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Global MPA managers unite to move marine management forward



BARCELONA, Spain

HOW IS YOUR MPA MANAGED? 15 marine protected area practitioners from 11 countries have gathered for the past 7 days in Barcelona, Spain in a World Conservation Congress (WCC) pre-conference workshop to answer this very question. Marine protected areas are established for a wide range of purposes, including protecting marine species and habitats, conserving marine biodiversity, restoring fishery stocks, managing tourism activities and minimizing conflicts between user groups. Yet, past experience has shown that many of these MPAs lack even a basic management plan.

How is Your MPA Managed? workshop brought together MPA managers, representing a range of biogeographic, social, political and economic settings, to share the experience of developing a management framework for their sites. The purpose of the training workshop was to test a draft version of the "How is Your MPA Managed?" IUCN-WCPA and NOAA planning guidebook. The training workshop provided an opportunity for an internationally-diverse set of MPA managers to share their MPA management experience and knowledge with one another before attending the Congress. With the knowledge of how to use the draft guidebook, managers will return home with a workplan to test the draft guidebook and develop an MPA management plan for each of their sites.

"The lack of effectively managed MPAs is a global issue and each of the 15 participants in this workshop have a responsibility to carry this management planning framework to their broader regions and beyond to ensure that the 2012 recommendations of the Durban Accord are met", said Dan Laffoley chair of WCPA-Marine. "What I was looking for is a framework at the highest level available - qualified, certified and shared amongst MPA practitioners" said workshop Carlos Franzosini from the 127 ha Miramare Marine Reserve in Italy, the smallest MPA represented at the workshop. "This workshop has been very helpful to those of us with little experience managing MPAs. Working with countries from around the world, I am going home with a whole new level of experience and expertise" said Asril Djunaidi from the world's largest MPA effort in Indonesia. From community based MPAs to the 4 million ha coral triangle initiative, MPA practitioners from around the world will be returning to their MPAs with a new tool and the support of MPA managers from around the world.

The "How is Your MPA Managed " workshop was made possible through a grant from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, in partnership with IUCN/WCPA, WWF-Mediterranean Programme Office, Conservation International (CI), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA).