



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

 3rd International Marine Protected Areas Congress
MARSEILLE & CORSICA-FRANCE 21-27 OCTOBER 2013

Organized by



Table of Contents

Program Overview	2
Introduction.....	2
<i>What is IMPAC3?</i>	2
<i>Congress structure</i>	3
Overarching Themes and Day-Specific Topics: the Call’s Philosophy	3
<i>Day-Specific Topics</i>	3
<i>Overarching Themes</i>	3
How Do I Submit my Paper(s)?.....	4
<i>Timing</i>	4
<i>Format</i>	4
Day-Specific Topics and Subtopics	4
Overarching Themes	5
Selection and Programming	5
Overarching Themes.....	6
Accelerating the Establishment of MPAs (Towards a Global MPA Network)	6
Promoting the Growth of the Blue Economy within MPAs.....	6
Successfully Implementing the Ecosystem Approach	6
Supporting Local Governance and Broadening Participation	7
Incorporating the Heritage of Cultural and Traditional Knowledge.....	7
Advancing MPAs as Part of the Strategy against Climate Change	7
Day-Specific Topics.....	8
The Ocean Opus: From Humankind to <i>Oceankind</i>	8
Science and Knowledge in the Service of Effective Management	9
<i>Oceanography</i>	9
<i>Inventories of species and habitats</i>	9
<i>Social sciences</i>	9
<i>Impact studies</i>	9
<i>Local and traditional knowledge</i>	10
<i>Conservation biology</i>	10
Tools for Effective MPA Management & Enforcement.....	11
<i>Management plan: the primary tool to implement MPA</i>	11
<i>Conservation approaches</i>	11
<i>An ecologically representative and well-connected network</i>	11
<i>Well-managed MPAs: assessment and certification</i>	12
<i>IUCN MPA categories</i>	12
Governance, partnerships and industry involvement.....	13
<i>MPA governance</i>	13
<i>MPAs, multiple use areas and user interactions within MPAs</i>	13
<i>Working with the private sector: contributions and empowerment in a win-win approach</i>	14
<i>Communicating around MPAs</i>	14
Regional Approaches.....	15
<i>Regional initiatives</i>	15
<i>Ecological networks</i>	15
<i>Regional networking</i>	15
<i>Regional governance, cooperation and enforcement</i>	16

Program Overview

Introduction

This document is designed to assist you in contributing content to the first part of the third International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC3), to be held in Marseille, France, from October 21 to October 25, 2013. Please note that the second part of the congress, organized in Corsica, is set aside for high-level policy issues.

The program of the congress is currently under preparation, with the primary goal of answering participants' needs. This is why your contribution is decisive in defining the nature and the success of the event.

We invite you to make online submissions to the IMPAC3 jury, on www.impact3.org between March 15 and May 10. You will be advised at a later date whether or not your abstract has been accepted, and for what kind of format (poster, knowledge café, workshop...). Based on the jury's choice of abstracts, a core committee will develop the detailed program.

Each day of the congress (other than the opening day) will be devoted to one of four different topics each each of which include subtopics. Meanwhile, six overarching themes will run throughout the week. You will find below two detailed lists, one for day-specific topics and the other for overarching themes.

Any proposal must state clearly to which items of both lists it relates.

What is IMPAC3?

IMPAC 3 is a high-quality and professionally coordinated international congress which:

- allows managers and practitioners of marine protected areas to exchange ideas and learn from each other;
- defines recommendations to orient relevant global, regional and national policy processes;
- assists in the establishment and ongoing implementation of a global, lasting, ecologically representative and effectively managed network of MPAs, in coherence with the sustainable development of coastal and maritime activities;
- strives to inform, involve and influence all stakeholders at different stages.

Congress structure

COMMUNICATING, PROMOTING, CREATING, SHARING AND MANAGING WITH EFFICIENCY					DEFINING GLOBAL POLICIES	
Monday, Oct. 21	Tuesday, Oct. 22	Wednesday, Oct. 23	Thursday, Oct. 24	Friday, Oct. 25	Saturday, Oct. 26	Sunday, Oct. 27
Opening: the Ocean Opus <i>Mediterranean Focus</i>	Tools for MPA Management & Enforcement	Science and Knowledge at the Service of Effective Management	Governance, Partnerships & Industry Involvement	Regional approaches	High Level Policy Meeting 1/2	High Level Policy Meeting 2/2
<p>Plenary Sessions feature key exchanges, debates, daily interactive conclusions, films, and broadband access to projects all over the world.</p> <p>Workshops and the Knowledge Café involve exchanges on specific topics within small to mid-sized groups.</p> <p>The Blue Society Pavilion provides a friendly venue to debate, showcase projects, understand different points of view, and mingle with all players involved in the building of an MPA-centered Blue Society.</p> <p>The Poster Session is a place to exchange informally on specific topics throughout the week.</p>					<p>Restricted access (200 persons max)</p>	

Overarching Themes and Day-Specific Topics: the Call’s Philosophy

IMPAC3 welcomes all kinds of proposals, whatever their subject and format, as long as they have a connection to both the overarching themes and the day-specific topics of the congress.

Day-Specific Topics

Each day turns the spotlight on an important MPA-related issue, to be considered from a local and/or regional point of view. As indicated in the table above, they are:

- Day 1: Opening Ceremony: the Ocean Opus – No contributions to be featured*
- Day 2: Tools for MPA Management & Enforcement
- Day 3: Science and Knowledge in Service of Effective Management
- Day 4: Governance, Partnerships and Industry Involvement
- Day 5: Regional approaches

Overarching Themes

Additionally, six transverse themes have been identified as especially relevant to the objectives of the congress and to the preoccupations of its audience. They bear connections to each of the day-specific topics and will be developed throughout the week. They focus on:

1. Accelerating the Establishment of MPAs (Towards a Global MPA Network)
2. Promoting the Growth of the Blue Economy within MPAs
3. Successfully Implementing the Ecosystem Approach

4. Supporting Local Governance and Broadening Participation
5. Incorporating the Heritage of Cultural and Traditional Knowledge
6. Advancing MPAs as Part of the Strategy Against Climate Change

Each proposal must fit in with at least 1 day-specific topic **and** at least 1 overarching theme. In their abstracts, contributors must therefore mention one item or more from **both** lists above.

How Do I Submit my Paper(s)?

Timing

Start planning your contribution now and be ready to submit it online when our official website opens on **March 15**. Go to www.impact3.org, “Program” section, “Call for Abstracts” subsection. **Submissions close on May 10.**

Format

Your abstract must be no longer than half a page or roughly 300 words. (You may append additional files referring to your abstract)

After submissions are closed, you will be advised whether your paper is selected, set aside on the waiting list, or dismissed.

Bear in mind that your abstract must mention which aspects of the agenda it refers to:

- tick one or two of the six overarching themes;
- tick one or several of the day-specific topics and subtopics.

Please be as specific as possible when classifying your abstract among the themes, topics and subtopics listed below.

Day-Specific Topics and Subtopics

Science and Knowledge at the Service of Effective Management

- Oceanography
- Inventories of species and habitats
- Social sciences
- Impact studies
- Local and traditional knowledge
- Conservation biology

Tools for Effective MPA Management & Enforcement

- Management plan
- Conservation strategies
- An ecologically representative and well-connected network
- Well-managed MPAs: assessment and certification
- IUCN MPA categories

- Governance, Partnerships and Industry Involvement
 - Governance
 - MPAs, multiple use areas and user interactions within MPAs
 - Working with industry: contribution and empowerment in a win-win approach
 - Communicating about MPAs: What do industry and the public want to know?
- Regional approaches
 - Regional initiatives
 - Ecological networks
 - Regional networking
 - Regional governance, cooperation and enforcement

Overarching Themes

- Accelerating the Establishment of MPAs (Towards a Global MPA Network)
- Promoting the Growth of the Blue Economy within MPAs
- Successfully Implementing the Ecosystem Approach
- Supporting Local governance and Broadening Participation
- Incorporating the Heritage of Cultural and Traditional Knowledge
- Advancing MPAs as Part of the Strategy against Climate Change

Selection and Programming

After April 30, the jury will contact each contributor and propose a format for presenting the contribution at the congress. Several options exist for sharing experiences/projects:

- discussion panels, speeches, debates;
- posters;
- Knowledge Cafés (small roundtables on new or very specific topics)

Furthermore, the jury may contact any participant to invite them to speak in plenary session, for instance by taking part in a debate, a keynote presentation or a dialogue.

For specific events or presentations (movies, books and official announcements), please send a request to abstracts@impac3.org from March, 15.

Overarching Themes

Accelerating the Establishment of MPAs (Towards a Global MPA Network)

The process of creating and managing a marine protected area may be seen as a series of steps, punctuated by decisions, linked or not to a local, national or a regional strategy, or springing from the ground up. MPAs should be created where people are especially likely to benefit from enhanced biodiversity protection.

In order to identify significant biodiversity areas (such as Key Biodiversity Areas, Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas, etc.) and to ascertain the relevance of implementing MPAs, it is essential to begin with a full inventory of ecological and socio-economic data, carried out by users and stakeholders. Various types of knowledge (scientific, sectoral, traditional, etc.) must be pooled so as to obtain a transverse picture. This picture is analyzed through the prism of a global network of MPAs. The final decision is based on the best available knowledge, and the MPA category is then defined through its goals, limitations, governance and action plan. Each country finalizes the process by means of laws and legal frameworks that define different statuses.

Promoting the Growth of the Blue Economy within MPAs

Beyond fishing, the Blue Economy encompasses all industries revolving around the oceans' wealth. Nations and corporations alike are increasingly aware of its importance and potential, both in waters under national jurisdiction and in the high seas. The socio-economic valuation and assessment of marine biodiversity and the new blue carbon market pave the way for a clearer definition of the notion of sustainable ocean development, aggregating economic, social and biodiversity factors.

To make the exploitation of the oceans' resources equitable and sustainable, marine areas need to be regulated. Economic players must become more involved, while being held more accountable for their practices. Techniques must therefore be developed to avoid, reduce or obtain compensation for the impact of their activities.

In the context of the emerging Blue Economy within the "Blue Society", MPAs have a specific role to play in finding ways to reconcile economic opportunities and long-term human well-being.

Successfully Implementing the Ecosystem Approach

The ecosystem approach has gained wide recognition for the analysis of dynamic coastal and marine environment in terms of both conservation and management. This strategy reflects the full complexity of MPAs, by integrating the management of land, water and living resources, in order to promote their conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.

The ecosystem approach requires adaptive management techniques, to deal with the complex and dynamic nature of ecosystems and our incomplete understanding of their functioning. The challenge for MPA managers is to combine them with other management and conservation approaches, as well as with national policies and legislative frameworks.

Supporting Local Governance and Broadening Participation

Local communities are essential players in the creation and management of MPAs.

Their involvement reflects and builds on native populations' long history of local and regional resource usage, as well as on their customary laws and control systems. Through local consultations and shared governance, MPA decision-makers and managers enhance MPA appropriation and understanding, leading to the full engagement of local communities.

MPAs raise local awareness of the benefits of conservation measures, helping populations realize the importance of the long-term sustainability of the protected areas in which they live or have an interest. Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) are a typical example of good local governance.

Incorporating the Heritage of Cultural and Traditional Knowledge

Owing to the Conference on Biological Diversity and to the ecosystem approach, it is now acknowledged that humans, in all their cultural variety, are an integral component of ecosystems. Traditional knowledge and values, sacred and religious sites, and ancestral uses have much to contribute to the management and planning process of MPAs.

The integration of a cultural approach to policies and regulations of the use of the oceans is essential. The ocean is a global public good belonging to humankind. Guaranteeing local appropriation of MPAs and their good shared management implies **taking into account the needs and cultural specificities of the island and coastal communities that populate it, and the behavior of the users and professionals that exploit it.**

Advancing MPAs as Part of the Strategy against Climate Change

The oceans play a critical role in regulating global climate change, because they form the largest long-term carbon sink on Earth (55 percent of all sequestered biological carbon is captured by marine organisms). By protecting natural marine ecosystems and maintaining essential ecosystem services, MPAs are a significant part of the global answer to climate change. An ecosystem approach to the first impacts of climate change on the oceans (rising sea levels, changes in ocean currents, ocean acidification...) leads to a twofold response, including both mitigation (storing and capturing carbon) and adaptation. Blue Carbon solutions, such as conserving mangroves, sea grasses and salt-marsh grasses, must be explored and discussed as a potential economic and strategic tool for MPA incomes.

Day-Specific Topics

Monday, October 21:

The Ocean Opus: From Humankind to *Oceankind*

This theme is not included in the call for papers.

Human cultures and societies are defined by the biological and physical environments in which they live. Similarly, **policies that aim to protect the oceans must involve a cultural and philosophical dimension**, as well as a physical one.

The ocean is a global public good essential to humankind. It follows that nations must assume common responsibility for, and work together towards, preserving the oceans' future. At the same time, they must take into account the specific needs and cultures of the island and coastal communities that populate the ocean, and the behavior of the users that exploit it, commercially or otherwise. The challenge lies in combining both aspects.

We promote a cultural and philosophical vision shared by all of humankind and organized around the notion of a sustainable ocean: what we call *Oceankind*. This concept represents a new paradigm for the preservation and management of marine life.

Sea and land cannot be conceived of as separate entities. Protecting the ocean means reconsidering how we live and work, wherever we live.

On Monday, October 21, Marseille welcomes all marine players, regardless of geographical, cultural or professional background, to work collectively towards the advent of *Oceankind*.

Tuesday, October 22: Science and Knowledge in the Service of Effective Management

Strategies for setting up or managing MPAs should be based on the best available knowledge. The congress aims to offer an overview of, and opportunities to exchange on, the main scientific developments of the last few years in the MPA field. Experiences in leveraging science for enhanced management, decision-making or public awareness will be most welcome. Particular attention will be paid to how the scientific community, managers, economic players and the larger public interact on knowledge issues.

The congress is expected to cover the following topics:

Oceanography

Under discussion here is the way ecosystems function, and what dynamics and patterns they depend on. This question lies at the nexus of many disciplines, including physics, chemistry, biology, ecology and climatology. It may be considered at various scales, from the local to the large marine ecosystem. Among the main issues are a better definition of conservation objectives; the adequacy of the shape of MPAs and of MPA networks, how climate change might impact conservation strategies; and what resilience may be expected from marine ecosystems. Modeling and the use of geographical information systems (GIS) are among the tools to be examined.

Inventories of species and habitats

Drawing up inventories of species and mapping habitats are very often the prerequisites to any conservation or management measure. They mobilize a wide range of techniques, from basic divers' observations to remote sensors and remote-operated vehicles. Protocols must be both scientifically sound and operational for managers. Inventories also present a challenge in terms of data management and their sharing. Due to their cost, they remain a domain where there is room for progress and innovation. Taxonomy deserves special mention when it comes to inventories, and the elaboration of red lists remains a critical tool for conservation.

Social sciences

Social sciences play a growing role in the study, shaping and organization of MPAs. Sociology and anthropology interact with the very definition of MPAs, helping to make them more efficient, people-oriented systems. Economics come into play to help justify the decisions made, through the valuation of marine ecosystems and of MPAs themselves, or through cost-benefit studies and other valuation methods. Geography helps to take a step back and to consider issues at scales consistent with MPA design and management. Seascapes are an emerging subject and offer interesting perspectives.

Impact studies

MPA managers are deeply concerned about impacts, whether of climate change, of terrestrial and marine activities, or of conservation measures. But it often proves difficult to distinguish between the effects of each separate type of pressure, to quantify their impact from an ecological point of

view, or to evaluate their cumulative effects. Because monitoring strategies and techniques are crucial to managers, they must undergo strict scrutiny, to make sure they are based on reliable data and well-defined indicators.

Local and traditional knowledge

Empirical knowledge is gaining increasing recognition for two reasons: it provides valuable information, while increasing the involvement of stakeholders. Participative science in particular is emerging as an interesting way of improving knowledge, gaining public participation and raising awareness.

Conservation biology

Finally, conservation biology must be paid due regard. It remains a central pillar of nature protection and decision-making. In particular, the place and role of MPAs in species conservation strategies needs to be questioned, for the sake of efficiency. For example, the creation of marine sanctuaries for mammals or other migratory species is still a matter of scientific debate, even though it has long enjoyed the support of decision makers.

Wednesday, October 23: Tools for Effective MPA Management & Enforcement

No tools, no management!

“Well-governed and effectively managed protected areas are a proven method for safeguarding both habitats and populations of species and for delivering important ecosystem services.”

Aichi Target 11, Technical Rationale extended (excerpted from COP/10/INF/12/Rev.1)

In accordance with Aichi Target 11, attention should be paid not only to the quantitative objective of protecting 10 percent of the ocean’s surface, but also to the quality of that protection: marine protected areas must be “effectively and equitably managed”. With this in mind, how are management concepts evolving? How can management plans be further improved? What are the best conservation strategies and techniques? How can they be enforced safely and consistently? How are we to assess the effectiveness of MPAs and of their management?

To address these issues, we suggest organizing presentations and discussions around the following points:

Management plan: the primary tool to implement MPA

Management plans define nature conservation objectives, action programs, regulations, monitoring instruments, as well as control and surveillance procedures. They are increasingly broadening their scope to encompass socio-economic development, with the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders.

Specifically, the congress is to address how MPAs can help to reduce poverty and encourage livelihoods. It should also explore how MPAs can finance themselves, especially by integrating the valuation of ecosystem services with the decision-making process. Financing mechanisms, whether already in use or to be developed, will be reviewed on different scales (from the local to the international).

Conservation approaches

We would like focus here on the most important roles of MPAs: the protection and the restoration of habitats and species, the management of living resources, and the maintaining of marine ecosystem integrity.

Among the topics to be developed are the design of MPAs, their impact on human activities, their restoration techniques, their use of artificial features and their methods for ensuring stakeholder cooperation. Emphasis may be laid on the context of pressures from climate change and from invasive species.

An ecologically representative and well-connected network

The creation of networks linking MPAs serves the ambition of developing a global conservation strategy, which would meet ecological objectives more effectively and comprehensively than individual sites can do alone. The notion of MPA networks merely reflects the high interconnection of marine ecosystems and the long range of migratory species.

A first set of questions revolves around strategies to make sure such networks involve all stakeholders. Aspects to be considered include: methods for sharing knowledge, especially through the use of modeling and of geographical information systems; discussion and decision-making processes; and the integration of stakeholders' diverse constraints in marine spatial planning.

A second set of questions deals more specifically with strengthening cooperation among MPA managers: finding ways to communicate more efficiently, to allow for common action.

Well-managed MPAs: assessment and certification

Within the last few years there has been a growing interest in developing standards for the assessment and certification of protected area management, as well as for the professionalization of protected area management skills. Both areas of interest are related and stem from a desire to **improve recognition and rewards for effective, well-managed sites and for capacity-building among their staff**. What strategy may be envisioned for delivering global certification, taking into account all types of MPAs and ensuring compatibility with existing schemes? What kind of tools and technologies are needed to achieve it?

IUCN MPA categories

IUCN's Categories of Protected Areas run from "No Take" Strict Preservation Zones to Sustainable Use Areas. Each MPA category refers to specific objectives and purposes that orient the coming status of the area. Is that classification fine enough to reflect the diversity of marine ecosystems and of real-life MPAs?

Thursday, October 24 : Governance, partnerships and industry involvement

Because the deterioration of marine ecosystems has multiple and complex causes, protecting the oceans necessarily involves a collective and cross-sectoral effort. The challenge lies in bringing home to users, and especially to industries, the extent to which different marine ecosystems depend on each other – just as the different uses made of these ecosystems are interconnected. Only then will the separate players assume their own share of responsibility in the conservation of the oceans.

When it comes to MPAs, it is a known fact that questions of governance and of interactions between uses and conservation objectives are of paramount importance. In this respect, promising recent developments include the increasing participation of stakeholders in the governance of MPAs; the development of ecosystem valuation; the improvement of socio-economic instruments to estimate the benefits generated by MPAs and the size of populations who enjoy them; and the growing familiarity of MPA managers with communication techniques.

MPA governance

Legal frameworks are the most obvious variable in MPA governance. At the national level, they often call for improvement, and here returns on experience would be welcome. At the international level, the Montego Bay convention provides an overarching legal basis, but concerns may be raised about how much security it offers MPAs, both in waters under and beyond national jurisdiction.

The second important aspect of MPA governance is the participation of stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Contributions might also consider how the public and recreational users deal with MPAs; how initiatives from local communities may be encouraged and taken into account; and what specific roles civil society, NGOs and local authorities are to play.

MPAs, multiple use areas and user interactions within MPAs

Traditionally, the question of human activities in MPAs has been viewed in terms of impacts, and therefore of prohibition and/or regulation. Evaluating pressures on the ecosystems and taking measures to temper them still preoccupies MPA managers. But as MPA networks expand and cover ever larger areas, they must find ways to combine nature protection and human activities, and even assume responsibility for managing conflicts between users. Proposals could profitably tackle the question of impact evaluation and limitation, as well as the subject of multiple uses and conflict management.

On another scale, marine protected areas should constitute a key element in marine spatial planning (MSP), which aims to protect ecological processes and the ecosystem services they support (such as fishing, marine tourism and recreation, and cultural uses of the ocean). Marine spatial planning must integrate MPAs because these areas are concurrently observatories to monitor the oceans, marine wildlife habitats, educational opportunities, fish-stock replenishing areas and ecosystem resilience areas.

Sustainable financing is critical if marine protection is to be effective. Governments need to assess the financial value of marine ecosystem services and integrate marine biodiversity capital in the oceans' economic and social wealth. User fees, tourism taxes and payments for ecosystem services hold promise as tools for MPA financing. In other parts of the world, conservation-incentive agreements have been used to support local marine protection efforts. The congress proposes to review current experiences and to explore new avenues for MPA financing. Additionally, special focus will be given to the Blue Carbon market. Is this the new investment Eldorado? And how might MPAs could be part of the processus?

Working with the private sector: contributions and empowerment in a win-win approach

Networks of MPAs can help maintain food security, incomes and jobs. They play an invaluable role in strengthening the foundations of many blue economies, and in catering to people who use the sea for recreational purposes. For maximum effectiveness regarding incomes, sustainable development and MPA networks, a range of complementary measures must be employed, as part of the overall ecosystem approach. They include industry stewardship and best practices, fisheries and habitat management, risk management and the monitoring of environmental effects. For the private sector, working with MPAs constitutes an opportunity to develop innovations and technologies compatible with ocean sustainability. For tourism, sports and recreation, fisheries, aquaculture, and research, it represents a way of safeguarding the resources and amenities on which they depend. To industries less dependent on ecosystem health, such as oil and gas, sand and gravels, energy or shipping, MPAs can offer solutions to compensate for their impact and partnerships to improve their environmental behavior.

Communicating around MPAs

What do MPA managers stand to gain from improving their communication techniques?

Successful MPA management relies on the active involvement of many: those who depend on the sea for a living or for recreation, industries, decision makers, and ultimately entire populations. For MPAs to gain traction, these diverse players must be made aware of the challenges facing their marine environment, and of the services rendered by MPAs. This is not merely a question of creating a positive atmosphere: once industries and the larger public commit their support, they become an essential information source for MPA managers, helping them to keep abreast of changing uses, and to adapt their strategies accordingly. **In this sense, communication techniques are a defining element of adaptive management.**

This instrument, however, must be honed for maximum effectiveness. Hence the need for reviewing participants' experience: What communication tools offer a good return on investment? What conditions must be fulfilled to gain hold of the target's attention? And above all, **what messages to we want to get across, and to what set of players?**

Possible communication objectives include explaining how MPAs impact a target group's activities, and what benefits that group might expect in return; providing scientific background, so that outsiders might appreciate the stakes; and highlighting MPAs' role in scientific research. Contributions may tackle one or the other message, or consider the way each must be articulated to reach its specific target: the general public, decision makers, private industries, or any other group.

Friday, October 25: Regional Approaches

Setting up and managing networks of MPAs is a multi-scale problem. The task may first be addressed on the scale of marine eco-regions. Such projects may lead to coherent and consistent networks, but are complicated by the fact that they usually overlap several nations. Regional sea conventions, where they exist, offer a political framework for international cooperation, but they have their own limitations, for instance in dealing with the high seas. Transnational cooperation sometimes provides appropriate solutions, helping to consider ecosystems as a whole, regardless of borders. The number of individuals and institutions ambitioning to set up MPAs and/or to improve their management is rising constantly, and so is their interconnection.

The congress is a great opportunity to take the pulse of regional dynamics, and to envision how diverse initiatives and programs can lend concrete shape to international ocean-governance objectives. Comparing outcomes, discussing how networks function on a daily basis, helping people meet and imagine new collaborative projects, bringing regions to work together more closely: all this serves to strengthen actions and improve coordination, within a context of interconnected seas.

More specifically, contributions are expected on the following topics:

Regional initiatives

Numerous initiatives exist on the scale of marine eco-regions. They should be reported on, in order to share experience and gain a perspective on where we stand in terms of meeting Aichi Target 11 on time, in 2020. Such presentations could focus on challenges raised by specific regional contexts, on governance practices on a regional level (e.g. regional sea conventions), and/or on existing networks of individuals or institutions and their achievements. Contributions might include descriptions of current, operational regional MPA networks; suggestions to strengthen and expand them; proposals to fill in remaining gaps; and discussions of how regional seas and other regional instruments might help countries to reinforce MPA networks. Particular attention should be paid to the high seas, and on the polar regions (depending on proposed contributions).

Ecological networks

MPAs networks should be ecologically representative and well-connected. The key words here are: coherence, connectivity, representativity, scales, oceanography, migratory species... Solutions are expected to be found through regional targets, spatial planning, large MPAs, duplication... The evaluation of MPA networks is a central aspect of this congress: what is the status of ecosystem coverage on the regional scale? Do we adequately address ecological representativity, integrity and connectivity? How do we track targets? How do we make regional targets detailed, specific and measurable? What needs to be monitored on the regional scale?

Regional networking

Under this heading, we would like to look at conditions for regional success, in terms of human organization, techniques and outcomes. Notions that might be addressed include networking tools, networks of managers, professional tools, social networks involving stakeholders (industry among

them), regional instruments, networks as learning tools, and their use for advancing the practical implementation of integrated marine spatial planning.

Regional governance, cooperation and enforcement

Where and how can regional approaches and actions strengthen MPA governance?

Regional MPA governance should combine top-down and bottom-up approaches. It relies on cooperation between organizations such as regional sea conventions and regional fisheries-management organizations or other fisheries organizations, as well as on global authorities such as the International Maritime Organization or the International Sea-Bed Authority.

The question encompasses planning aspects, notably the role of regional seas in setting and meeting regional biodiversity targets (defining priority activities to fill in gaps; designing protocols, regional strategic schemes and actions plans); the mechanisms for setting up and enforcing responses, and the equitable sharing of MPA costs and benefits on a regional level. Among other subjects, contributions are expected to address tools for regional MPA governance, cooperation and enforcement; to review practical experiences; and to compare governance.

As we are preparing for IMPAC3, we look forward to your contribution.