



Overview of the Oceans Program, Pacific Region
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Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

OCEANS PROGRAM

Pacific Region

Oceans Program



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There are approximately 6,500 islands, 37,000 kilometres of shoreline and about 450,000 square kilometres of ocean in British Columbia. Through its Pacific Region Oceans Program, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), guided by the *Oceans Act*, the *Fisheries Act*, the *Species at Risk Act* and Canada's Oceans Strategy, plays a leadership role in managing the impact of human activities on Canada's west coast by creating a balance between protecting marine ecosystems and maintaining a prosperous economy.

DFO's Oceans Program helps fulfill the Government of Canada's commitment to the sustainable development and protection of our oceans and marine resources to ensure healthy and productive ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. To do this, we follow three guiding principles from Canada's Oceans Strategy.

- 1 Sustainable development and use of Canada's marine resources to support economic growth and prosperity while ensuring a viable future.
- 2 Integrated management by bringing ocean users together to manage and conserve Canada's marine resources.
- 3 A precautionary approach by "erring on the side of caution" to protect resources and preserve the marine environment.

As part of our job, we work with other federal departments, provincial agencies, Aboriginal peoples, and stakeholders with responsibility for or involvement in oceans issues in the Pacific Region. See <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/man-gest/coordination-eng.htm> for more information.

Managing our Oceans

Consistent with Canada's Ocean Strategy, DFO's Oceans Program has four concrete goals:

- 1 To develop a collaborative, integrated approach to oceans management
- 2 To expand working partnerships among oceans stakeholders and increase their responsibility and accountability for our shared resources
- 3 To optimize the economic potential of our marine resources while ensuring their conservation and sustainability
- 4 To position Canada as a world leader in oceans management

Contact Us

For more information about the Pacific Region Oceans Program, visit
<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/index-eng.htm>



Marine Protected Areas



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A key element in Canada's Oceans Strategy involves the creation of networks of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) from coast to coast to coast. An MPA is a geographically defined ocean area that is dedicated to, and managed for, the long-term conservation of the marine environment. DFO is committed to creating six additional MPAs across Canada by 2012 to protect Canada's vulnerable species and our most important, productive and biologically diverse areas.

MPAs designated under the *Oceans Act* can help conserve and protect the following:

- Commercial and non-commercial fishery resources, including marine mammals, and their habitats,
- Endangered or threatened marine species and their habitats,
- Marine areas of high biodiversity or biological productivity,
- Unique habitats, and
- Any other marine resource or habitat as is necessary to fulfill the mandate of the Minister.

In the Pacific Region, DFO's Oceans Program works with our federal and provincial partners to develop conservation and socio-economic objectives for a regional network of MPAs. Currently in the Pacific there are two designated DFO *Oceans Act* MPAs and two Areas of Interest (AOI) for proposed MPA establishment.

- Endeavour Hydrothermal Vents MPA
- Bowie Seamount MPA
- Race Rocks AOI
- Hecate Strait/Queen Charlotte Sound Glass Sponge Reefs AOI

In addition, DFO in the Pacific Region is collaborating with Parks Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation on the management of the Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site.

Benefits of Marine Protected Areas

MPAs provide a range of environmental, social and cultural benefits for Canadians, including:

Healthy marine environments

- MPAs conserve and protect marine species, the diversity of ecosystems on which marine organisms depend, and special geographical features.
- MPA networks play a role in protecting important ecological links between areas, which contributes to improved species resilience.

Economic interests

- Healthy ecosystems support sustainable industries, local economies and coastal communities.
- In time, MPAs may support fish populations, which can disperse to nearby commercial and recreational fishing areas.
- An MPA network strategy clarifies Canada's direction for marine conservation, providing ocean users with a better understanding of future access to marine resources.

Canadian culture

- MPAs conserve areas with spiritual or cultural value such as archaeological sites, shipwrecks, and areas traditionally used by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.
- Recreation, tourism and educational activities may be permitted in an MPA to improve public awareness, understanding and appreciation of marine heritage.

Integrated Oceans Management



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Integrated Oceans Management (IOM) is a collaborative way to determine how Canada's marine resources can best be developed and protected, and a commitment to coordinated planning and management of human activities that considers conservation, protection, and sustainable use of shared ocean resources and areas. MPAs are part of Canada's approach to IOM.

Large Ocean Management Areas and the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area

Nationally, Canada under its IOM approach to Oceans Management, has established five Large Ocean Management Areas (LOMAs) where IOM plans are being developed. In the Pacific Region, we are working to set up the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA)—the first LOMA to be established on the west coast.

The goal of the PNCIMA initiative is to ensure sustainable human use of a marine area while conserving ecological diversity. Participants include commercial and recreational users, non-government organizations, Aboriginal Peoples, government agencies and coastal communities.

Visit www.pncima.org for more information on the PNCIMA initiative.

Benefits of Integrated Oceans Management

IOM helps to:

- Balance socio-economic, cultural, and ecological objectives for oceans.
- Forecast and address future economic developments and needs.
- Improve coordination of new and existing management processes.
- Address conflicts between different ocean uses.
- Create greater certainty and sustainability in oceans management.
- Help account for the cumulative effects of many activities happening in marine ecosystems.
- Strengthen relationships with all partners and ocean users.

Integrated Oceans Management and Marine Protected Areas

Developing MPAs through an IOM approach can help maximize conservation effectiveness and ensure long-term success by bringing all interested stakeholders into the decision-making process. Input from all sources is considered in a fair and balanced manner, and objectives are identified and pursued in consideration of broader ecological, social, economic and cultural objectives.

Other Initiatives

The marine ecosystems off our coast are varied, productive, and precious. The programs and activities we undertake to manage and protect them are described in detail on our website. Please visit <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/man-gest/oth-aut-eng.htm> for more.