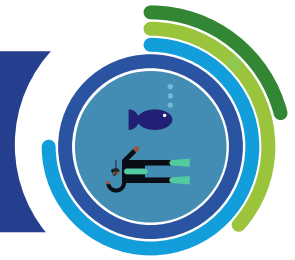


USING THE MPA GUIDE



The MPA Guide is a science-based framework to categorize, plan, track, evaluate, and discuss marine protected areas (MPAs). It provides a systematic way to organize types of MPAs and connect them with the different social and ecological outcomes they are expected to achieve.

The MPA Guide has been the work of hundreds of experts over many years. It is the result of consultation and collaboration between scientists, policymakers, NGOs, and communities across the world. Based on decades' worth of social and ecological scientific research, *The Guide* also draws on the wealth of local and traditional knowledge across the globe and input from ocean experts and practitioners working in MPA design, governance, and management.

The MPA Guide was developed to be useful, relevant, and applicable to real-world MPAs—which are defined by IUCN as areas whose primary objective is the conservation of nature. It can help assess progress towards the goals of global coverage targets, such as that set by the Convention for Biological Diversity. It is already in use around the world.

The MPA Guide has four core components:

- 1. Stage of Establishment: an MPA's status in the process of creating an MPA.**
- 2. Level of Protection: how well an MPA is protected from extractive or destructive activities.**
- 3. Enabling Conditions: principles and processes for effective MPA planning, design, and governance.**
- 4. Outcomes: the different social and ecological benefits and impacts that come from different types of MPAs, assuming Enabling Conditions are in place.**

WHAT IS THE MPA GUIDE?

The MPA Guide identifies four Stages of Establishment and four Levels of Protection. As long as an MPA, or a zone within a multi-zone MPA, meets the IUCN definition (the primary goal is the conservation of nature), it will fit into one Stage and one Level at any point in time.

Stage of Establishment

- **Proposed or Committed** by a governing or other organizing body;
- **Designated** by law or other authoritative rulemaking;
- **Implemented** with in-the-water changes in management; and
- **Actively Managed** with ongoing monitoring, adaptive management, and other elements of effective protection.

Once an MPA or zone is **Implemented**, with Enabling Conditions in place, it will start to deliver conservation outcomes in the water. This is when an MPA should be 'counted' as providing protection.

Level of Protection

The Level of Protection clarifies how well an MPA or MPA zone is protected from the following extractive or destructive activities:



Mining



Infrastructure



Dredging and
Dumping



Aquaculture



Anchoring



Fishing



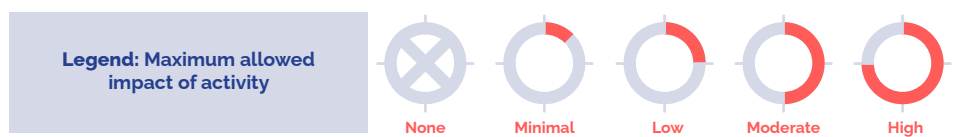
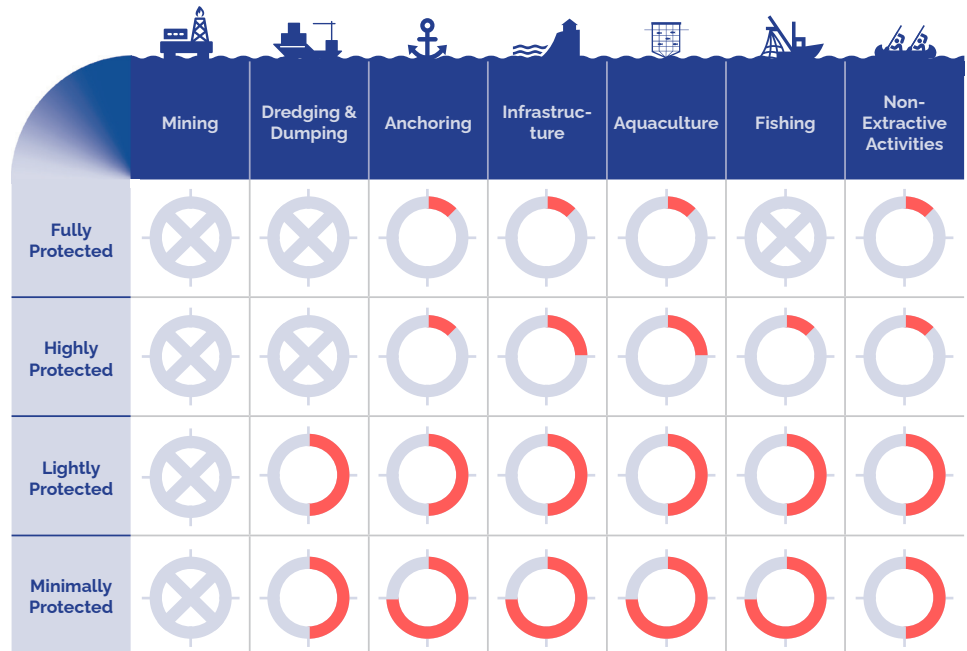
Non-extractive activities

The four Levels of Protection are based on the intensity, scale, duration, frequency, and overall impact of these seven activities. If the impact of activities is too large, the area is considered incompatible with the conservation of biodiversity and its benefits.

Levels of Protection

- **Fully Protected** with no extractive or destructive activities, and all abatable impacts minimized. These areas can include 'marine reserves' and 'no-take' areas. Any activities (such as tourism or cultural practices) must be non-extractive and have low total impact. Fishing or extraction of any wild marine resources is not allowed.
- **Highly Protected** with only minimal extractive or destructive activities, and other abatable impacts minimized. Any activities must have low total impact. For example, some Highly Protected areas may allow a small amount of traditional, subsistence or small-scale fishing that uses a few highly selective gear types; number of fishers and intensity of use must be consistent with low total impact.
- **Lightly Protected** with some protection, but moderate to significant extraction and impacts are allowed; and
- **Minimally Protected** in which more extensive extraction and other impacts are allowed, while still providing some conservation benefits to the area. Extremely destructive activities, like industrial fishing, are still prohibited.

Level of IMPACT that is allowed for each level of protection



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No value judgement is made for any type of MPA; each is respected for its circumstances and evaluated based on biodiversity conservation outcomes and their benefits.

WHAT THE MPA GUIDE PROVIDES

Consistent understanding of global ocean protection. It can be used to show where we currently stand in reaching international targets, what we still need, and how to achieve global goals. It also provides a common understanding of what is required of MPAs to ensure biodiversity conservation and its benefits.

Clarity on what effective protection looks like. By connecting the outcomes with MPA type, *The MPA Guide* clarifies that it is through Fully or Highly Protected, Implemented or Actively Managed MPAs, with key Enabling Conditions in place – such as inclusivity, transparency, accountability – that we can achieve the most effective protection of the global ocean and deliver win-win outcomes for people and the planet.

An internationally recognised and relevant framework. This framework is already in use internationally to help match Level of Protection with MPA goals, to advance Stage of Establishment, and to ensure key Enabling Conditions are in place. It enables countries to share knowledge and showcase their MPA achievements on the global stage. This logic and framework may also apply to other areas, such as protected areas on land or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs).

Science-based guidance to inform decision making and implementation. *The MPA Guide* provides the science to guide decision making in MPA policy, including opportunities to design new MPAs and modify existing MPAs to better achieve stated goals.

HOW TO BEGIN USING THE MPA GUIDE

Please visit <http://mpa-guide.protectedplanet.net> to find out more about *The MPA Guide*, including practical guidance, real-world examples, explanatory videos on each of the four core components, and an interactive decision tree to aid in categorizing your MPA or zone into a Stage of Establishment and Level of Protection. For more information, email TheMPAGuide@gmail.com.