Proteus Technical Community of Practice

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

Joseph Appiott (SCBD), Lauren Weatherdon (UNEP-WCMC), Sebastian Bekker (UNEP-WCMC)

UN environment programme WCMC proteus

Welcome

Objectives of the Technical Community of Practice

- A venue for direct communication between data users and technical experts
- Increase familiarity with Proteus resources
- Identifying common challenges & fostering solution approaches

Logistics

- ***Frequency*** quarterly
- ***Scheduling*** AM & PM sessions (cancelled if fewer than 3 participants from 2 companies)
- ***Rules*** Chatham House rule for discussion, but presentation recorded
- ***Topics*** your suggestions welcome

Today

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

1. Introduction to EBSAs
2. Methodology used to describe EBSAs and develop the dataset
3. Implications of EBSAs and their intended use, including relevance to the private sector
4. Availability of the dataset

Discussion

25 YEARS
Convention on Biological Diversity
SAFEGUARDING LIFE ON EARTH

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

"Special Places in the Ocean"

Convention on Biological Diversity

- **Entered into force in 1993**
- **196 Parties**

Convention on Biological Diversity

Three Main Goals

- Conservation of biological diversity
- Sustainable use of biological diversity
- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources

United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Aichi Biodiversity Targets

2020 Deadline

Preparatory process for the CBD post-2020 global biodiversity framework

- **COP Decision 14/34** sets out the process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which comprises:
  - Open-Ended Intersessional Working Group (OEWG);
  - Global, regional and thematic consultations; and
  - Documents and discussion papers
- **Open-ended Working Group (OEWG)** to discuss the overall development of the Framework
  - Led by two co-chairs and overseen by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties.
  - Meetings of OEWG are open to representatives of Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and stakeholders

Francis Ogwal
(Uganda)

Basile van Havre
(Canada)


SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Collaboration with Various Intergovernmental Organizations/Authorities

UN General Assembly

Convention on Migratory Species

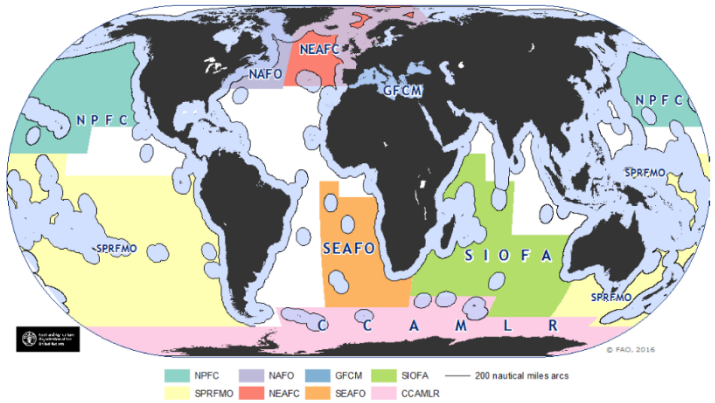
International Seabed Authority

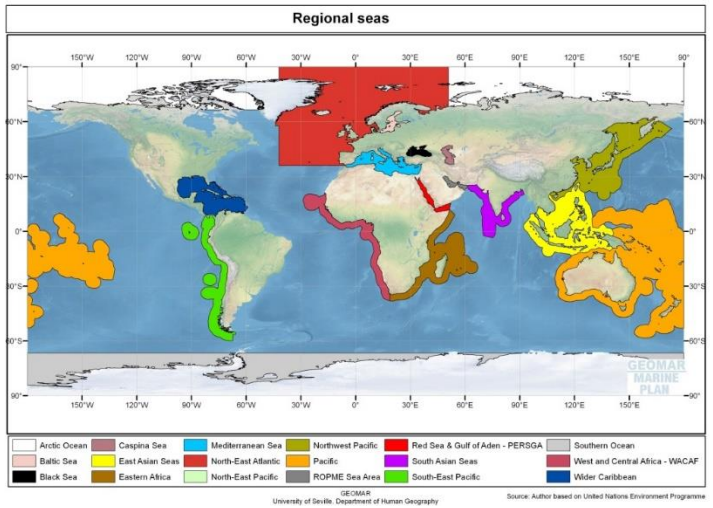
UN Environment

Food and Agriculture Organization

Convention on Intl Trade in Endangered Species

International Maritime Organization





CBD scientific criteria for ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs)

(annex I, decision IX/20, adopted by COP 9 in 2008)

1 UNIQUENESS OR RARITY

2 SPECIAL IMPORTANCE FOR LIFE HISTORY STAGES OF SPECIES

3 IMPORTANCE FOR THREATENED, ENDANGERED OR DECLINING SPECIES AND/OR HABITATS

4 VULNERABILITY, FRAGILITY, SENSITIVITY, OR SLOW RECOVERY

5 BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTIVITY

6 BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

7 NATURALNESS

CBD process on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) through regional workshops

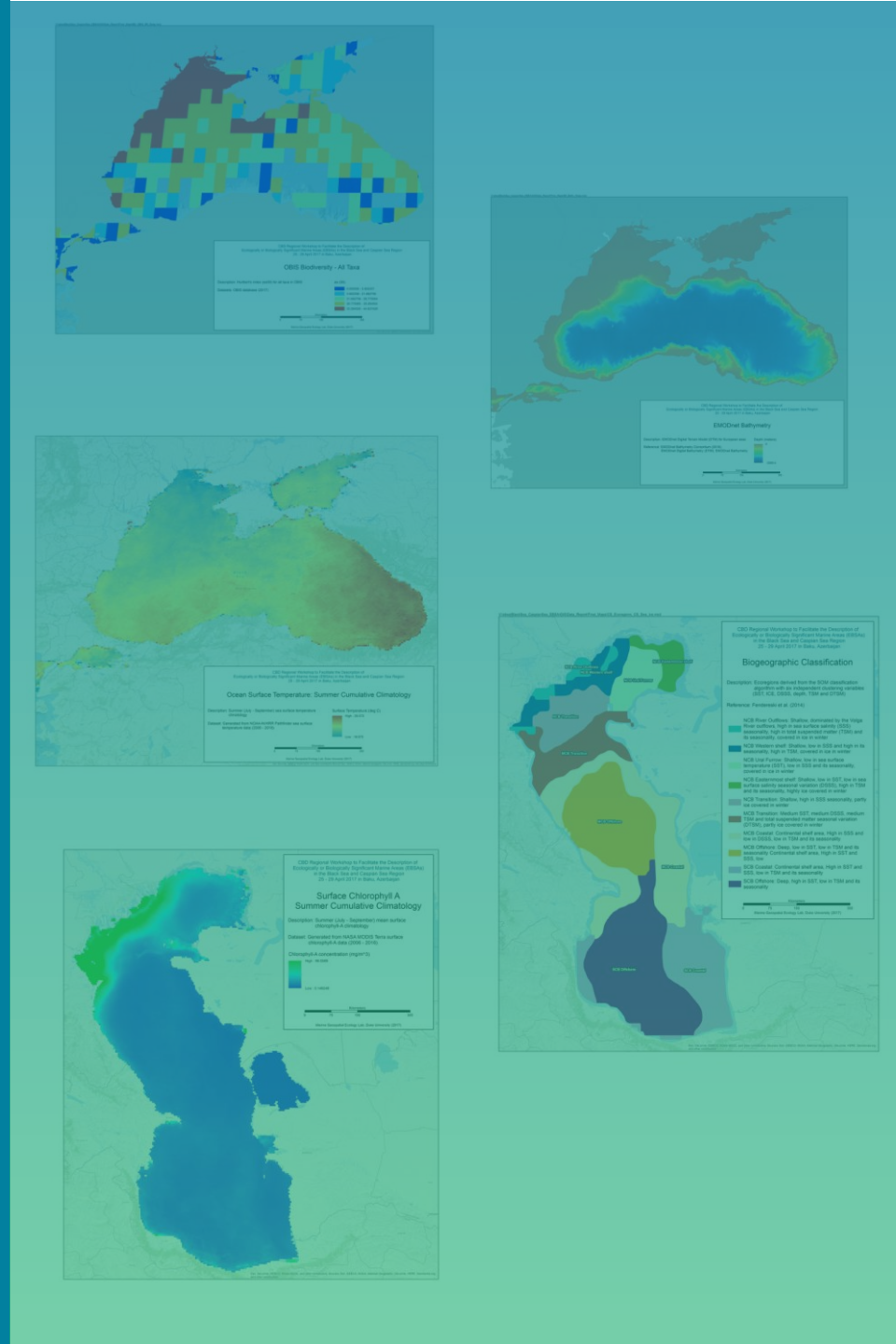
(www.cbd.int/ebsa)

- Synthesis of best available scientific and technical information
- Expert process on the application of EBSA criteria
- Description and mapping of areas that meet the EBSA criteria

Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab, Duke University (2019)

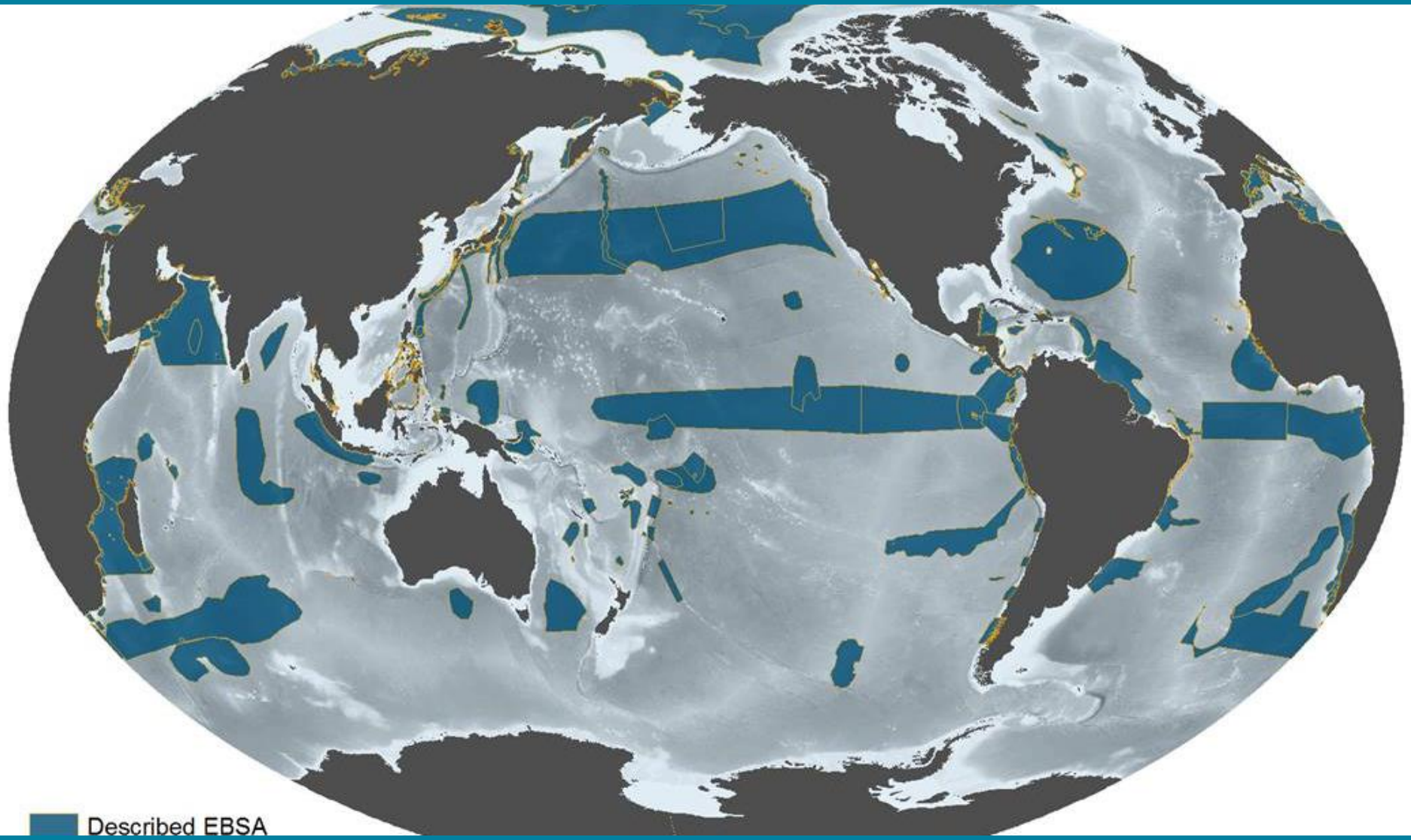
DATA-RICH PROCESS

1. 70 – 100 GIS LAYERS
2. Biological Data (e.g. OBIS)
3. Biogeography
4. Physical and Geological Data
5. Indigenous and traditional knowledge



EXPERT-DRIVEN PROCESS

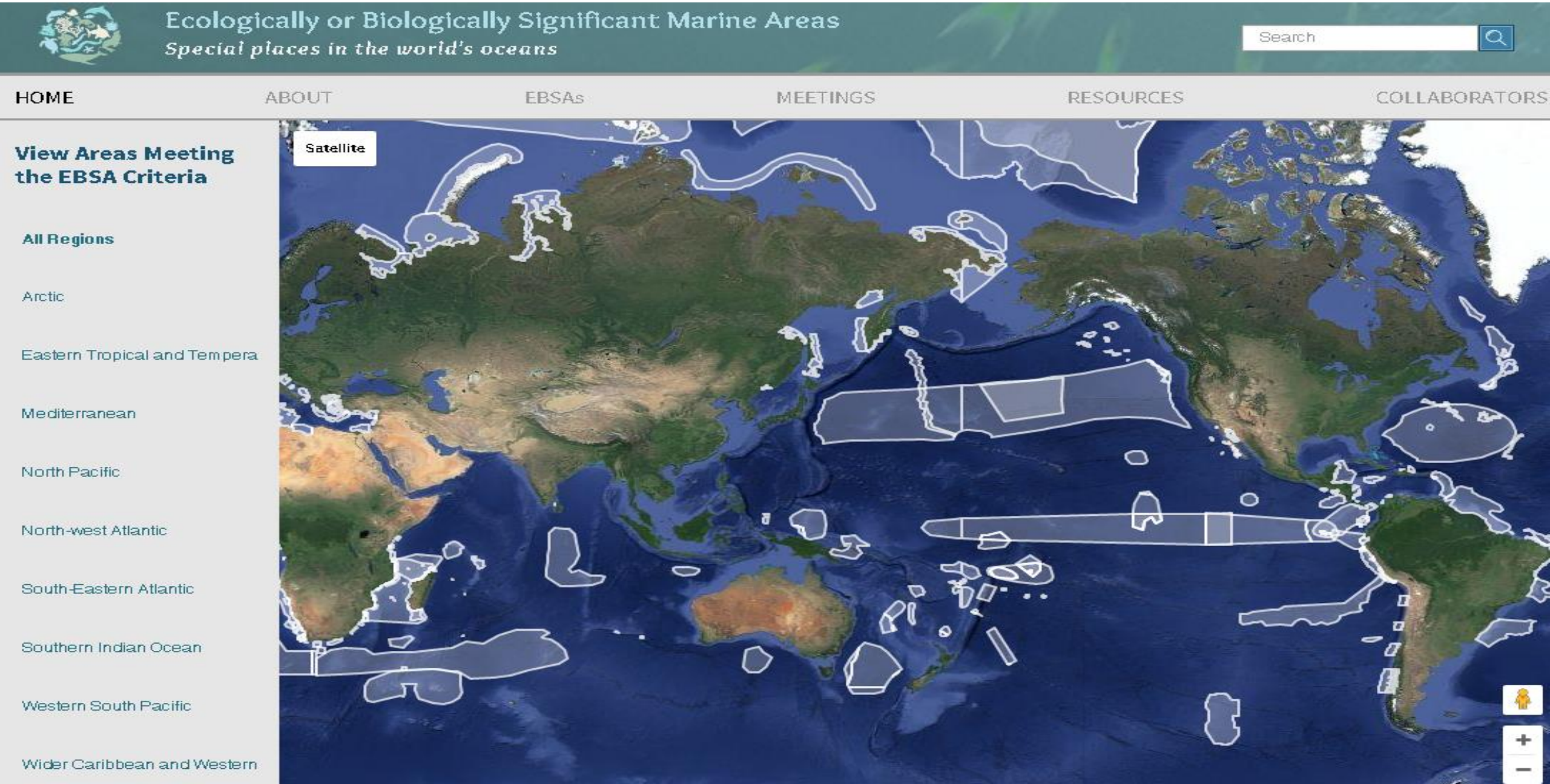
Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)



15 regional workshops since COP 10— Described 321 EBSAs around the world

Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material in these slides do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Further details at: www.cbd.int/ebsa



Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs)

PDF | Print

The Sargasso Sea

General Information

Summary

The Sargasso Sea is a fundamentally important part of the world ocean, located within the North Atlantic sub-tropical gyre with its boundaries defined by the surrounding currents. Its importanc e derives from a combination of physical and oceanographic structure, complex pelagic ecosystems, and its role in global ocean and earth system processes. The Sargasso Sea is home to an iconic pelagic ecosystem with the floating Sargassum seaweeds, the world's only holopelagic algae, as its cornerstone. It hosts a diverse community of associated organisms that includ endemic species, and provides essential habitat for key life stages of a wide diversity of species, many of which are endangered or threatened. The Sargasso Sea is the only breeding or European and American eels, the former being listed as critically endangered, and is on the migration route of numerous other iconic and endangered species. A variety of oceanogra ocesses impact productivity and species diversity, and the area plays a disproportionately large role in global ocean processes of oxygen production and carbon sequestration. The sea floor ha

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5 BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTIVITY

6 BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

7 NATURALNESS

Applying the EBSA Criteria

- These are **RELATIVE** criteria
  - ALL parts of the ocean are ecologically important and require uses to be sustainable: the search is for areas that are special ***relative to other areas in the general region,*** and require greater risk aversion.
  - There are **no thresholds** that *must be* met; judgements are comparative to adjacent areas, and legitimate to point out gradients of increasing “EBSA-ness” if that conveys information most accurately
  - Relative assessments are necessarily scale dependent; we are working at **large scales** at this meeting
  - Areas **may meet multiple criteria** and that is important, but meeting just one strongly also is important

Applying the EBSA Criteria

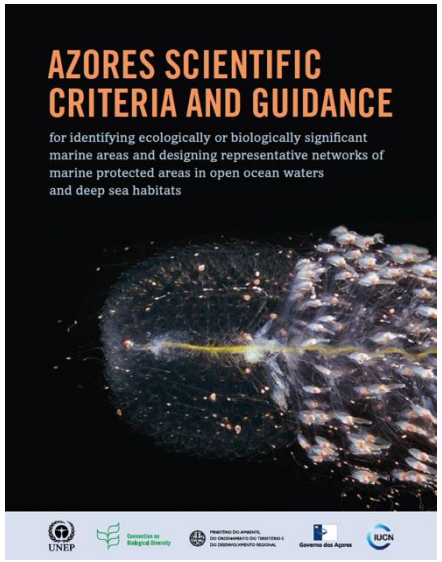
Criterion 3. Importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats

Definition:

Area containing habitat for the survival and recovery of endangered, threatened, declining species or area with significant assemblages of such species

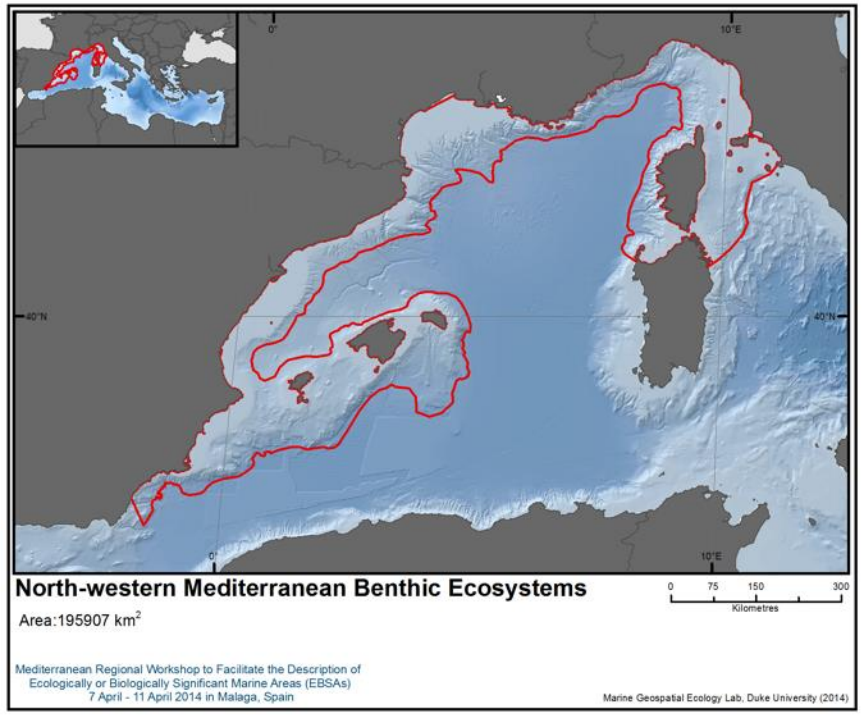
Examples:

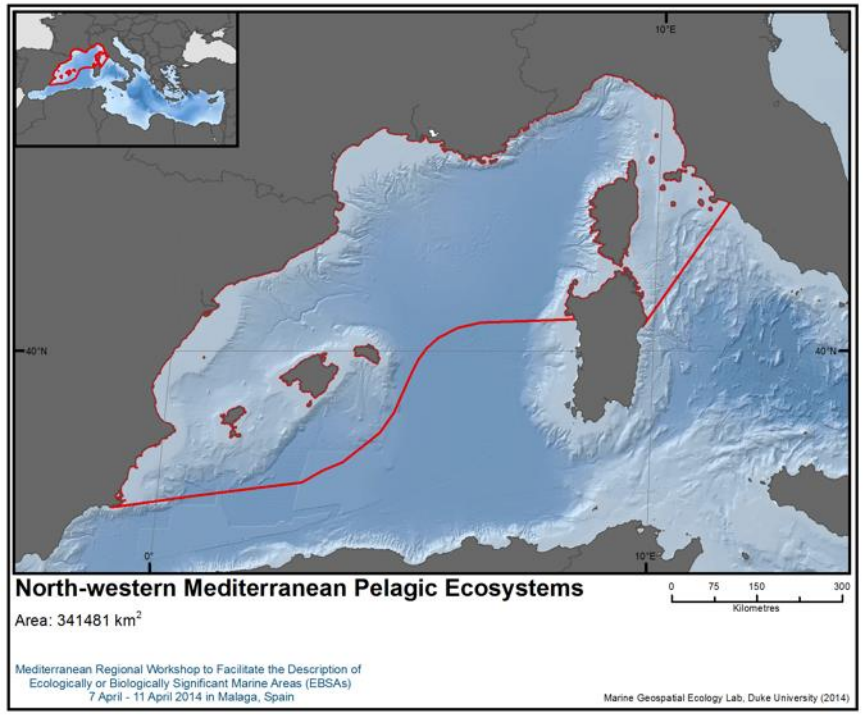
Areas critical for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats, containing (i) breeding grounds, spawning areas, nursery areas, juvenile habitat or other areas important for life history stages of species; or (ii) habitats of migratory species (feeding, wintering or resting areas, breeding, moulting, migratory routes)



Applying the EBSA Criteria

EBSAs describe features, not areas
--Example--Overlapping EBSA Features

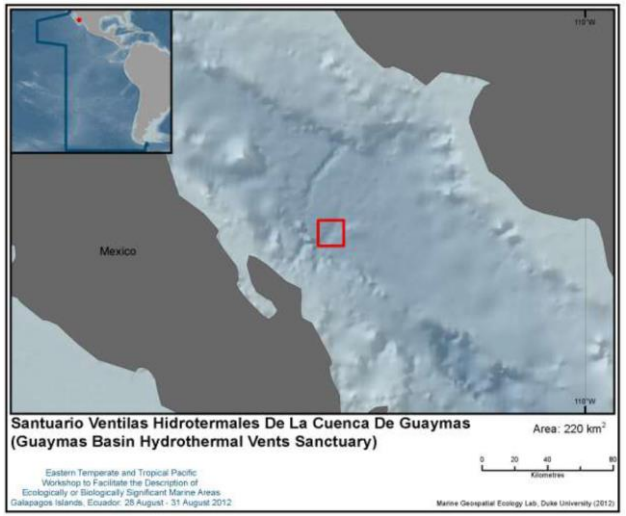




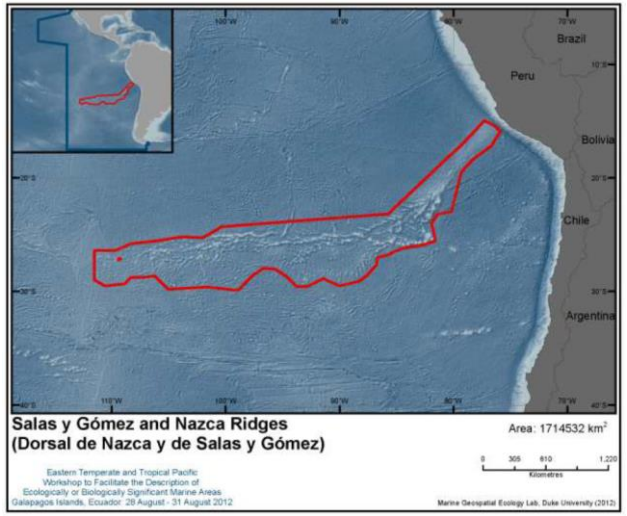
Classifying Different Types of EBSAs

Type 1: static features

- EBSAs characterized by features that are clearly differentiated in the physical world, and fixed in space and time (e.g., a coral reef or a specific seamount).



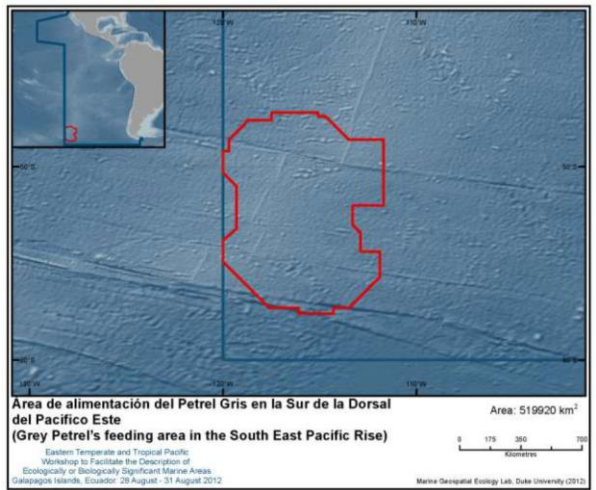
Type 2: groups of features



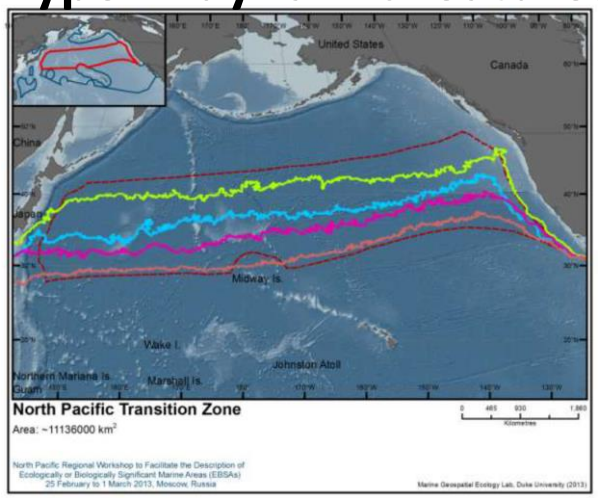
- A set of fixed areas that share similar features and are generally clustered in space (e.g., a chain of seamounts).

Type 3: ephemeral features

- A fixed area in which some part of the large delineated EBSA always meets the defining criteria and some part does not. However, those parts may shift over time so the pattern of the mosaic is not stable. E.g., spawning areas for fish or feeding hotspots for seabirds.



Type 4: dynamic features



- Persistent but mobile features of the ecosystem (e.g., shelf-ice edges and major oceanographic fronts).

Classifying Different Types of EBSAs

Flexibility to describe a broad range of features

Useful for a broad range of tools and approaches including: marine spatial planning, MPAs, EIAs, fisheries management, monitoring and research

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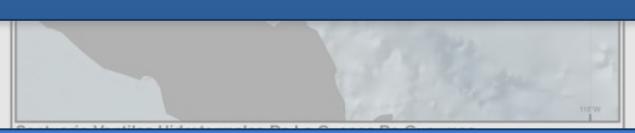

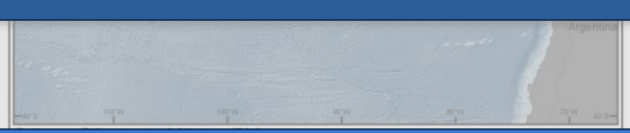

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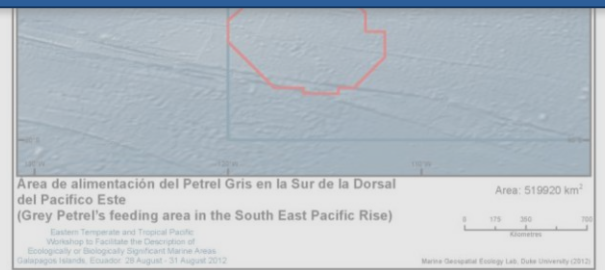


CBD EBSA Process:

What are ecologically or biologically significant marine areas?

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS? ✗

FISHING CLOSURES? ✗

JURISDICTIONAL MATTERS? ✗

INTERVENTIONS

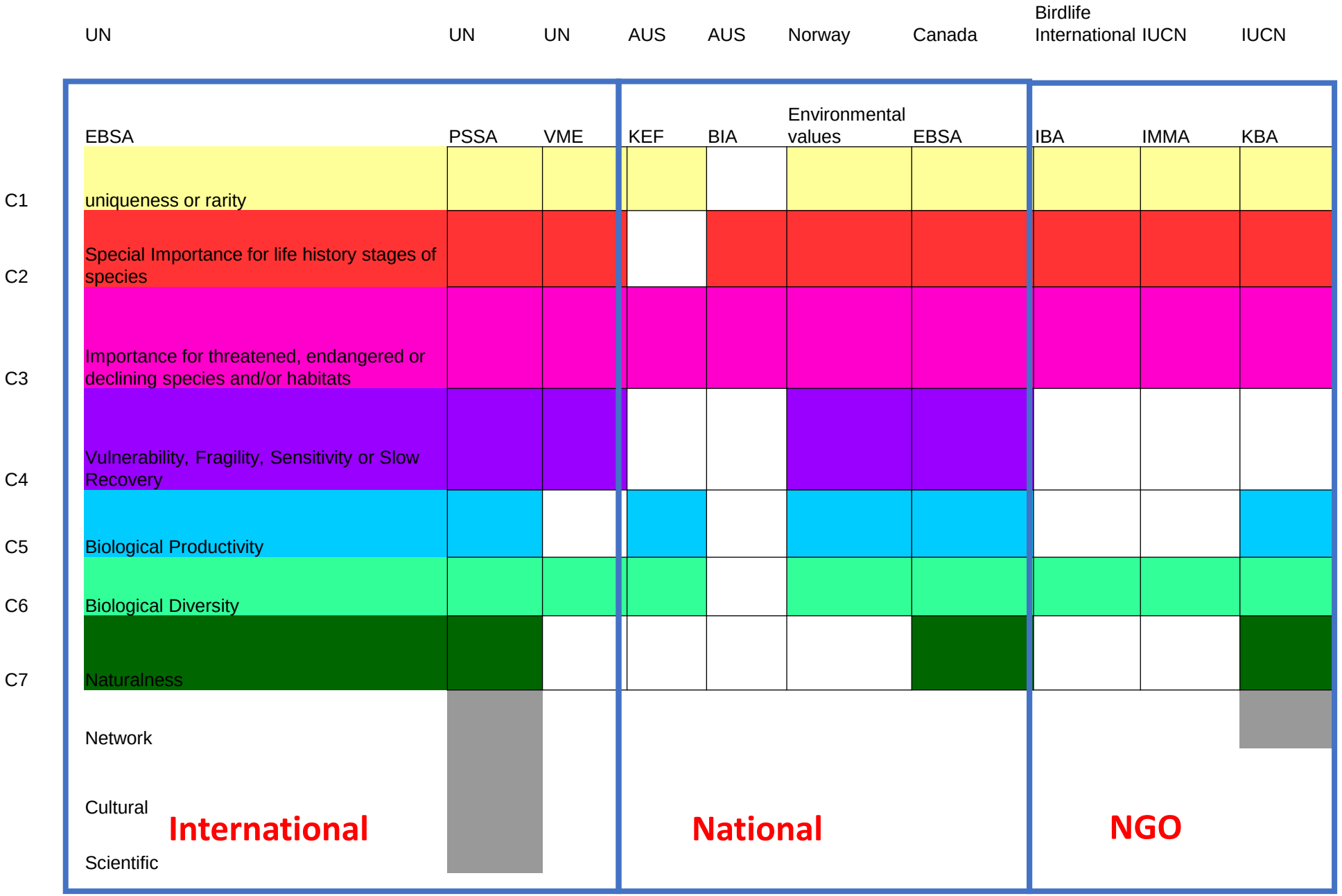
By States and competent intergovernmental organizations

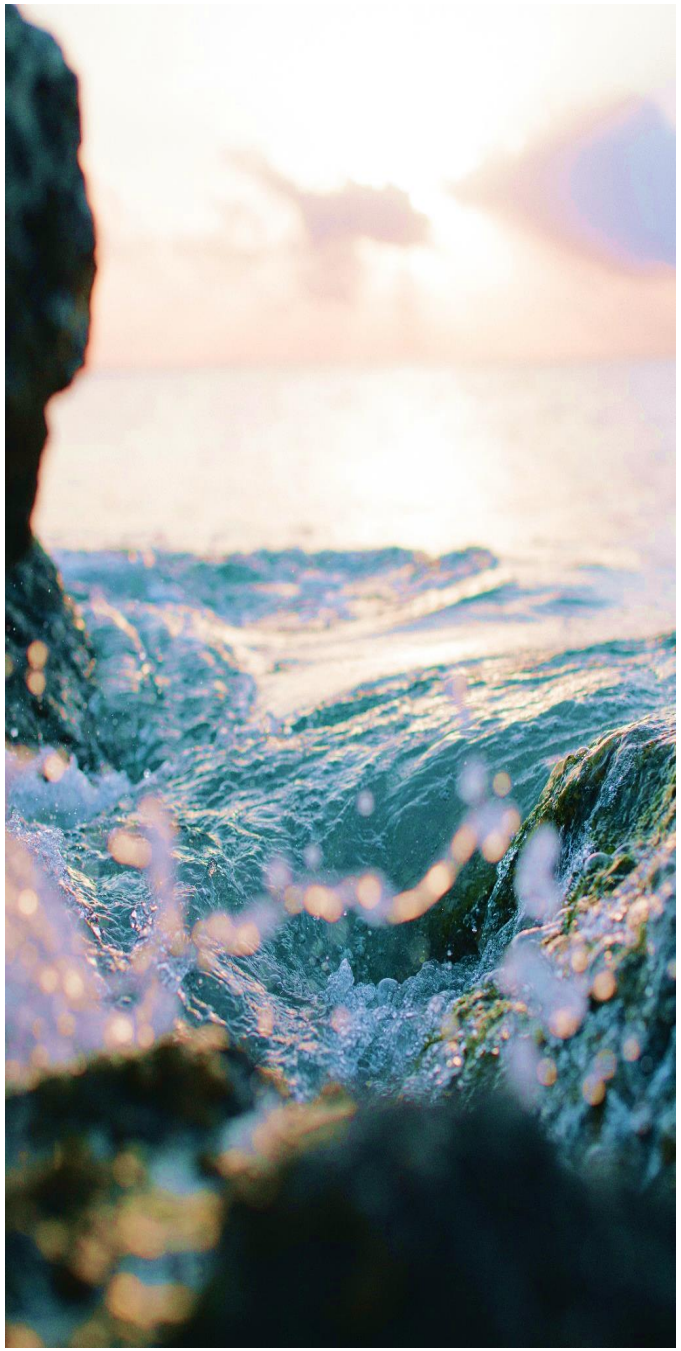
CBD Conference of the Parties Guidance on EBSAs

"Notes that the **application of the ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) criteria is a scientific and technical exercise**, that areas found to meet the criteria **may require enhanced conservation and management measures, and that this can be achieved through a variety of means**, including marine protected areas and impact assessments, and *emphasizes* that the identification of ecologically or biologically significant areas and the **selection of conservation and management measures is a matter for States and competent intergovernmental organizations**, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;" (COP decision X/29, paragraph 26)

Slide by Piers Dunstan, CSIRO

Criteria Sets used to identify marine values





Using EBSA Information

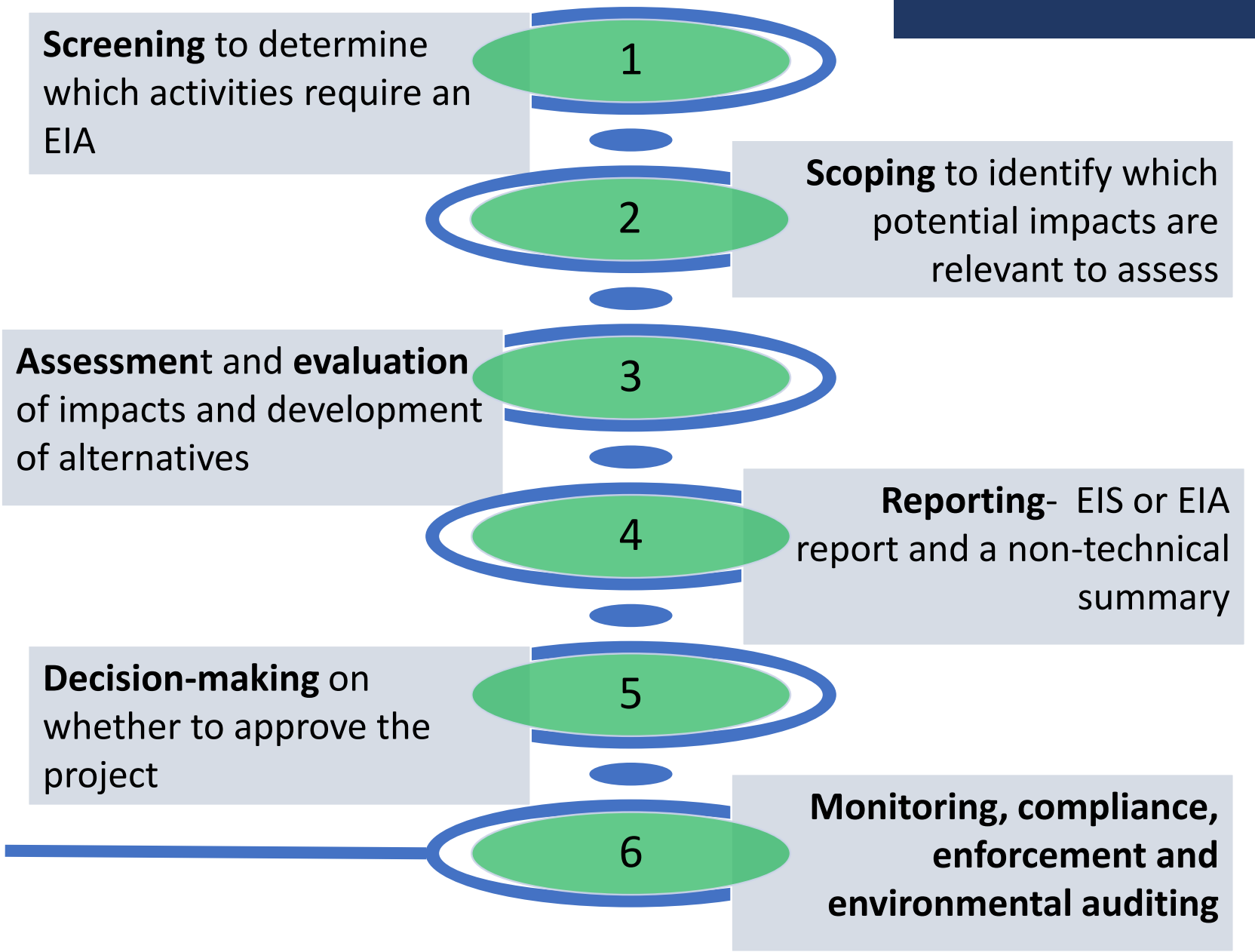
EBSAs

Features that may be impacted

Nature of those features and types of interactions

Features that would need to be monitored and how

EIAs



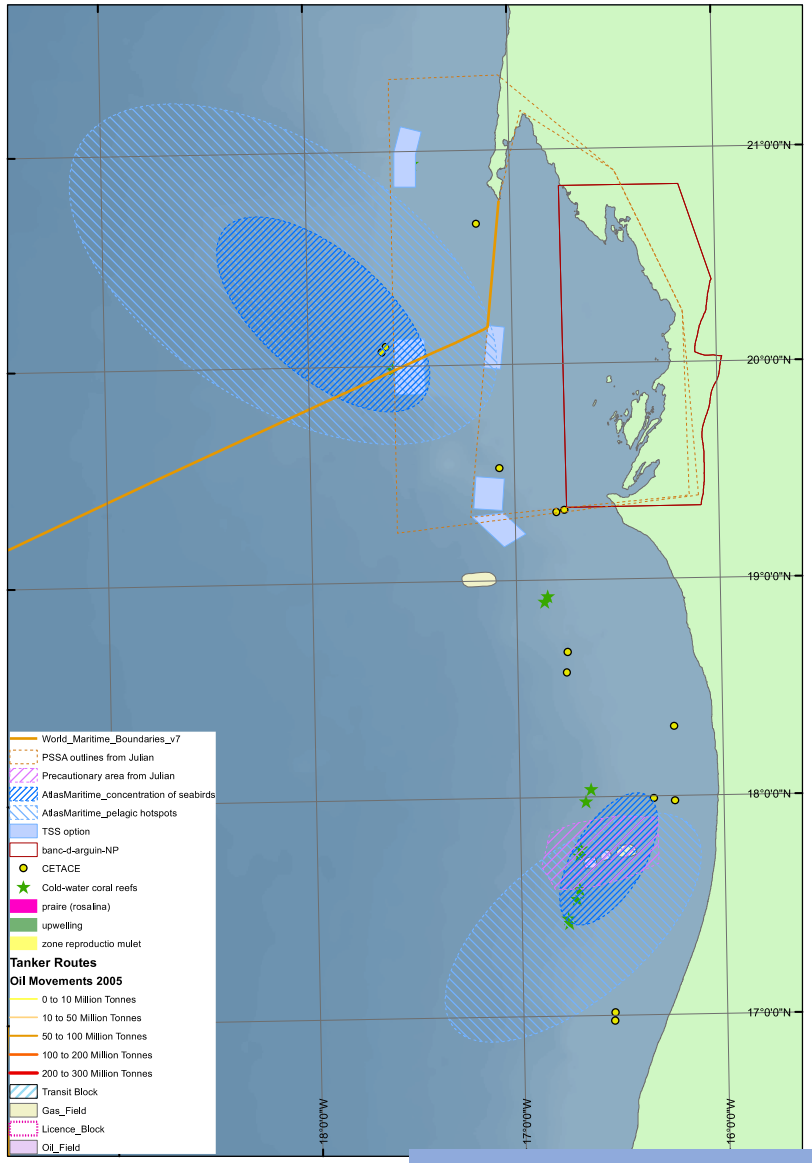
Sectoral use of EBSA information

International shipping: PSSA and/or MARPOL Special Area

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

World Heritage Convention

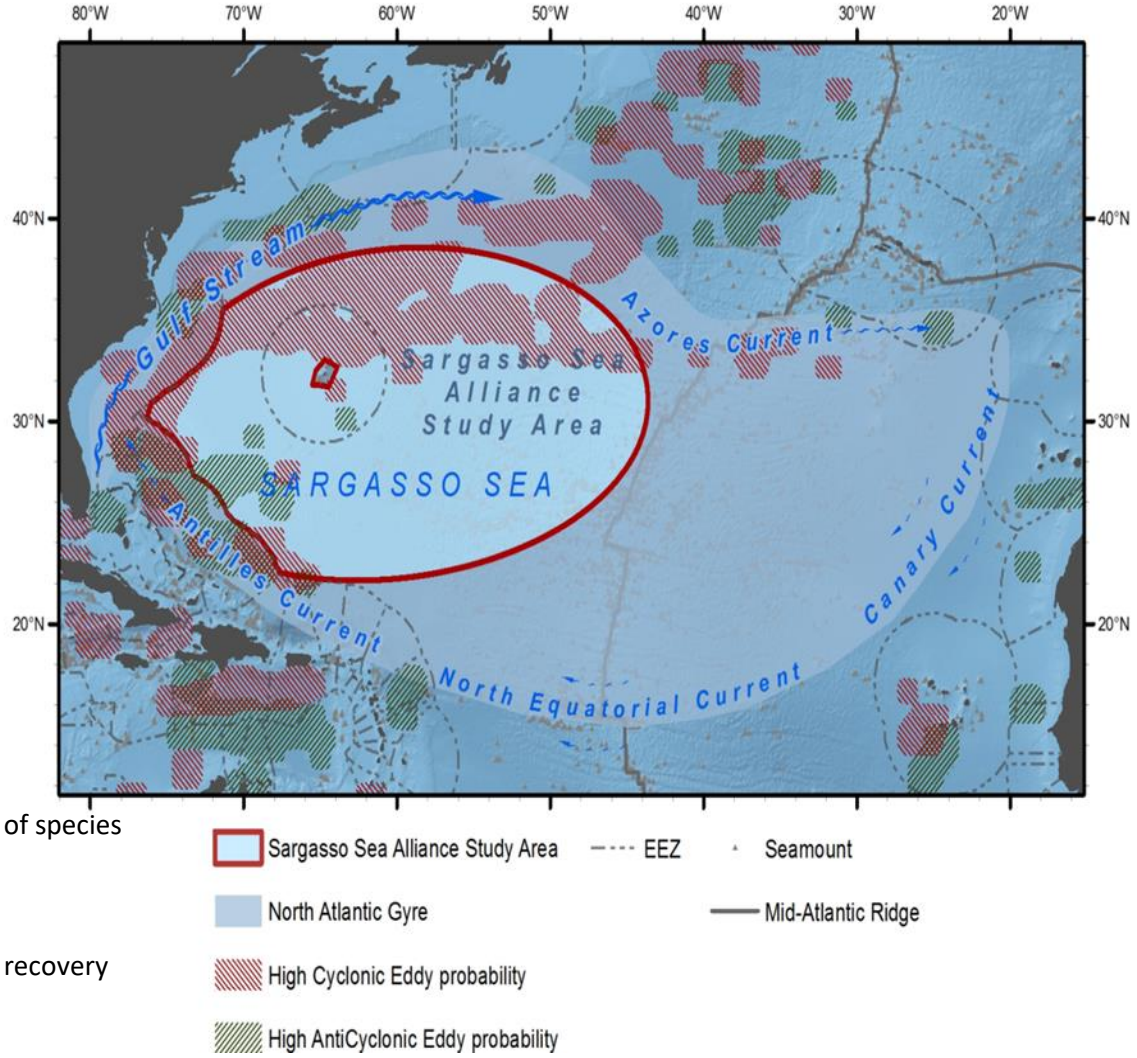
C1	Uniqueness or rarity	H
C2	Special importance for life history stages of species	H
C3	Importance for TED species and habitats	M
C4	Vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity or slow recovery	-
C5	Biological Productivity	H
C6	Biological Diversity	H
C7	Naturalness	L



Slide by David Johnson, GOBI

Sargasso Sea Commission

Collaboration with ICCAT:
2014 SCRS Ecosystem Sub-Committee recommended Sargasso Sea as a pilot for EAF



C1	Uniqueness or rarity	H
C2	Special importance for life history stages of species	H
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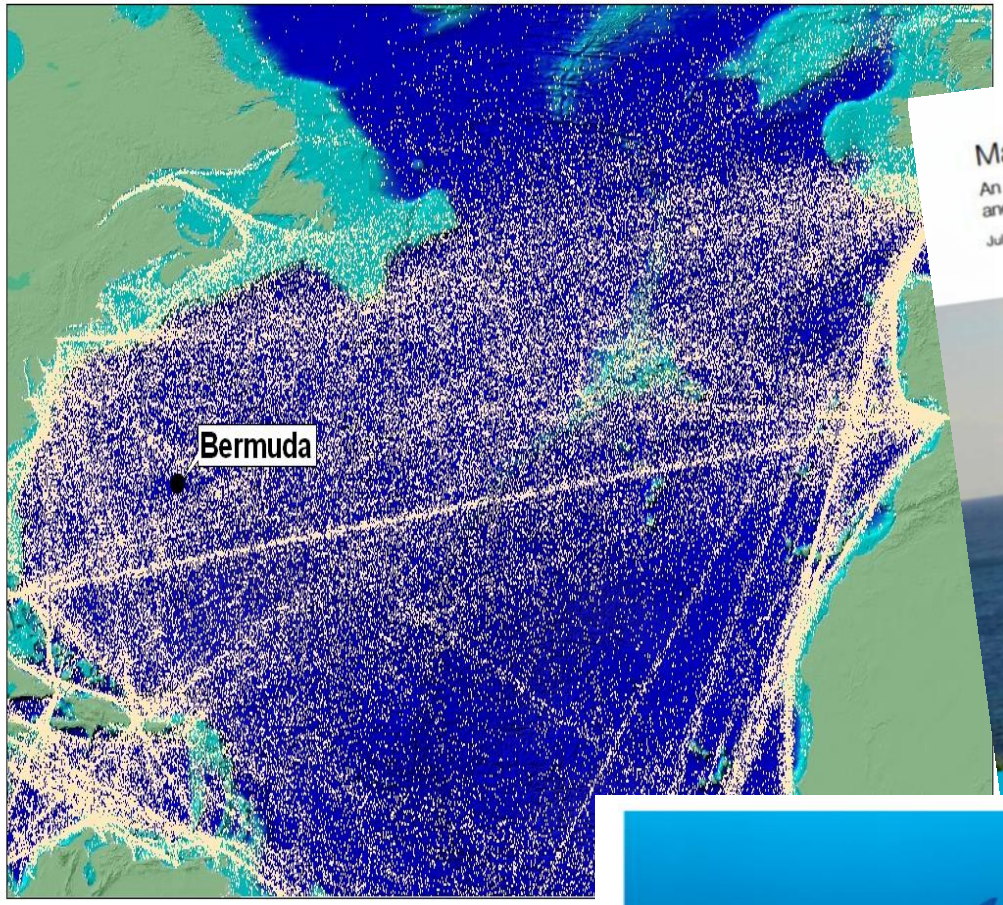
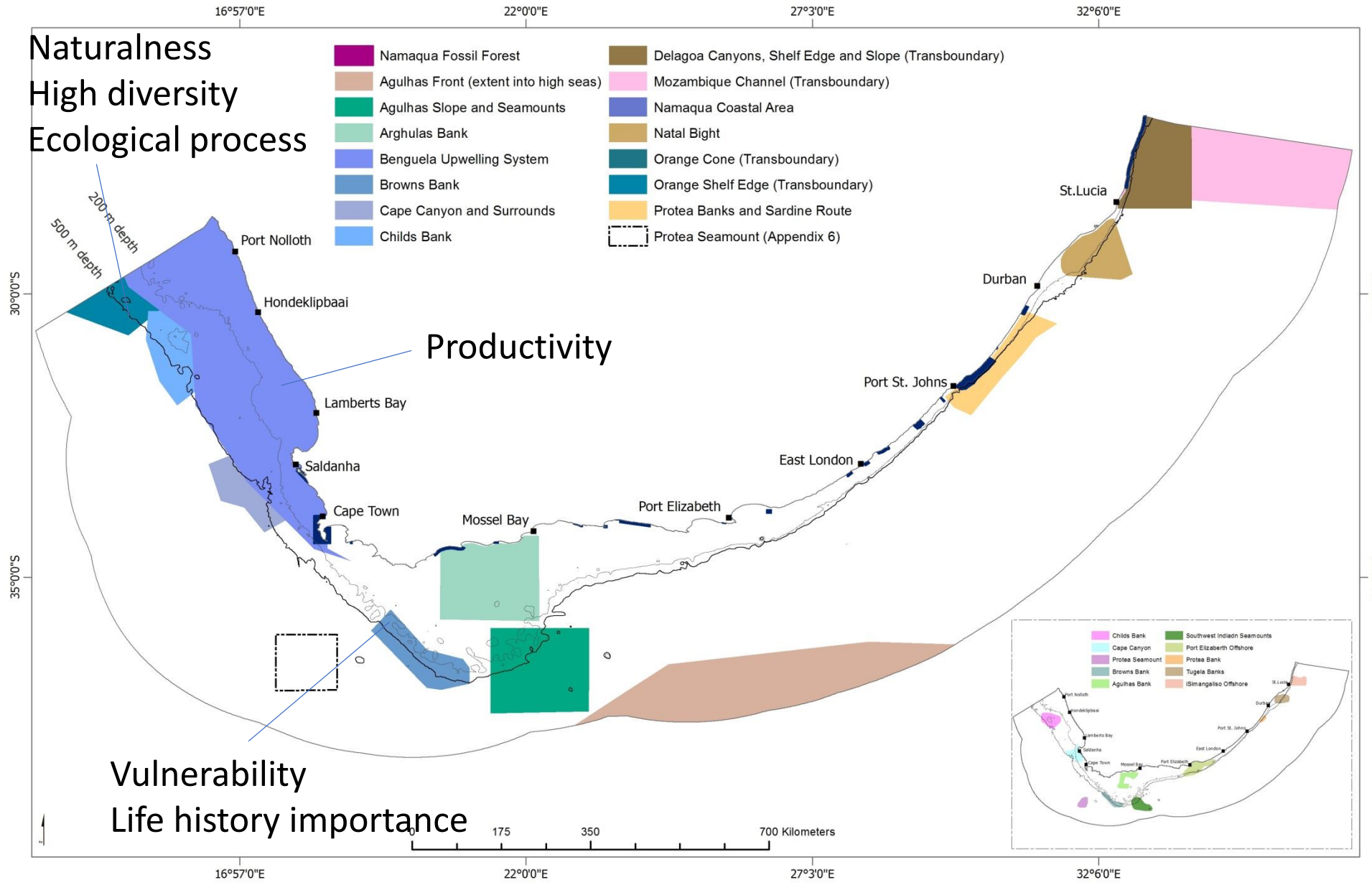
C5	Biological Productivity	H
C6	Biological Diversity	H
C7	Naturalness	M

Slide by David Johnson, GOBI



Slide by David Johnson, GOBI

Phakisa: 15 EBSAs in South Africa

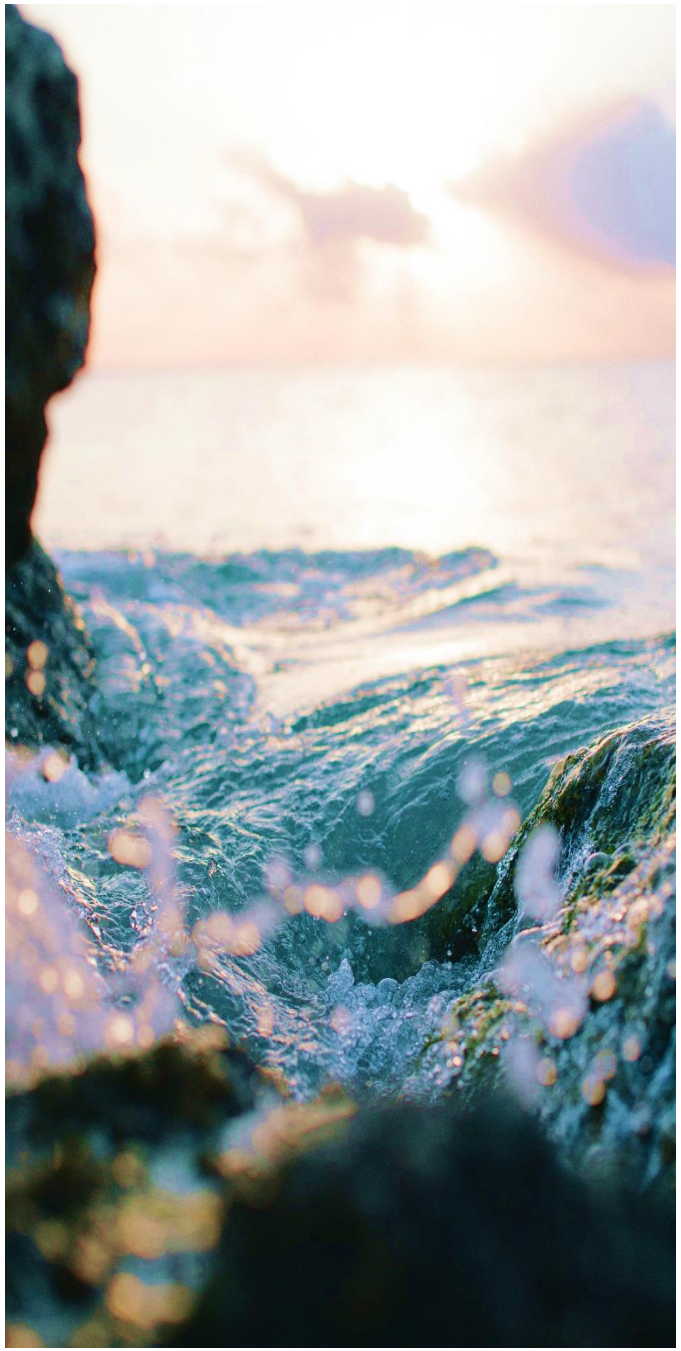


Slide courtesy Kerry Sink

EBSA Information Supporting Marine Spatial Planning in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem

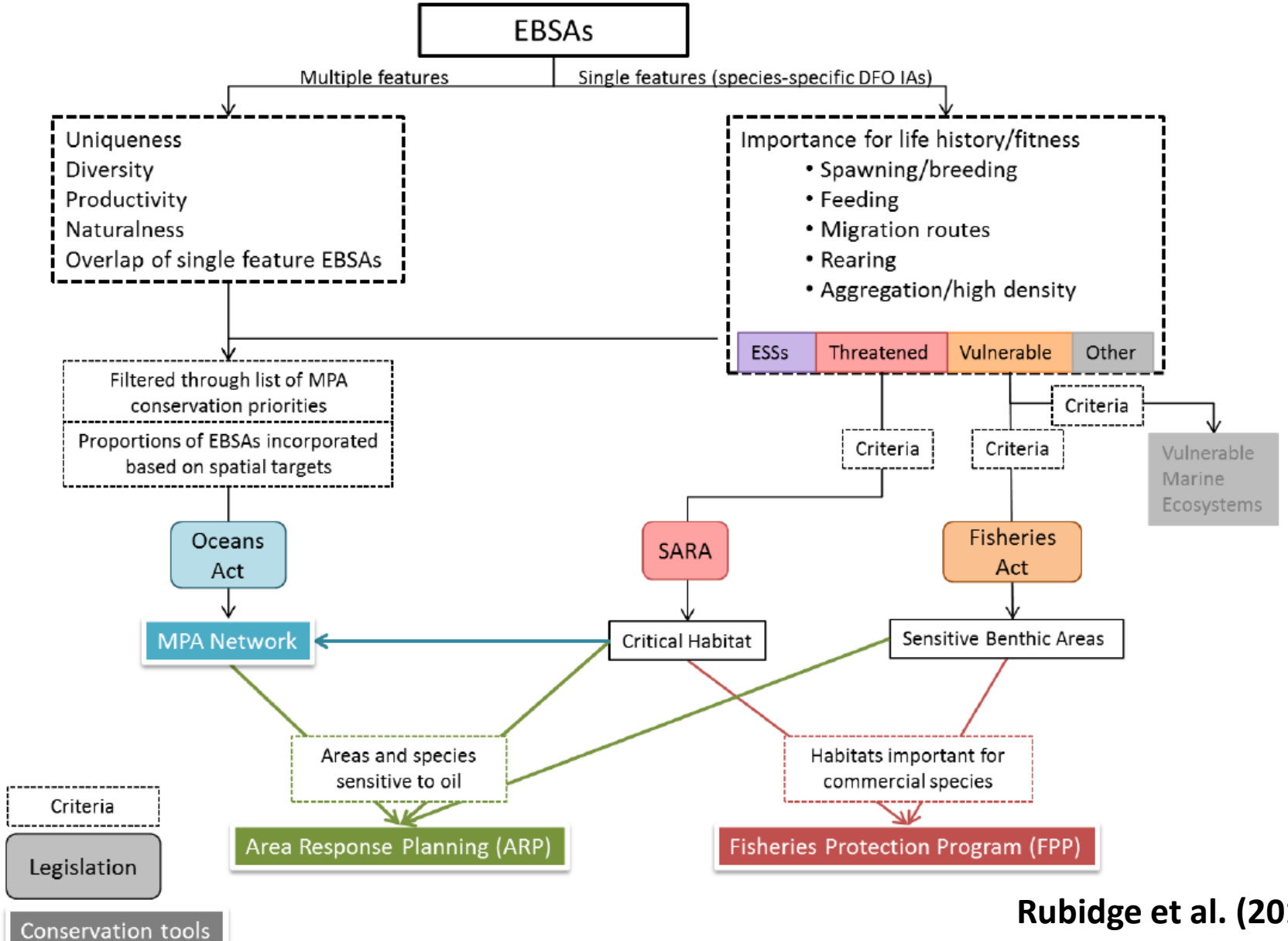
- Joint project by the BCC, its member states Angola, Namibia and South Africa and the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), funded by the German Environment Ministry

- Achieving socio-economic development through the balancing of sustainable use and protection of the marine environment
  - National and regional strategic frameworks for MSP
  - Development of one plan per country
  - Linking EBSAs with MSP



Complementary National Initiatives

Canada's Experience with EBSAs

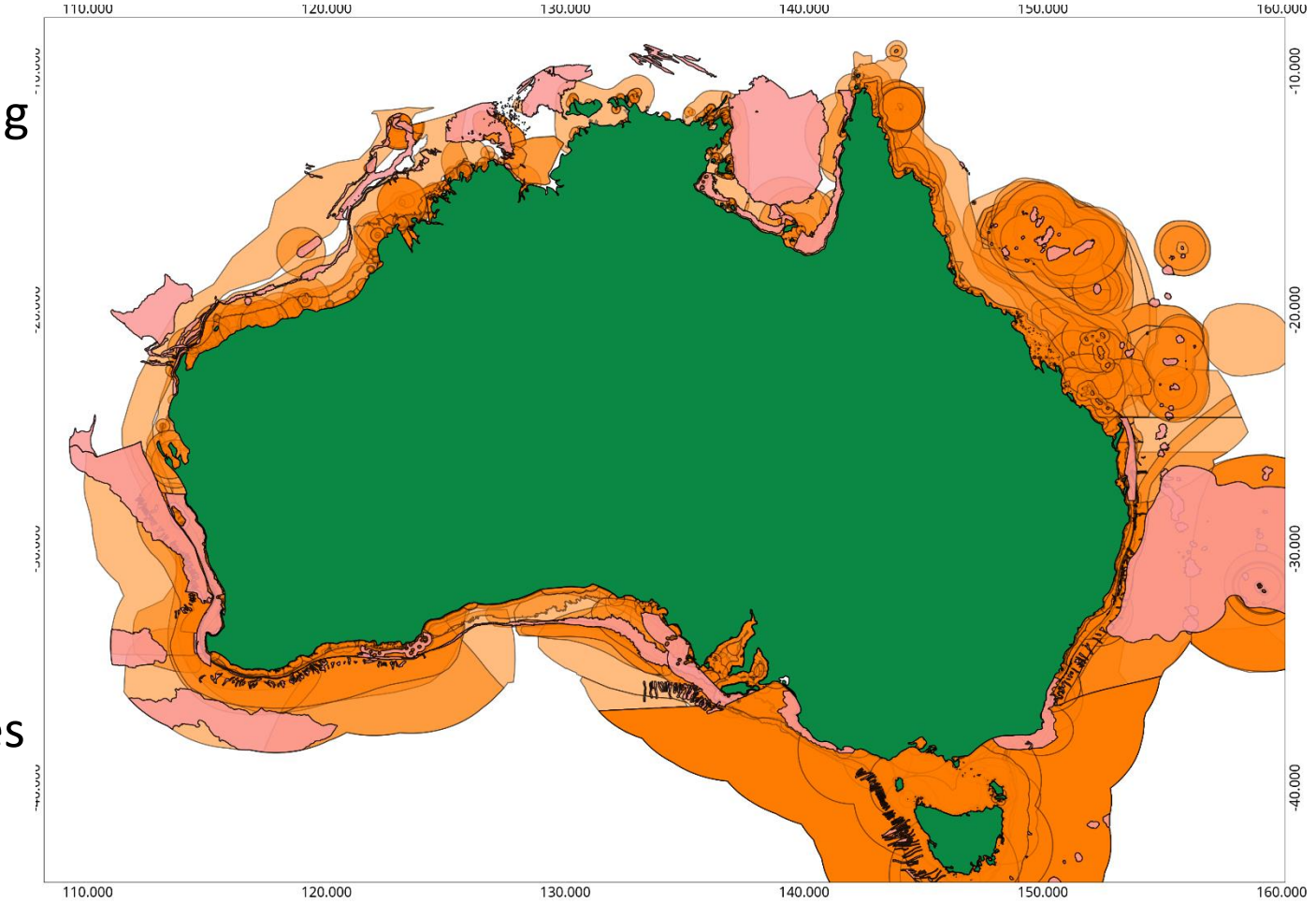


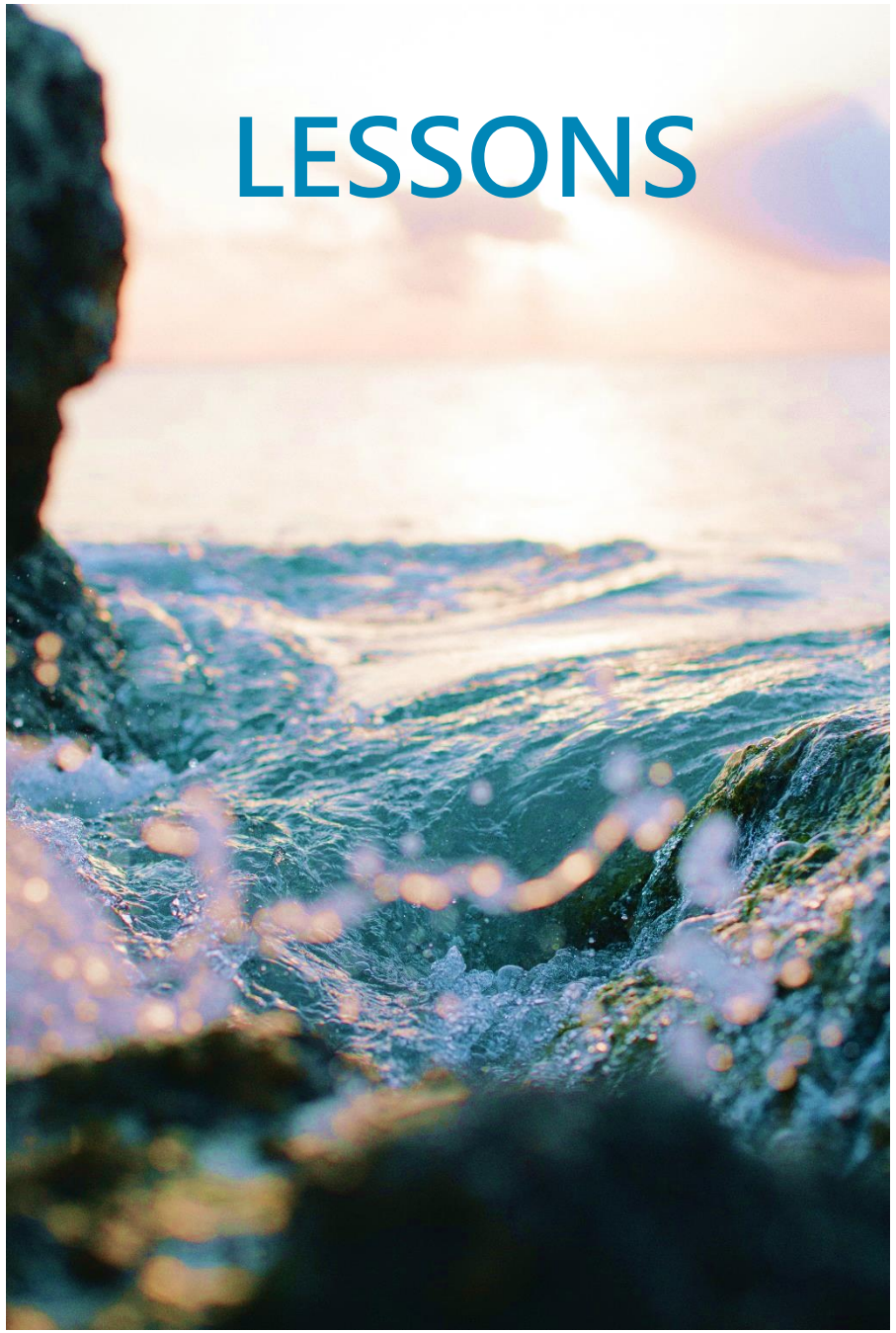
Rubidge et al. (2018)

Australia's Experience

Key Ecological Features and Biologically Important Areas

- **Biologically Important areas** are for species that are important for breeding, feeding or migration
- **Key Ecological Features** are areas that are bioregionally important for biodiversity, ecosystem function and productivity
- Any activity that is likely to impact on a KEF or BIA requires an EIA





LESSONS

- EBSA description focuses on features, not on threats, trends, or management
- EBSA criteria provides flexibility to describe and understand a broad range of features
- EBSA information contributes to management planning for conservation and sustainable use
- EBSAs provide focus for research and monitoring of important features
- EBSA process facilitates scientific collaboration, networking and capacity building

25 YEARS Convention on Biological Diversity
SAFEGUARDING LIFE ON EARTH

Thank you

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United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Discussion

Discussion

Potential areas for discussion include:

- While EBSAs are a scientific exercise, our understanding is that some countries have integrated them into area-based planning and management measures. Would you happen to have a few examples of where this has occurred? What are the implications are for businesses?
- As a data-driven process, the description of EBSAs might benefit from the inclusion of different types of knowledge. Have there been any instances where data from businesses (e.g. environmental impact assessments) have been used?

UN environment programme

WCMC

Contact

For password details for your company, and any other questions related to the Proteus Partnership please contact:

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