

Reinventing residual reserves in the sea: are we favouring ease of establishment over need for protection?

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Abstract

1. As systems of marine protected areas (MPAs) expand globally, there is a risk that new MPAs will be biased toward places that are remote or unpromising for extractive activities, and hence follow the trend of terrestrial protected areas in being 'residual' to commercial uses. A resulting problem is that least protection is often given to the species and ecosystems that are most exposed to threatening processes.
2. There are strong political motivations to establish residual reserves that minimize costs and conflicts with users of natural resources. These motivations will remain effective while success continues to be measured in terms of area (km²) protected.
3. The global pattern of marine protected areas was reviewed, which appears to be residual. The extent to which MPAs in Australia are residual nationally and also regionally within the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Marine Park was also examined.
4. Nationally, the recently announced Commonwealth marine reserves were found to be strongly residual, making almost no difference to 'business as usual' for most ocean uses. Underlying this result was the imperative to minimize costs, but without the spatial constraints of explicit quantitative objectives for representing bioregions or the range of ecological features.
5. In contrast, the 2004 rezoning of the GBR was exemplary, and the potential for residual protection was limited by representing a minimum percentage of finely subdivided bioregions and habitats. Nonetheless, even at this regional scale, protection was uneven between bioregions and within-bioregion heterogeneity might have led to no-take zones being established in areas unsuitable for trawling and also with species composition different from trawled areas.
6. A simple four-step framework of questions for planners and policy makers is proposed to help reverse the emerging residual tendency of MPAs and maximize their effectiveness for conservation. This involves checks on the least-cost approach to establishing MPAs to avoid perverse outcomes.

Keywords: marine protected area (MPA); systematic conservation planning; conservation priority; biodiversity; extractive activities; fisheries

1. Introduction

Anthropogenic activities increasingly threaten marine ecosystems, with major impacts from resource exploitation, land-based pollution, invasive species, climate change, and from other sources (e.g. Halpern *et al.*, 2008; Swartz *et al.*, 2010). To mitigate the impacts of threats to global marine biodiversity, international treaties, such as the 1982 Rio Summit, encourage countries to adopt holistic conservation targets and more sustainable practices. Recent assessments of the global environment show, however, that little progress has been made 20 years after Rio (Rio+20), with progress demonstrated toward only four out of the 90 most pressing environmental goals (UNEP, 2012). A similar concern has been expressed for the marine environment (Veitch *et al.*, 2012), leading to calls for increased protection of marine ecosystems and species.

While several approaches can be used to protect marine biodiversity from anthropogenic threats, marine protected areas (MPAs) are recognized as a key management tool (Gaines *et al.*, 2010; Veitch *et al.*, 2012). In practice, MPAs refer broadly to a zoning of the oceans in

which human activities are restricted to protect species or ecosystems for the primary purposes of conservation. Levels of restriction range from partial (e.g. focus only on benthic species, or only limiting one type of fishing gear or activity) to high (e.g. “no-take” zones, also often named “marine reserves”) and almost total (“no-entry” zones). However, MPA effectiveness can be variable, depending on the appropriateness of zoning, objectives of management, and levels of compliance (Agardy *et al.*, 2011; Mora and Sale, 2011), and marine ecosystem types are very unevenly represented within MPAs (Spalding *et al.*, 2008). Even with these limitations, MPAs can contribute to social and ecological goals for sustainable use of marine natural resources (Fox *et al.*, 2011; Ban *et al.*, 2012; Rice *et al.*, 2012).

Although MPAs are widely recognized tools for biodiversity protection, less than 3% of the marine realm is currently protected, compared to more than 12% of the world’s land surface (Wood *et al.*, 2008; Mora and Sale, 2011; UNEP, 2012). Furthermore, only a small proportion of MPAs include no-take zones (Wood *et al.*, 2008), while most terrestrial reserves do not allow extractive use. This context has led to the establishment of international targets for expansion of MPAs. The World Parks Congress (WPC) recommended in 2003 that at least 20-30% of marine and coastal areas be strictly protected by 2012. In 2002, the Convention on Biological Conservation (CBD) called for at least 10% of each of the world’s terrestrial and marine ecoregions to be effectively conserved by 2010. In 2010, the CBD adopted a new strategic plan for biodiversity for 2011-2020, including 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets¹. Among these, Target 11 calls for formal protection of 10% of marine and coastal areas, including protected areas but also more generally “other effective area-based conservation measures”.

Progress towards these targets for MPAs has, however, been much slower than expected. Further, MPAs have been largely restricted to national waters (Wood *et al.*, 2008), a bias partly reflecting the challenges of implementing MPAs in the 64% of the world’s oceans beyond national jurisdictions (Ardron *et al.*, 2008). A recent trend towards establishing very large MPAs (>100,000 km²) such as Chagos, Cook Islands, and the Coral Sea (Table 1), is nonetheless accelerating the expansion of the global MPA coverage, while also raising debate about the effectiveness of extensive, remote MPAs for protecting global marine biodiversity (De Santo, 2013; Kaplan *et al.*, 2013; Pala, 2013).

An important, unresolved question about MPAs is whether the many gaps in representation of species and ecosystems are random or systematic. Systematic gaps could, for example, be related to the ease with which MPAs can be established and be inversely related to the level of extractive uses of the ocean. This kind of systematic bias, if present, would mirror the widely observed bias in terrestrial reservation towards over-representation of ecosystems with the least value for extractive uses (Scott *et al.*, 2001; Joppa and Pfaff, 2009). One of the major disadvantages of this bias is that the species and ecosystems most associated with extractive uses and most in need of protection continue to decline without effective intervention (Pressey *et al.*, 2000). The phenomenon of protected areas being “residual” to extractive uses (Margules and Pressey, 2000), although familiar in terrestrial regions, has been mentioned in the marine environment only briefly (Edgar *et al.*, 2008; Guarderas *et al.*, 2008; Edgar, 2011) and has not yet been formally explored.

¹ <http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>

In this paper, the tendency for MPAs to be residual and therefore ineffective in separating marine species and ecosystems from processes that threaten their persistence is assessed. Residual reservation arises from an implicit or explicit policy of locating MPAs to minimize the opportunity costs to those people engaged in extractive uses of the land and sea, even though many of the important threats to terrestrial and marine biodiversity arise from those extractive uses (Halpern *et al.*, 2008; Rands *et al.*, 2010). In the ocean, extractive uses with important present-day impacts on biodiversity include fishing, mining, and development for oil and gas. Consequently, minimizing opportunity costs to resource exploitation in the ocean also minimizes the extent to which species and ecosystems are protected from their activities. Here, a series of questions related to the opportunity costs of MPAs that should be addressed by decision-makers, agency officials, and non-government organisations are proposed. Three case studies demonstrating residual tendencies of MPAs at three scales are then described: globally, within Australian waters, and within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Finally, the questions related to the opportunity costs of MPAs are discussed again in light of each case study to assess the confidence with which managers, planners and policy makers can assert that marine biodiversity has been effectively protected by minimizing opportunity costs. Details about data sources and analyses are included in Supporting Information S1.

2. Questions about minimizing opportunity costs in designing MPAs

From its inception as a field of research (Pressey, 2002), systematic conservation planning has emphasised the fundamental importance of explicit conservation objectives for individual conservation “features”, defined here as species, ecosystems, natural processes, or other entities that contribute to a depiction of biodiversity (Pressey, 2004). A key principle of systematic conservation planning has always been efficiency (Pressey *et al.*, 1993), or minimizing the costs of achieving explicit conservation objectives. Different kinds of costs are relevant to planning (Naidoo *et al.*, 2006) but the most important in marine conservation planning are typically opportunity costs, or the costs borne by those whose extractive uses are curtailed by the establishment of MPAs (Ban and Klein, 2009). Even *ad hoc* establishment of MPAs considers opportunity costs, although often implicitly (McNeill, 1994; Jones, 1999; Stewart *et al.*, 2003).

It is intuitively sensible that costs resulting from marine conservation planning should be minimized by reducing the extent to which MPAs impinge on extractive activities. However, this approach has weaknesses related to spatial scale. Given that extractive activities in the ocean present serious threats to marine biodiversity (Sala and Knowlton, 2006; Halpern *et al.*, 2008; Harris, 2012), it is important to recognize that, particularly at broad spatial scales, marine biodiversity in more heavily-used and threatened areas differs from that in less used and less threatened areas. These differences in composition of biodiversity arise from both physical and geographic variation between areas used for extraction and those that are not, so that exploited and unexploited marine areas tend to be different ecosystems (Gray, 1997; Morato *et al.*, 2006; Halpern *et al.*, 2008; SoE, 2011). Therefore, minimizing the costs of MPAs at broad scales has the potential for perverse outcomes: protection avoids the more heavily used and costly areas (in financial and/or political terms) and is not afforded to biodiversity most in need of protection. The risk of perverse outcomes is reduced when explicit objectives are set for features defined at finer resolutions that are less physically and biologically heterogeneous (Bedward *et al.*, 1992). Nonetheless, even MPA planning based on relatively finely resolved subdivisions of the marine environment, such as the 70 marine bioregions

within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Fernandes *et al.*, 2005), might benefit from scrutiny to avoid issues related to residual reservation.

Considering the potential for perverse outcomes for marine biodiversity, a series of four questions (Figure 1) related to minimizing opportunity costs when planning MPAs are proposed. It is suggested that policy-makers, agency officers and representatives of non-government organizations should be able to answer these questions in the interests of accountability. Given that the primary objective of an MPA is always conservation (Day *et al.*, 2012), and that MPAs are always intended to protect the natural structure and function of biodiversity, the questions are:

1. Are MPAs/no-take zones intended to protect biodiversity?
2. Should developing systems of MPAs/no-take zones give precedence to more threatened biodiversity features?
3. Should MPAs/no-take zones adequately represent all biodiversity features of interest?
4. Should MPAs/no-take zones adequately represent more threatened examples of features that are different to less threatened examples?

We suggest that negative or uncertain answers to any of the four questions require careful explanations to public or private funders of MPAs and to others concerned with marine biodiversity. Explanations (Figure 1) should focus on the likely fate of biodiversity features, or within-feature variation, left without adequate protection as a consequence of decisions about the locations of MPAs and no-take zones. A positive answer to each question leads immediately to the subsequent question. From question 1 to question 4, positive answers progressively reduce the risk of perverse outcomes arising from planning MPAs and no-take zones with the aim of minimizing opportunity costs. Positive answers to all four questions leave the way clear to minimizing opportunity costs without risks to biodiversity. Another route to this endpoint is to provide a series of satisfactory explanations, subject to scientific scrutiny, on the right hand side of the figure, although successful navigation of this route is thought to be highly unlikely.

The use of the term “biodiversity” in this paper recognizes that, especially in the ocean, much biodiversity remains unknown (Butler *et al.*, 2010). Because of large gaps in knowledge, MPA planning must include not only known features considered to be in need of protection (e.g. selected species, Mills *et al.*, 2011) but also surrogates believed to reflect the distribution of ‘unknown’ biodiversity (e.g. the marine bioregions targeted by Fernandes *et al.*, 2005).

Underlying question 1 (Figure 1) is the basic purpose of establishing MPAs and no-take zones. Minimizing opportunity costs entails the risk that biodiversity features will not be the primary focus when selecting potential locations of MPAs and no-take zones. Although the protection of biodiversity is often stated prominently in policies related to MPAs, reservation is also a political process concerned with public perceptions and achievement of aspirational targets, such as percentages of jurisdictions or global marine waters in MPAs, in politically expedient ways. In agreeing that biodiversity conservation underpins establishment of MPAs and no-take zones, people involved in policy and planning commit themselves to addressing the subsequent questions.

In Question 2, the term “precedence” relates to urgency of protection. Precedence concerns

the sequence with which features should be protected, in the common situation where not all features can be adequately represented within a single planning process. With only 2-3% of global marine waters in MPAs, gaps in representation are to be expected, and it will take many years to expand MPAs, and especially no-take zones, to fully represent all marine ecoregions and habitat types (Spalding *et al.*, 2008). The same applies to most national jurisdictions. The rationale for question 2 is that marine biodiversity features vary in their co-occurrence with and exposure to threats imposed by extractive uses (Halpern *et al.*, 2008; Harris, 2012). Minimizing opportunity costs therefore entails the risk that MPAs and no-take zones will represent initially (and perhaps eventually) only those biodiversity features occurring in areas with little potential for extractive uses, thereby leaving unprotected the features most in need of protection. This is more than a remote possibility, given the well established tendency for political pragmatism to bias protection on land towards features least needing intervention (Scott *et al.*, 2001; Joppa and Pfaff, 2009). Clearly, those features more exposed to threats require more urgent protection because they will likely decline more rapidly without active intervention (Edgar *et al.*, 2008).

Question 3 relates to a fundamental purpose of conservation planning: representing the range of biodiversity (Margules and Pressey, 2000). “Adequately represent” refers to both the variety and extent of representation. First, all known biodiversity features of conservation interest should have some level of representation in MPA systems or no-take areas, including those not already considered, above, as most threatened. Second, objectives for representation of individual features should reflect their relative need for protection, with proportionately more extensive representation of features that are rarer, more heterogeneous physically and biologically, and more exposed to threats (Pressey and Taffs, 2001a; Pressey *et al.*, 2003; Desmet and Cowling, 2004; Metcalfe *et al.*, 2013). Objectives should also consider, where possible, the historical extent and abundance of ecosystems and species (Jackson, 2001; Knowlton and Jackson, 2008). Without explicit objectives for all features of conservation interest, minimizing opportunity costs entails the risk that many features will be missed or protected at inadequate levels.

Question 4 addresses the potential for threats to biodiversity from extractive uses to be unevenly distributed within the ranges of individual features. In the tropics, harvesting of marine turtles, for example, might be more heavily focused on some genetic stocks than others (Wallace *et al.*, 2011). Similarly, marine bioregions and other mapped spatial units defined by physical or biological characteristics can be heterogeneous in both species composition and potential for extractive uses (Lindsay *et al.*, 2008; Williams *et al.*, 2010). Minimizing opportunity costs therefore entails the dual risk that more threatened examples of features will be given less protection and that these more threatened examples are genetically or compositionally different to the less threatened ones. Both these conditions apply to MPAs, and especially to no-take zones, established in Australia’s South-east Marine Region (Williams *et al.*, 2009a).

Section 6 will review the evidence that MPAs and no-take zones address the requirements posed by each of these questions. In doing so, the discussion draws largely on the information presented in the following three case studies of MPAs and no-take zones globally, across the Australian marine jurisdiction, and in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

3. Global analysis

Globally, about 5000 marine protected areas cover about 2.3% of the world's oceans (Figure 2). The large majority of MPAs are located within countries' Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), only 0.17% being in the high seas (Spalding *et al.*, 2013). MPAs provide various levels of protection, ranging from no-take zones to areas allowing different types and levels of activities (e.g. fishing, tourism) that do not always match international requirements for MPA designation (Robb *et al.*, 2010; Fitzsimons, 2011; Al-Abdulrazzak and Trombulak, 2012). Wood *et al.*, (2008) have estimated no-take zones to cover less than 0.1% of the world's ocean. While most MPAs have a single level of protection, some, like the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in Australia, are multi-use areas subdivided into zones of various levels of protection (Fernandes *et al.*, 2005). Many MPAs allow extractive activities such as commercial trawling and oil and gas exploration and extraction. For example, in Australia, trawling is permitted in specific zones of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Shark Bay Marine Park (a Western Australian state MPA), although both are World Heritage Areas and highly valuable MPAs. Several very large MPAs recently created or planned in the Pacific Ocean (e.g. Phoenix Islands Protected Area) allow fishing across most of their extents (Pala, 2013).

Out of more than 5000 existing and proposed MPAs in the world, 15 MPAs (Table 1) account for nearly 74% of the world's MPA area coverage. These very large MPAs, most of them created after 2005, occupy large percentages of some countries' EEZs (Table 1). The Chagos (United Kingdom), the Coral Sea (Australia) and the announced New Caledonia (France) MPAs each cover about 10% of the EEZ of their respective country, allowing those countries to meet their 2020 commitments under the Aichi 11 target with single MPAs. The largest proposed MPA, the Sargasso Sea² (numbered P1 in Figure 2) would alone, if created, represent about 22% of the world's MPA coverage. Apart from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which covers the continental shelf of north Queensland, Australia, these large MPAs were largely established in remote and largely uninhabited places, in parts of the ocean with little extractive activity (see Table 1 for details). Using reconstructions of average fish catches from 1950 to 2000 (Watson *et al.*, 2004), this analysis indicates that fishing activities in these large MPAs prior to their implementation were limited, with average catches ranging from 0.008 to 0.171 tonnes/year/km² (all species and all gear types), compared to a the global average of 0.278 and the global maximum of 711.47.

While large, remote MPAs have benefits for biodiversity, their relative contribution to averting direct anthropogenic threats can be small. Studies have pointed to advantages of extensive marine wilderness compared to small MPAs embedded in fished seascapes (Friedlander and DeMartini, 2002; Graham and McClanahan, 2013; Graham *et al.*, 2013). While remote MPAs might protect wilderness from future extension of human footprint, anthropogenic threats to marine biodiversity are primarily concentrated in national waters closer to large population centres, especially on continental shelves (Halpern *et al.*, 2008). The biodiversity of marine waters around mainland UK and USA, for example, is under much more intense pressure from extractive activities (Halpern *et al.*, 2008) than the UK's Chagos MPA or the USA's Pacific Remote Islands MPA (Figure 2). As a consequence, the biodiversity of coastal waters is arguably in more immediate need of protection, particularly in the context of

² <http://www.sargassoalliance.org/>

continuously declining marine biodiversity in these inshore regions (CBD, 2010; SoE, 2011; Vincent, 2011).

The 10 largest MPAs in the world (Figure 2 and Table 1) substantially increase the protective coverage of some marine jurisdictions (Table 1), and hence contribute significantly to international targets such as the 10% target agreed at Aichi. A number of large MPAs have been created in EEZs around the overseas territories of developed countries (e.g. France, UK, USA), allowing those countries to reach international conservation targets before 2020. At the same time, the contribution of these very large MPAs to the most urgent conservation priorities in the world's oceans can be questioned (Agardy *et al.*, 2003; Cressey, 2011; Anon., 2012; De Santo, 2013; Dulvy, 2013; Spalding *et al.*, 2013).

4. National picture: Australia

In late 2012, Australia completed a major planning process to establish a National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA) in Commonwealth waters (i.e. under national, not state, jurisdiction). These new Commonwealth MPAs, covering more than 2.3 million km², were added to existing national and state MPAs, such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Commonwealth MPAs established in 2007 in the South-east marine planning region (Figure 3). Marine bioregional planning in Australia was implemented in six marine regions that encompass most of Australia's EEZ: North, North-west, South-west, South-east, Temperate East, and Coral Sea (Figure 3). Together with previously established MPAs, they cover about 3.1 million km², comprising more than a third of Australia's marine waters and constituting the world's largest national coverage of MPAs.

The NRSMPA planning process has been guided by a set of goals and principles³, taking into account information about the biology, environment, and human activities in Australia's waters (ANZECC, 1998 and 1999). Goals were to have MPAs representing: (1) each of the 41 bioregions defined by the Integrated Marine and Coastal Regionalisation of Australia (IMCRA), version 4.0; (2) all ocean depths; (3) examples of benthic and demersal biological features; and, (4) all types of seafloor features (e.g. seamounts, canyons). Notably, however, no quantitative objectives appear to have been set for any of these features, in contrast to the process used to rezone the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in 2004 (see Fernandes *et al.*, 2009). Lack of explicit quantitative objectives is also inconsistent with Australia's long-established leadership in systematic conservation planning (Margules and Pressey 2000) for which explicit, numerical objectives are a foundation. The lack of quantitative objectives enhanced the spatial flexibility to establish MPAs in low-cost marine waters, but to the potential detriment of marine biodiversity (and see criticisms of the 2007 outcomes for the South-east region by Nevill and Ward, 2009 and Williams *et al.*, 2009a).

Despite the impressive extent of Australia's expanded MPAs, analyses of the distribution of those MPAs in relation to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categories cast doubt on the network's effectiveness in protecting marine biodiversity from major threatening processes. In the analyses that follow, IUCN categories I-II (no-take or high protection areas), category IV (habitat/species management areas), and category VI

³ <http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/publications/general/goals-nrsmpa.html>

(sustainable use areas) are distinguished. This distinction is important because category IV, and especially category VI, zones permit extractive uses that can have negative impacts on marine biodiversity. Some Australian category VI zones, for example, permit trawling, long-lining, purse-seining and development for oil and gas extraction, all known to negatively affect marine biodiversity (SoE, 2011). Notably, a recent study (Fitzsimons, 2011) concluded that the Australian Government has mislabelled some of its MPAs by allowing extractive uses that the IUCN categories do not permit, a problem that also occurs in state-managed MPAs such as Shark Bay Marine Park, Western Australia.

The first goal of the NRSMPA planning process was to represent each of the 41 bioregions. Parts of all of the 41 provincial bioregions, other than the Cocos and Christmas Islands provinces (outside the scope of the recent planning process) and the Northeast Shelf province (already protected by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park), are represented to some extent by new MPAs. Bioregions differ strongly, however, in extent and nature of protection (Figure 4; and see Barr and Possingham, 2013). Out of 38 bioregions covered by the new MPAs, seven have less than 10% of their areas included within MPAs (e.g. in the North marine region), while others, such as the Northeast and Kenn provinces, are almost fully protected in the new Coral Sea MPA. The extent of bioregions protected by IUCN category I or II MPAs is even smaller, with six bioregions without any such protection, 19 others with less than 10%, and only seven bioregions having more than 20% of their areas included. Importantly, the 33 bioregions on the continental shelf subject to most extractive activities in the Australian marine jurisdiction (Dambacher *et al.*, 2012) tend to have much lower levels of protection than the remainder. For all IUCN categories, the median percentage of shelf bioregion area in MPAs is 16.9%, compared to 36.2% for non-shelf bioregions. For no-take MPAs, the median percentage coverage of shelf bioregions is 2.3%, compared to 16.4% for non-shelf bioregions.

Within planning regions, major biases in representation of habitat features are evident, strongly indicative of residual reservation. An extreme example occurs in the Temperate East region, covering 12° of latitude, where biodiversity features in the most threatened environments - the continental shelf and upper slope - lack any new no-take protection. Only two very small (1 km² and 4 km²) marine reserves on the shelf, at Pimpernel Rock and the Cod Grounds, preceded establishment of the new MPAs. Within the same region, the single offshore no-take MPA that includes some shallow water habitat, Middleton Reef, also preceded the new network (by 25 years). Thus, the most threatened habitats within the Temperate East region will receive no additional protection under the proposed zoning scheme in the form of no-take MPAs. In the South-east region, MPAs generally, and no-take areas in particular, disproportionately avoided the “zone of importance” of Williams *et al.* (2009a), where highest biodiversity values and greatest threats to biodiversity overlap (for further discussion, see Harris *et al.*, 2009; Williams *et al.*, 2009b). In the Coral Sea region, the very extensive MPA coincides with commercial fishery values that are marginal nationally (Hunt, 2013). Furthermore, the category II and IV zones that prohibit pelagic longlining, the most profitable of the Coral Sea fisheries, have been located to avoid all but the most marginal areas for this fishing method (Hunt, 2013).

With regards to water depth, all depth ranges are represented at some level in MPAs (Figure 5A), reflecting one of the stated goals of the planning process. However, there is a clear bias in representation of depth classes, overall and in relative to IUCN categories. Shallower waters are poorly protected by MPAs generally, and then dominantly in category VI

MPAs (Figure 5A). Deeper waters are better protected in MPAs generally, and with larger percentages of no-take MPAs. This pattern accords with the tendency for no-take MPAs to be concentrated near the outer limits of the marine jurisdiction (Figure 3). The bias toward protection of deeper waters is evident in the representation of broad geomorphic provinces, defined by Heap and Harris (2008). Less than 24% of the continental shelf is in any kind of MPA, and only 3.1% is in no-take MPAs (Figure 5B), reflecting the relatively poor protection of shelf bioregions (Figure 4). The more remote and deeper geomorphic provinces are better protected, with 42.6% total MPA and 12.3% no-take on the continental slope, 38.4% MPA and 21.6% no-take on the continental rise, and 37.6% MPA and 20.0% no-take on the abyssal plain.

The NRSMPA planning process was also guided by different biological datasets, including 45 Key Ecological Features (KEFs). These are areas identified by scientists as being valuable for their exceptional productivity, biological diversity, or both (Dambacher *et al.*, 2012). KEFs were selectively identified in all marine planning regions, except for the South-east where MPAs were established before KEFs were defined. Dambacher *et al.* (2012) analysed the relationship between 31 Australian KEFs and anthropogenic pressures. They identified 15 different types of pressures, the most common being fishing, followed by ocean temperature and oil spills. KEFs cover about 22.3% of the marine planning regions in which they were mapped. The percentage of total KEF area represented in MPAs is 40.2%, although only 9.1% is within no-take MPAs. Inclusion of individual KEFs in MPAs is very uneven, ranging from none to 100%, with a median 60.7%. The median drops to 0.96%, however, when considering coverage by no-take MPAs.

While depth and seafloor types serve as approximate surrogates for the potential for extractive uses, it is also possible to review the Commonwealth MPAs directly in relation to two specific major uses: commercial fishing and exploration/extraction of oil and gas.

Analyses of average fish catches during the 11 years preceding the implementation of the new MPAs indicate that catches were 5.6 to 13.9 times lower in locations where the new MPAs are located, compared to areas left open to fisheries (Figure 6). Furthermore, average fish catches were 2.7 to 15 times higher in locations where category VI zones were established, compared to locations where no-take zones were established, with the exception of the North planning region where the reverse applied. The residual nature of Australia's MPA system in relation to fishing is reflected more accurately in Figure 6 by no-take MPAs than by the other MPA categories. Category IV and VI MPAs allow fishing to continue in various ways, and the impacts of fishing on biodiversity in these areas, and outside MPAs, have been underestimated. The risks to biodiversity posed by fishing have been assessed through a series of species- and fishery-specific assessments (e.g. Lack, 2010). Although these assessments identified major impacts of gear types on habitats and species considered to be vulnerable, they did not consider cumulative or trophic effects. The assessments have been interpreted to mean that impacts of gear not reaching an effect threshold for an individual species or habitat have no significant region-wide cumulative impacts on biodiversity. Consequently, extensive MPAs that include fishing (categories IV and VI) are widely, but incorrectly, believed to present little risk to biodiversity. Modelling indicates otherwise: indirect and cumulative impacts of fishing, at levels and with procedures that meet the sustainable harvest standards used in Australia, can be both far-reaching and substantial (Smith *et al.*, 2011; Garcia *et al.*, 2012).

MPAs have also been designed to avoid interference with oil and gas activities, which are most extensive in the North-west and South-east planning regions. Figure 7A illustrates, for the North-west region, the spatial relationship between MPAs and petroleum titles (e.g. permits allowing oil and gas exploration or exploitation), exploration acreage release (i.e. areas under consideration by the industry in 2011), and all existing offshore wells. Some oil and gas exploration and production are intended to be allowed within category VI MPAs. No-take and category IV MPAs have been designed to avoid titles, release areas and active wells and, as a consequence, poorly represent some of the Key Ecological Features in this region. Across Australia, around 6% of MPAs categorised as VI overlap petroleum titles and 72% overlap 2011 and 2012 petroleum acreage release areas (Figure 7B), indicating that Australian MPAs have been categorised or configured to provide no obstacle to oil and gas development, notwithstanding the adverse impacts of these developments on marine biodiversity (SoE, 2011).

5. Regional picture: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

We assessed marine protection in the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Marine Park, established in 1975 as a multiple-use park to allow for the “long term protection and conservation of the environment, biodiversity and heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef region” (Commonwealth of Australia, 1975). With a total size close to 350,000 km², the park is divided into zones with different levels of protection. The initial zoning plan was strongly residual, with no-take zones concentrated in remote areas and largely absent from soft-bottom ecosystems suitable for trawling and other extractive uses (Day, 2008). The 2004 rezoning of the park increased no-take zones from 4.6% to 33.3% of the total area, also representing in no-take zones at least 20% of each of the 70 marine bioregions defined for the exercise (Fernandes *et al.*, 2005; Day, 2008). Other objectives were also used to identify the zones, such as at least three replicate samples of each bioregion, minimum sizes of new no-take zones, protection of minimum amounts of known habitats, and protection of unique and special sites. The five-year rezoning process involved significant consultations with the public and key stakeholders, including recreational and commercial fishers. Despite diverging levels of satisfaction with the rezoned marine park amongst stakeholders (Lédée *et al.*, 2012; Sutton and Tobin, 2012), the 2004 GBR rezoning is recognized worldwide as a major achievement in marine conservation (e.g. Gaines *et al.*, 2010).

Data inputs to the rezoning included spatial information on commercial uses (e.g. fishing and tourism) and non-commercial uses (e.g. recreational fishing and diving). The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) used a systematic conservation planning approach to achieve quantitative objectives for multiple biodiversity features, guided by biophysical operating principles, while minimizing the opportunity costs to users, including commercial and recreational fishers. The process involved an initial draft zoning plan followed by public comment, allowing GBRMPA to propose revised zones for a second phase of public consultations that further minimized the impact on existing uses.

Spatial data on trawling effort were central to the design of the final zones (Figure 8). This analysis found that early draft no-take zones in 2003 largely avoided important trawling areas. After public consultation on the draft, the location of no-take zones further changed relative to trawl effort. It was found a 73% overlap in no-take zones between the 2003 and

final (2004) zoning plans (a 27% change in draft no-take zones), allowing a further 49% reduction in the impact on trawling. Grech and Coles (2011) found that, while the area available for trawl fishing in the GBR decreased from 51% to 34% with the final 2004 rezoning, the rezoning caused the loss of only 4.8% of the area actually trawled in 2003, and 0.82% of the area trawled more than once in 2003.

Minimizing opportunity costs to trawling in the Great Barrier Reef rezoning meant that protection of soft-bottom bioregions from trawling was greatest in areas with the lowest trawl effort (Figure 9). Protection was least (albeit with the required minimum of 20% coverage by no-take zones) for bioregions that had been more extensively trawled prior to the rezoning, leaving large portions (up to 78%, Figure 9) of some bioregions exposed to trawling. The implications for the region's biodiversity have not been assessed, although adverse impacts of trawling in the region have been documented (Poiner *et al.*, 1998). A key unanswered question is what percentages of bioregions are necessary to represent their biota (Desmet and Cowling, 2004; Metcalfe *et al.*, 2013) to afford adequate protection from trawling.

Among the 70 marine bioregions that underpinned the 2004 rezoning, many were very large, with some extending over hundreds of kilometres (Lewis *et al.*, 2003). The objectives that guided the rezoning allowed considerable flexibility in the placement of no-take zones. It is unclear, however, whether this approach shifted no-take zones to parts of bioregions that were different, physically and biologically, from parts that remained open to trawling. Trawling is far from uniform within the GBR's soft-bottom bioregions (Figure 9), suggesting heterogeneity with respect to suitability for trawling (and see BurrIDGE *et al.*, 2003). This heterogeneity could be related to distance from ports, inherent characteristics such as sediment type or hard structures that impede nets, or investment in preparing areas by initial trawling to remove megabenthos, making such areas suitable in terms of bottom type and target species. While information about benthic biodiversity was made available to GBRMPA for the rezoning (Pitcher *et al.*, 2002, 2007), this information was generally not sufficient to understand heterogeneity of biodiversity within bioregions. Whether minimizing opportunity costs to trawling led to residual protection of physical and biological variation within bioregions therefore remains an open question.

6. Discussion and conclusions

The establishment of MPAs around the world has been extensive and is rapidly expanding, but the effectiveness of many MPAs has been questioned (Mora and Sale, 2011; Rife *et al.*, 2013). Much of the criticism of MPAs relates to allowed activities, poor enforcement, and alienation of stakeholders. However, an important question that has seldom been asked (but see Spalding *et al.*, 2013) is how effectively MPAs are separating marine biodiversity from processes that threaten its persistence - the fundamental purpose of any protected area. Too often, the establishment of protected areas is seen as equivalent to effective protection, and very often this conflation of ideas is mistaken. Protected areas fail in their basic purpose to the extent that they are residual to extractive uses. Minimizing the opportunity costs of MPAs entails the considerable risk of pushing "protection" into residual parts of the ocean (Figure 1).

Thirty years of systematic conservation planning has much to contribute to designing more effective systems of MPAs, through both policy and practice. Principles developed in Australia for establishment of MPAs, influenced strongly by systematic planning, include comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness (ANZECC, 1998). But the recent exercise in designing very extensive MPAs in Australian waters demonstrates that principles once endorsed by government can be abandoned when they would lead to politically unacceptable conflicts with resource users. Put another way, it seems that the opportunity costs of a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of MPAs in Australia were too high for the Australian Government to pay. Furthermore, the practice of systematic planning of MPAs, despite well known success stories (Fernandes *et al.*, 2009; Gleason *et al.*, 2010), falls short in several respects. First, reviewing systems of MPAs only in terms of representation (e.g. Barr and Possingham, 2013) ignores the relative urgency for protection of species and ecosystems. Second, a growing literature on using spatially variable costs in systematic conservation planning (see Ban and Klein, 2009) has not come to terms with the risks entailed in minimizing the costs of achieving conservation objectives. Third, the respective benefits and risks of large MPAs in remote, presently unthreatened areas and smaller MPAs in imminently threatened and heavily used waters remain poorly understood (but see Spring *et al.*, 2007 for a terrestrial example).

The sections that follow review the extent to which minimizing opportunity costs has led to residual protection of the marine environment, drawing on the three case studies above. The section finishes by outlining some challenges for science and policy in making the design of MPAs more effective for protection of marine biodiversity.

6.1. Another look at the four questions related to minimizing opportunity costs of MPAs

In section 2 four questions were posed (Figure 1) that decision makers should be able to answer about the implications of minimizing opportunity costs when designing MPAs and no-take zones. The evidence that minimizing the opportunity costs of MPAs and no-take zones has had perverse outcomes for marine biodiversity globally, in Australian waters, and in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park are now discussed. This assessment involves a slight rephrasing of questions 2-4 by replacing “Should” – for statements of intent in Figure 1 - with “Do” – for assessment of outcomes here. Table 2 summarizes the assessments of this study, beginning with three alternative answers. “Yes” indicates that the evidence for a positive answer outweighs negative evidence. “No” indicates the opposite. “Not sure” indicates mixed or scarce evidence. The lens for these assessments is shaped by current scientific thinking about the location and configuration of MPAs. In the case of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, rezoned in 2004, using this lens therefore draws to some extent on hindsight. Hopefully, this assessment provides some lessons for the next rezoning of that region, and also for MPA planning in other regions that would seek to emulate what was, in 2004, world’s best practice.

Question 1: Are MPAs/no-take zones intended to protect biodiversity?

At the global level, the intent to protect marine biodiversity using MPAs and no-take zones is stated explicitly in policy (e.g. WSSD, 2002⁴; IUCN World Parks Congress, 2003⁵; CBD COP

⁴ 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Agenda 21, available online: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?documentid=52>

2010⁶ and in IUCN's definition of MPAs as primarily focused on conservation outcomes (Day *et al.*, 2012; Fitzsimons, 2011). Nationally, Australia's in-principle commitment to the conservation of marine biodiversity through MPAs is clearly stated. Principles for expanding the Australian MPA system to represent and promote the persistence of biodiversity have long been established (ANZECC, 1998). Goals, apparently qualitative, underpinning the recent bioregional planning exercises in Australian waters also indicate a policy commitment to conserving marine biodiversity. For the Great Barrier Reef, both the enabling legislation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010) and operating principles for the 2004 rezoning (Fernandes *et al.*, 2005) are explicit about the primacy of biodiversity conservation in the region. In summary, it appears that governments and international NGOs have promoted, for the three case study contexts, the important role of MPAs and no-take zones in achieving biodiversity conservation. If the effectiveness of MPAs in protecting biodiversity is sometimes dubious, one reason is lack of resources for management and compliance (Mora and Sale, 2011; Rife *et al.*, 2013). But another important factor determining the effectiveness of MPAs and no-take zones is their location relative to biodiversity features that need protection from threatening processes, addressed in the questions that follow.

Question 2: Do developing systems of MPAs/no-take zones give precedence to more threatened biodiversity features?

The rationale for giving precedence to biodiversity features that are most threatened (and with fewest spatial options for protection, Margules and Pressey, 2000) is that such a scheduling strategy will minimize the extent to which conservation objectives are compromised by threatening processes while systems of MPAs are being assembled. Globally, the emerging trend is toward very extensive MPAs in remote parts of the ocean with limited potential for extractive uses and distant from the most serious threats to marine biodiversity (see Spalding *et al.*, 2013). There is no evidence that large, remote MPAs are the best way of averting the decline in marine biodiversity (and see 6.2, below). This approach appears to be shaped more by political pragmatism and by the explicit emphasis of some conservation NGOs than by insights into effective ways of maximizing the long-term persistence of biodiversity. Large and remote MPAs are in many cases the only way countries can meet, at minimal cost and political risk, their international conservation commitments. For Australia there is no evidence that more threatened biodiversity features (e.g. coastal waters or Key Ecological Features) have been given precedence, and strong evidence for the opposite pattern. Australia's MPA system in Commonwealth waters is now so extensive (at 3.1 million km²) that residual patterns are clearly evident. Indirect evidence consists of very uneven representation of provincial bioregions and strong spatial biases, particularly of no-take MPAs, toward deeper waters more distant from the mainland. More direct evidence relates to biases away from areas valuable for commercial fishing and extraction of oil and gas, particularly in the case of no-take MPAs. Both of these activities are known to have impacts on and to pose future risks to Australia's marine biodiversity (SoE, 2011), and some poorly protected species and ecosystems are in decline (SoE, 2011).

⁵ 2003 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Parks Congress, available online: https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/14_2lowres.pdf

⁶ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (COP) tenth meeting, decision X/2 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 - 2020, available online: <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=12268>

For the Great Barrier Reef, precedence of threatened features was, in one sense, not an issue. The whole zoning system, after protracted design and public consultation, was enacted simultaneously, so a sequence of protection was irrelevant (although whether the zoning system is “complete” remains open to debate). The rezoning did, however, consider ecosystems and species known at the time to be threatened, including marine turtles and dugong (Fernandes *et al.*, 2005 and 2009). The assessment “Not sure” in Table 2, is influenced by two considerations. First, the rezoning had only a marginal effect on the extent of pre-existing trawling in soft-bottom bioregions (Figure 9, and see Grech and Coles, 2011). Second, there was a clear tendency for no-trawling zones to be configured around previous trawling, albeit with a minimum of 20% protection of all bioregions (Figure 9). It is also acknowledged that the rezoning was preceded by a trawl management plan in 2001, although this plan was not focused on maintaining the region’s biodiversity. Importantly, trawling is currently permitted over extensive parts of some bioregions (up to 78%, Figure 9).

In summary, there is an emerging residual pattern of MPAs globally, a strongly established residual pattern in Australian waters (and see Pressey, 2013), and some indications of residual protection in the Great Barrier Reef. At least for Australia and the Great Barrier Reef, these patterns have clearly been shaped by an emphasis on minimizing opportunity costs. Globally, the distribution of MPAs strongly suggests the influence of minimizing opportunity costs, perhaps via the political expedient of avoiding conflict with resource extractors in near-shore, heavily used waters. Moreover, the effectiveness of zoning and management of some very large, remote MPAs is dubious (Cressey, 2011; Dulvy, 2013).

Question 3: Do MPAs/no-take zones adequately represent all biodiversity features of interest?

The global MPA system covers a small percentage of the world’s oceans, so representation, even at the coarse resolution of marine ecoregions and pelagic and benthic provinces, is inevitably poor (Spalding *et al.*, 2013). This limitation is reinforced by the fact that MPAs are rarely no-take zones, spanning a broad range of protection types that do not necessarily avert threats to biodiversity. The commitment by governments and large NGOs to filling gaps in global representation remains uncertain despite explicit international policy statements about representation (e.g. Aichi Biodiversity Targets⁷). At least one international NGO has an explicit policy to establish very large, remote MPAs⁸. While such a policy helps to increase the world’s MPA coverage and protect large relatively pristine areas, it is accelerating the already strong trend towards large and remote MPAs (De Santo, 2013; Spalding *et al.*, 2013) and uneven representation. Across a sequence of international conventions and conferences, there have been occasional proposals for quantitative objectives usefully framed in relation to marine ecoregions and habitats (De Santo, 2013). But there appears to be no international consensus on such objectives. Also, vagueness about the spatial context for objectives (such as Aichi’s “10% of coastal and marine areas”) and objectives framed for national jurisdictions

⁷ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (COP) tenth meeting, decision X/2 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 - 2020 including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, available online: <http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>

⁸ <http://www.pewenvironment.org/campaigns/global-ocean-legacy/id/8589941025>

(CBD COP, 2010⁹) could be counterproductive by encouraging politically expedient, highly biased protection (Agardy *et al.*, 2003; De Santo, 2013; Melick *et al.*, 2012).

Nationally, well considered principles for expanding the Australian Commonwealth MPAs (ANZECC, 1998) appear to have been discarded in designing the 2007 (Nevill and Ward, 2009) and 2012 MPAs. These very extensive MPAs were apparently not based on any quantitative objectives and, by any standards, failed to adequately represent many of the environmental features that had been mapped specifically for the bioregional planning process. Biases in representation were stronger for no-take MPAs than for all MPAs combined. Regionally, the 2004 rezoning of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park remains one of the world's best examples of representing marine biodiversity, as well as attempting to promote the persistence of key processes (Fernandes *et al.*, 2005). With hindsight, however, the 20% representation objective for all bioregions in no-take zones, although testing political will at the time, should not be emulated. Instead, more sophisticated, variable objectives for individual ecosystems and species are needed to reflect factors such as rarity, spatial turnover of species within ecosystems, genetic heterogeneity within species, and exposure of features to threatening processes.

In summary, representation is very poor globally and hindered by the lack of explicit objectives. In Australia, the lack of objectives for recent bioregional planning was a retrograde step, with representation remaining uneven and, for some features, very poor. The approach to representation in the Great Barrier Reef, exemplary in 2004, would benefit from refinements. All three case studies suggest (globally) or indicate (Australia and the Great Barrier Reef) that uneven representation is related to minimizing opportunity costs in the form of short-term financial and political liabilities.

Question 4: Do MPAs/no-take zones adequately represent more threatened examples of features that are different than less threatened examples?

Globally, there is little information on variation within marine ecoregions or pelagic and benthic provinces, although it is likely that heterogeneity of both biological composition and extractive potential will be high in many such extensive features. Given the very poor and increasingly residual representation of many of these features, it is not possible for within-feature variation to be adequately addressed by MPAs in relation to threats. Among the principles for MPA expansion previously established in Australia (ANZECC, 1998) is one that concerns the representation of physical and biological variation within mapped features such as provincial bioregions. The available evidence indicates that within-feature representation is not high in the new Commonwealth MPAs, despite many of the mapped features, such as provincial bioregions, being very extensive and likely very heterogeneous. Williams *et al.*, (2009) demonstrated that geomorphic units used for planning MPAs in the South-east region were heterogeneous physically and biologically and that MPAs, and particularly no-takes, covered a biased (least threatened) portion of this variation. The configuration of MPAs, especially no-take MPAs, around commercial uses in the Australian marine jurisdiction offers little promise that more threatened within-feature variation has been represented. For the

⁹ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (COP) tenth meeting, decision X/2 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 - 2020, available online: <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=12268>

Great Barrier Reef, it is clear that pre-existing trawling influenced the distribution of no-take and other protective zones designed to achieve objectives for marine bioregions. What remains unclear is whether this bias is associated with variation in biodiversity within bioregions. In summary: within-feature variation is poorly known globally and certainly not represented; in Australia, the few published analyses and residual biases at the feature level strongly suggest poor representation of threatened within-feature variation; and in the Great Barrier Reef it is unknown whether within-bioregion suitability for trawling is also associated with variation in biodiversity.

Overall, Table 2 indicates clearly that, globally and in Australia, a commitment to protecting marine biodiversity with MPAs has not been matched by action. Minimizing opportunity costs is leading to perverse outcomes for marine biodiversity. Protection is concentrated on ecosystems and associated species under least threat, while much biodiversity exposed to threats remains so, and is declining as a consequence. For the Great Barrier Reef, perverse outcomes of minimizing opportunity costs are possible. Objectives for the Reef's features need to be refined, partly in relation to exposure to threatening processes, and the implications for the Reef's biodiversity of minimizing costs to trawling are not understood.

6.2 Challenges for science and policy

More extensive application of the principles of systematic conservation planning would help to reverse the weaknesses of MPA systems described in Table 2. But more effective systems of MPAs would also benefit from further development of systematic methods in at least three areas, each of which will require translation into policy. First, representation of ecosystems and species - a foundation of systematic planning (Margules and Pressey, 2000) - is necessary but not sufficient. A limitation is that measures of representation do not indicate which features are most in need of protection. Chronological analyses of the development of terrestrial reserve systems have shown that progressive increases in representation reflect "protection" of less threatened features while more threatened features remain exposed to further attrition (Pressey and Taffs, 2001b; Pressey *et al.*, 2002). Measures of representation per se (e.g. Barr and Possingham, 2013) therefore need to be refined to reflect need for protection.

A second area for improvement of planning methods and policy relates to costs. The implications of achieving quantitative conservation objectives at minimum cost - one of the basic goals of systematic planning (Margules and Pressey, 2000; Naidoo *et al.*, 2006) - need to be better understood. The risks to biodiversity of minimum-cost conservation solutions are strongly related to the spatial resolution and heterogeneity of features identified for representation (Section 2), but might persist even to relatively finely defined features such as the 70 marine bioregions in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Among the unanswered questions related to costs are: 1. To what extent do apparent "win-win" solutions that achieve objectives at minimum cost disadvantage biodiversity features most exposed to threats posed by extractive activities?, 2. How do perverse outcomes from minimizing costs relate to the resolution at which conservation features are defined?, 3. What measures can be put in place to promote the persistence of features whose conservation is most costly?, and 4. To what extent must society forgo economic gain or incur economic losses if the commitment to conservation is real?

A third challenge for conservation planning concerns understanding the implications of the trend toward very large, remote MPAs. Although substantial work has been done on scheduling protection, at least in terrestrial environments, there is a poor understanding generally of the most effective balance of investment between presently safe, remote areas and imminently threatened ones. Claims that remote, residual MPAs are good investments for the future are only valid if it can be demonstrated that this strategy gives better long-term outcomes for biodiversity than an alternative strategy based on addressing urgent priorities in relation to threat. Intuitively, some mix of these strategies might be sensible, but finding that balance defensibly is presently not possible. Analytical methods for designing balanced portfolios of investments relative to imminence of threat need to be developed. In their absence, much investment in marine conservation will rest on claim and counter-claim, not on information.

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Tables

Table 1: (A) The world's ten largest contiguous Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and their year of creation, size, percentage of countries' EEZs covered, cumulative proportion to the total world's MPA coverage, estimated average fish catch over 50 years (1950-2000) before MPAs' creation (in tonnes/year/km², all species and all gear types combined - cf. global average 0.278), and approximate population within the MPAs and a 100 km buffer outside their boundaries. Fish catches were averaged for the whole MPA areas. (B) The world's five largest proposed MPAs.

A

Rank	Name	Country	Year	~ Size (10 ⁶ km ²)	% EEZ	Cumul. % world MPA	Average fish catch [#]	Approximate population
1	New Caledonia	France	Announced	~1.40	~12.69	11.1	N/A [#]	252,000
2	Cook Islands	Cook Islands	Announced	~1.00	~50.00	19.1	N/A [#]	10,900
3	South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands Marine Protected Area	UK/Argentina	2012	1.07	-	27.6	N/A [#]	30*
4	Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve	Australia	2012	0.99	9.75	35.5	0.008	0*
5	Chagos Archipelago, British Indian Ocean Territory Marine Protected Area	United Kingdom	2010	0.64	9.40	40.6	0.014	3000**
6	Phoenix Islands Protected Area and World Heritage Site	Republic of Kiribati	2006/08	0.41	11.86	43.8	0.018	<25
7	Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument	USA	2000/06	0.36	3.19	46.7	0.020	~45*
8	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	Australia	1975	0.34	3.39	49.4	N/A [#]	~920,000***
9	Marianas Trench Marine National Monument	USA	2009	0.25	2.17	51.4	0.171	0
10	Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument	USA	2009	0.23	1.98	53.3	0.019	0

B

Rank	Name	Country	Year	~ Size (10 ⁶ km ²)	% EEZ	Cumul. % world MPA [†]	Average fish catch [#]	Approximate population
P1	Sargasso Sea Marine Protected Area	International [^]	Proposed	~5.00	N/A [#]	52.1	N/A [#]	0
P2	Antarctic Ross Sea	International	Proposed	3.60	N/A [#]	68.1	N/A [#]	0
P3	Pitcairn Island	UK	Proposed	0.80	11.76	71.6	N/A [#]	55
P4	Bermuda's Exclusive Economic Zone	UK	Proposed	0.30	4.41	73.0	N/A [#]	64,700
P5	Motu Motiro Hiva Marine Park (Easter Island)	Chile	Proposed	0.20	5.43	73.9	N/A [#]	5,000

[^] The proposed Sargasso Sea MPA would be located in high seas, although Bermuda/UK's government is among the countries leading this proposal.

[#] Some values, identified by 'N/A' could not be estimated, either because the boundaries of the MPAs have not been finalised or because establishment predates the period encompassed by the global fisheries dataset.

[†] Cumulative percentage in Table B is calculated separately from Table A based on a global MPA coverage that considers a scenario in which all five proposed MPAs would be implemented.

^{*} Inhabitants of the islands adjacent to these MPAs are primarily scientists, park managers, meteorologists and/or government officers.

^{**} The indigenous population of the Chagos archipelago (UK) was evicted in the early 1970s to create a US military base on the atoll of Diego Garcia. The current resident population is composed of military and contracted civilian personnel.

^{***} In addition of having a large population within 100 km from the marine park, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park includes about 900 islands, a few of which have resident populations; Palm and Magnetic islands have long-term residences; other islands have resorts with resident staff, and there are several research stations with resident staff.

Table 2: Analysis of patterns of marine protected areas globally, in the Australian marine jurisdiction, and in the Great Barrier Reef region, in relation to the four questions posed in Figure 1.

	Global	Australia	Great Barrier Reef
1. Are MPAs/no-take zones intended to protect biodiversity?	Yes: Indicated by definitions of MPAs and high-level policy statements.	Yes: Indicated by national policy statements and qualitative goals for the design of MPAs established in 2007 and 2012.	Yes: Indicated by enabling legislation and operating principles for the 2004 rezoning.
2. Do developing systems of MPAs/no-take zones give precedence to more threatened biodiversity features?	No: Trend is toward very large, remote MPAs with little potential for extractive uses and distant from most serious threats.	No: Strong biases away from commercial activities indicate an extensive system of MPAs that is clearly residual.	Not sure: Available data on threatened species and ecosystems shaped the 2004 rezoning, but there were only marginal reductions in the extent of trawling, which continues to affect large parts of some soft-bottom bioregions.
3. Do MPAs/no-take zones adequately represent all biodiversity features of interest?	No: MPAs currently occupy too small a percentage of the world's oceans to be adequately representative. There are no agreed quantitative objectives, and trends in representation suggest increasing bias toward remote parts of the ocean with least exposure to threatening processes.	No: Absence of quantitative objectives for representing features despite previous policy initiatives for systematic planning. Representation was highly uneven, and in some cases very poor, for features mapped in preparation for the bioregional planning exercises that led to extensive new MPAs in 2007 and 2012.	Not sure: Representation in 2004 was adequate within the limits of political tolerance, and based on explicit objectives and operating principles. Refinement of objectives would improve protection, and the model of uniform requirements for representation should not be emulated.
4. Do MPAs/no-take zones adequately represent more threatened examples of features that are different than less threatened examples?	No: No evidence that within-feature variation is a consideration. Very poor and residual representation of extensive features indicates that representation of within-feature variation in relation to threats is not possible.	No: Some evidence that within-feature variation related to biodiversity and threats was not accounted for. No evidence that within-feature variation was an important consideration in the design of MPAs, in spite of long-established national policy relevant to this issue.	Not sure: Within-bioregion variation linked to suitability for trawling influenced the representation of bioregions. Corresponding within-bioregion variation in biodiversity is unknown.