Marine protected areas and the role of ENGOs in supporting MPA establishment within the Salish Sea

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Role of Environmental Non-Government Organizations (ENGOs) in MPA Establishment

Prepared by CPAWS-BC for the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference
Introduction

• The Salish Sea is a productive, culturally significant, bi national ecosystem.
• Provided ecosystem services since time immemorial
• Currently it is under threat from industrialization and population growth.
• 113 of nearly 3500 species are listed as either threatened, endangered, or candidates for listing.
Global Commitment to Conservation

• Aichi Biodiversity Targets for 2020 ask signatories to protect at least 17% of terrestrial and 10% of marine environments.

• Canada is moving towards this goal by establishing
  • Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
  • and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs)
Southern Strait of Georgia

• Public and Political interest in MPA establishment since the 1970s

• Parks Canada and the BC government begin feasibility study of NMCAR in 2003

• NMCAR = National Marine Conservation Area Reserve
CPAWS-BC’s Role in Conservation

• Activate our citizens and encourage our governments

• Multiple level lobbying; bottom-up and top-down
  • Take Back the Wild – engages community members affected by conservation measures
  • Academic and in-house research and analysis
    • MARXAN – Spatial analysis tool used to locate areas of high biodiversity
Take Back the Wild – Bottom-Up

• Outreach program that seeks to engage and empower communities being affected by MPA establishment

• Based on the concept of distributed organizing which mobilizes not only direct volunteers but also their social and professional networks

• Community Ambassadors who take the program receive a campaigners skillset:
  • Government and Media relations
  • Communications
  • Community Engagement
  • Working with First Nations
Community Ambassadors

• Work with CPAWS-BC to create Community-Based Action Plans aligned with the conservation goals of the proposed NMCAR

• Salt Spring Island:
  • Community Ambassador engaged with organizations who support the NMCAR and got them to write letters of support for the NMCAR and general ocean conservation

• Thetis Island:
  • Started with a table at a local event, left with 80 signatures for a drafted letter
  • Interest was so great that she is running a mini Take Back the Wild
MARXAN – Top-Down

• A decision support tool used in evidence-based decision making

• Solves a minimum-set problem by capturing the minimum representation required to meet preset ecological targets/goals while simultaneously minimizing costs.

• Being used by Canada’s DFO to inform their Marine Protected Area Networks

Adrian Gerhartz Abraham
MARXAN in the Southern Strait of Georgia

• In 2012 and 2016 CPAWS-BC commissioned MARXAN analyses of the SSoG.

• Offers insight on areas of concentrated ecological values.

• Output is not a polished park proposal, rather represents ecologically significant areas which create minimal conflict with human-use.
Conclusion

• ENGOs play an important role in community outreach and empowerment.
• Through Take Back the Wild CPAWS-BC creates active citizens who lobby on behalf of their communities.
• With our in-house and academic research and analysis we can influence decision makers through the MPA stakeholder engagement process.
thanks