

## **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the *Spotlight on Marine Protected Areas in Canada* Report**

- Q1. What definition of marine protected area was used for this report?**
- A1. The report defines marine protected areas (MPAs) as: "a clearly defined geographical space in Canada, recognized, dedicated, and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values, that is situated partly or wholly in the marine environment (which includes inter-tidal or sub-tidal ocean, salt marshes, estuaries, Great Lakes or wetlands associated with Great Lakes)". The definition is based on the internationally-recognized IUCN definition of a protected area, but made more specific to a marine environment.
- Q2. Most of the marine protected areas in the report seem to be terrestrial (coastal). How do they qualify as "marine"?**
- A2. The marine protected area definition used in the Spotlight report allows for the inclusion of the marine component of terrestrial protected areas, which includes stretches of coastline, estuaries, inter-tidal areas, etc. All statistics in the report are based solely on the marine portions of the protected areas; terrestrial portions were excluded. In many cases the marine component is just a small strip of a much larger terrestrial protected area. This is evident from the maps, which only show the marine components.
- Q3. How was it determined which coastal areas to include?**
- A3. All the federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions with authority to establish protected areas submitted their information for the report, following the same set of rules (criteria). Only coastal areas that include an inter-tidal area, salt marsh, estuary, Great Lake, or coastal wetland (associated with a Great Lake) were included in the Spotlight report. A 1:50 000 scale mapped coastline was applied to standardize the split between coastal (marine) and terrestrial portions of protected areas, except in cases where a higher-resolution boundary was provided by the jurisdictions.
- Q4. Why were some marine protected areas without IUCN categories included in the report?**
- A4. All sites included in this report had to either have an IUCN category assigned to them, or be eligible for IUCN categorization, even if the category had not been determined yet. The marine protected areas described as "not classified" in the report fall into the latter category. Sites that did not satisfy the IUCN definition of a protected area and were ineligible for IUCN categorization were not included in the report.
- Q5. Why were Coral Conservation Areas and other fisheries closures not included in the report, given their conservation value?**
- A5. The potential for management measures such as Coral Conservation Areas, sponge-reef closures and other fisheries closures to contribute to marine conservation is well recognized. Many of these closures meet the definition of a marine protected area and will have a role in achieving objectives of marine protected area networks, once network planning gets underway. At this point in time, Fisheries and Oceans Canada is still in the process of evaluating hundreds of fisheries closures against a set of specific criteria for conservation value. Future reports of marine protected areas and MPA networks in Canada will most certainly include such measures.
- Q6. What was the process for collecting and vetting the data?**

A6. The data for this report was submitted by federal-provincial-territorial government agencies in the summer of 2009, for the purpose of building a national inventory of current marine protected areas in Canada. In future the MPA inventory will form part of the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas' Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System (CARTS), to create one central database for all marine protected areas in Canada. The data in the inventory has been vetted by jurisdictional representatives to ensure it is complete and accurate. The statistics, graphics and maps in the Spotlight report were produced using this data, and were reviewed by the jurisdictional representatives prior to publication.

**Q7. How were the Case Studies for the report selected?**

A7. Suggestions for case studies were solicited from operational staff of the federal-provincial-territorial government agencies participating in preparation of the report. Selection of case studies was based on two main criteria: achieving balanced representation of federal and provincial/territorial protected area authorities; and obtaining good geographical coverage. Since provincial/territorial areas were predominantly coastal, federal sites were selected to feature the offshore and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence water system. Although only a limited number of areas could be featured in the report, the public will soon have access to an interactive web-based search tool to learn about any and all of Canada's marine protected areas. Even listing all the 797 marine protected areas in the report would have added another 15 pages to the length of the document.