Revised 12 November 2010

# Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) report on Marine Protected Areas and MPA Network Planning to CCEA-AGM, Friday 5 November 2010

## 1. Marine Protected Area Network Planning - Highlights

*National Framework for Canada's Network of Marine Protected Areas*

- January 2010: Decision to create a higher-level, more strategic National Framework for Canada's MPA Network; original Framework became draft Technical Guidelines
- February-March: Developed an engagement strategy (consultation approach)
- April 2010: Deputy Minister approval to begin engagement (consultation) on National Framework
- May-ongoing: Engagement within FPT government agencies, targeted engagement with Aboriginal groups, key industries and ENGOs, ramping up to more intensive engagement with all parties
- Intend to post on the Oceans Portal on 29 November for a 2-month public review period

*National Inventory of Marine Protected Areas*

- Inventory of FPT protected areas with a marine component; Canada's national network of MPAs will build on 799 existing F/P/T MPAs + fishery closures, other conservation areas
- Spotlight on Marine Protected Areas in Canada report was released on Oceans Day (8 June 2010)
- Assessment of "other conservation measures" is currently underway

*Technical Guidelines for Bioregional MPA Network Planning*

- Dusting off January 2010 version; will work on guidelines with FPT "TEC" over the winter of 2010-2011

## 2. Marine Protected Area Operations – Basic Stats

- 8 *Oceans Act* MPAs have been established
- 9 Areas of Interest (AOI) or AOI proposals have either been announced or are under consideration

## 3. Marine Protected Area Operations - Highlights

- The Tarium Niryutait Marine Protected Area (MPA) was established on September 15, 2010 (registration date). The conservation objective of this new MPA is to conserve and protect beluga whales and the supporting ecosystem; to maintain a thriving population of beluga whales for optimum sustainable culturally important subsistence harvest by Inuvialuit.

- Two new Areas of Interest were announced by Minister Shea on Oceans Day (June 8, 2010): the Laurentian Channel at the entrance of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Hecate Strait/Queen Charlotte Sound Glass Sponge Reefs.

The Laurentian Channel contains the highest concentration of black dogfish in Canadian waters and is the only place where pupping occurs; it is an important spawning, nursery and feeding area for a variety of species including porbeagle shark, smooth skate, monkfish, pollock and white hake; and it is a critical migration corridor for marine mammals moving in and out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Laurentian Channel also provides important overwintering habitat for cod and redfish stocks, a significant part of those species' lifecycles.

Reefs the size of the ones found in Hecate Strait/Queen Charlotte Sound have not been found elsewhere in the world, contributing to their global importance for protection. Preliminary data indicates that reefs may provide nursery and ongoing habitat for a range of species including other sponges, worms, shellfish, bivalves and diverse fish species.

These AOIs will be subject to detailed evaluation and public consultation before a decision to formally designate them as MPAs is made.

- Reporting on the monitoring of established MPAs show that:

For the Gilbert Bay MPA:
There is a decline in abundance of the Gilbert Bay cod population and the indication of poor recruitment in recent years. The biomass of commercial size fish has decreased substantially during the past two years. Commercial and recreational fishing activity in areas surrounding the MPA has increased in recent years; however, the MPA has provided protection to important spawning and nursery habitats, as well as some adult foraging/feeding habitats.
- *Gilbert Bay Marine Protected Area science indicator monitoring*
http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/CSAS/Csas/publications/resdocs-docrech/2010/2010_060_e.pdf
- *Review of the Gilbert Bay Marine Protected Area Monitoring Indicators, Protocols and Strategies, and an Assessment of the Gilbert Bay Cod Population*
http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/CSAS/Csas/publications/sar-as/2010/2010_027_e.pdf

For Eastport MPA:
Changes in Eastport MPA include higher abundance of large lobsters, including ovigerous females, a broadening of population size structure and increases in average sizes of male and female lobsters. Some benefits, including the increased presences of large lobsters were detected in the adjacent commercially fished areas. The MPAs have contributed to conserving and enhancing this population of American lobsters.
- *Assessing Marine Protected Areas as a conservation tool: a decade later, are we continuing to enhance lobster populations at Eastport, Newfoundland?*
http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/336567.pdf)