3	Effectively use scientific guidelines in the <i>California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas</i> .	Same as Nov. 19 version
G5-Objective 4	Minimize infractions through increased awareness and compliance with MPA regulations.	<u>Ensure public understanding of MPA boundaries and regulations.</u>
G5-Objective 5	Include simple, clear and focused site-specific objectives/rationales for each MPA.	Include simple, clear and focused site-specific objectives/rationales for each MPA <u>and ensure that site-level rationales for each MPA are linked to one or more regional objectives.</u>

Goal 6 (G6): To ensure that the [south coast] MPAs are designed and managed, to the extent possible, as a network.

Goal and Objective #	Version Presented to the SCRSG on November 19, 2008	Revised Version Based Upon Staff Synthesis of SCRSG Interests
G6-Objective 1	Develop a process to inform adaptive management that includes stakeholder involvement for regional review and evaluation of management effectiveness to determine if regional MPAs are an effective component of a statewide network.	<u>Provide opportunities to</u> Develop a promote a process to <u>that informs</u> adaptive management <u>and that</u> includes stakeholder involvement for regional review and evaluation of management effectiveness to determine if regional MPAs are an effective component of a statewide network.
G6-Objective 2	Develop a mechanism to coordinate with future MLPA regional stakeholder groups in other regions to ensure that the statewide MPA network meets the goals of the MLPA.	<u>Provide opportunities to</u> develop a mechanism to coordinate with future MLPA regional stakeholder groups in other regions to ensure that the statewide MPA network meets the goals of the MLPA.
G6-Objective 3	Replicate representative marine habitats throughout the statewide system	Same as Nov. 19 version
G6-Objective 4	Increase the persistence of important bottom-dwelling fish and invertebrate groups throughout the statewide system	Same as Nov. 19 version
G6-Objective 5	Increase the ability of larvae from species likely to benefit from MPAs to be transported between MPAs	Same as Nov. 19 version
G6-Objective <u>3</u>	Ensure ecological connectivity within and between regional components of the statewide network.	Same as Nov. 19 version

Regional Design and Implementation Considerations

Design Considerations

The SCRSG recognizes several issues that should be considered in the design and evaluation of MPAs. Like the “Considerations in the Design of MPAs” that appears in the *California MLPA Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas*, these considerations may apply to all MPAs and MPA proposals regardless of the specific regional goals and objectives for that MPA and may contribute to the site-level rationales for individual MPA design and placement.

The design considerations will be incorporated with the goals and objectives and transmitted to provided to the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force for adoption and then to the California Fish and Game Commission as part of the suite of recommendations for the study region. Design considerations with long-term monitoring components will be used in developing monitoring plans and to inform the adaptive management process. Design considerations include:

1. In evaluating the siting of MPAs, considerations shall include the needs and interests of all users.
2. When designing or modifying MPAs, consider leveraging relevant portions of existing state and federal fishery management activities or and area-based restrictions, including state and federal fishery management areas and regulations when designing new MPAs or modifying existing ones. (such as rockfish conservation areas and trawl fishery closures, or other restricted access zones).
3. Site MPAs to prevent fishing effort shifts that would result in serial depletion.
4. When crafting MPA proposals, include considerations for design found in state fishery management plans such as the Nearshore Fishery Management Plan^{1[6]} and the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan.^{2[7]}

^{1[6]} Design considerations from the Nearshore Fishery Management Plan:

1. Restrict take in any MPA [intended to meet the NFMP goals] so that the directed fishing or significant bycatch of the 19 NFMP species is prohibited.
2. Include some areas that have been productive fishing grounds for the 19 NFMP species in the past but are no longer heavily used by the fishery.
3. Include some areas known to enhance distribution or retain larvae of NFMP species
4. Consist of an area large enough to address biological characteristics such as movement patterns and home range. There is an expectation that some portion of NFMP stocks will spend the majority of their life cycle within the boundaries of the MPA.
5. Consist of areas that replicate various habitat types within each region including areas that exhibit representative productivity.

^{2[7]} Design considerations from the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan:

Proposed MPA sites should satisfy at least four of the following criteria.

1. Include within MPAs suitable rocky habitat containing abundant kelp and/or foliose algae
2. Insure presence of sufficient populations to facilitate reproduction.
3. Include within MPAs suitable nursery areas, in particular crustose coralline rock habitats in shallow waters that include microhabitats of moveable rock, rock crevices, urchin spine canopy, and kelp holdfasts.
4. Include within MPAs the protected lee of major headlands that may act as collection points for water and larvae.
5. Include MPAs large enough to include large numbers of abalone and for research regarding population dynamics.
6. Include MPAs that are accessible to researchers, enforcement personnel, and others with a legitimate interest in resource protection.

5. In developing MPA proposals, consider how existing state, local and federal programs address the goals and objectives of the MLPA and the south coast region as well as how these proposals may coordinate with other programs.
6. Site MPAs adjacent to terrestrial federal, state, county, or city parks, marine laboratories, or other "eyes on the water" to facilitate management, enforcement, and monitoring, education and outreach.
7. Site MPAs to facilitate use of volunteers to assist in monitoring and management.
8. Site MPAs to take advantage of existing long-term monitoring studies.
9. Design MPA boundaries that facilitate ease of public recognition and ease of enforcement.
10. Consider existing public coastal access points when designing MPAs.
11. MPA design should consider the benefits and drawbacks of siting MPAs near to or remote from public access.
12. Consider the potential impacts of climate change, community alteration, and distributional shifts in marine species when designing MPAs.
13. Preserve the diversity of recreational, educational, commercial, and cultural uses.
14. Optimize the design of the MPA network to facilitate monitoring and research that answers resource management questions; an example is including MPAs of different protection levels in similar habitats and depths, adjacent or in otherwise comparable locations, to state marine reserves, to evaluate the effectiveness of different protection levels in meeting regional and statewide goals.
15. Ensure some MPAs are close to population centers, coastal access points, and/or research and education institutions and include areas of educational, recreational, and cultural use. [TRANSFERRED FROM GOAL 3, OBJECTIVE 1]

Implementation Considerations

Implementation considerations arise after the design of MPAs, when the California Department of Fish and Game and any other responsible agencies implement decisions of the California Fish and Game Commission and, if appropriate, the California Park and Recreation Commission, with funding from the California State Legislature or other sources.

The implementation considerations will be incorporated with the regional goals and objectives and design considerations and transmitted to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force for adoption and, then to the California Fish and Game Commission as part of the suite of recommendations for the study region. The MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group recommends the following implementation and management activities, as appropriate, also be included in the regional MPA management plans required under the master plan for MPAs (section 4.0) for designated MPAs:

1. Improve public outreach related to MPAs through the use of docents, improved signage, and production of an educational brochure for south coast MPAs.

2. When appropriate, phase the implementation of south coast MPAs to ensure their effective management, monitoring, and enforcement.
3. Ensure adequate funding for monitoring, management, outreach and enforcement is available for implementing new MPAs.
4. Develop ~~coordinated statewide~~ regional management and enforcement plans in coordination with state, local, and federal entities, including cooperative enforcement agreements, adaptive management, and jurisdictional maps, which can be effectively used, adopted statewide, and periodically reviewed.
5. Incorporate volunteer monitoring and/or cooperative research, where appropriate