# Minutes
# Proteus Annual Meeting 2017

## Pre-meeting: Enhancing marine and coastal biodiversity screening
## 26th June 2017

*The David Attenborough Building, Pembroke Street, Cambridge, CB2 3QZ*

### *Objectives of the day*

- Showcase progress towards collating data on marine and coastal habitats globally, and to reflect on what we've learned through user surveys, analytics of downloaded data, and Proteus Partners' feedback
- Collaboratively establish a vision for enhancing access to high-quality marine and coastal data in the coming years

### *Presentations*

| Introduction and overview of achievements to date |
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| ▪ Introduction (Steve Fletcher, United Nations Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre, UNEP-WCMC, Head of Programme, Marine) [download]<br>▪ Overview of marine achievements – "where we were, where we are, and where we would like to be" (Lauren Weatherdon, Programme Officer, Marine, UNEP-WCMC) [download] |
| **Vision for the future** |
| ▪ Presentation on the Word Database on Protected Area's (WDPA) trajectory and achievements (Brian McSharry, UNEP-WCMC) [download]<br>▪ Vision for enhancing marine and coastal data (Lauren Weatherdon, UNEP-WCMC) [download] |

## *Take away messages*

- UNEP-WCMC is developing a marine data strategy for 2017-2020 to ensure continued provision of high-quality marine and coastal data resources
- The strategy will draw on lessons learned and expertise gained during the development of the World Database on Protected Areas over the last five years
- Priorities highlighted by Proteus Partners during this workshop will be considered in the further development of the action plan for enhancing marine and coastal data
- Data quality is frequently cited by Partners as being crucial to the value of data provided by UNEP-WCMC and will continue to form a central part of future work
- Partners suggested to explore the availability of data on seasonality and temporality of features, congregations of birds and mammals, and additional habitat features, such as sponges
- In terms of data usability, Partners flagged the importance of integrating data resources with the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) and local/national databases providing complementary information
- Proteus Partners are invited to nominate a GIS focal point within each company, to provide continued feedback into the strategy

# *Introduction and overview of achievements to date*

The 2016 United Nations World Ocean Assessment, the first global-scale assessment of the state of the marine environment, recognized the need for urgent action to reduce pressures on the marine environment.

International attention on the sustainable use of marine resources has been increasing in the context of this year's United Nations Ocean Conference (June 2017, New York). The Conference resulted in a "Call for Action", coupled to a register of voluntary commitments to implement Sustainable Development Goal 14 ("Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development").

Sustaining a healthy ocean is a key strategic theme for UNEP-WCMC. As part of this objective, one of the Centre's priorities for 2017-2018 is to initiate a step-change in global access to, and use of, marine biodiversity spatial data to support the delivery of oceans-related sustainable development goals and targets.

With the support of the Proteus Partnership, the Centre's marine programme has been able to make significant progress in terms of making new data available, and identifying potential data resources. Key achievements over the last two years include:

- 2.52 million records of marine and coastal habitats, compared to 2.45 million in 2015
- 2.1 million km² of marine and coastal areas mapped, compared to 1.2 million km² in 2015
- 128 data resources identified in the Manual on marine and coastal dataset of biodiversity importance, compared to 75 in 2015

The Centre is developing a marine data strategy until 2020 to ensure continued provision of high-quality marine biodiversity data. This workshop sought to gather feedback from Proteus Partners, to guide the development of the marine data strategy. Proteus Partners are both key funders and key users of the Centre's marine data resources.

*Ice-breaker: " In two words, state why you joined this workshop"*

# *Practical session: Current use of marine features and priorities for future developments*

**Marine Features -** Participants i) identified marine features for which data is currently available through Proteus, which Partners find most valuable ; ii) identified two priority features for which data is not currently available, which Partners would find valuable (starred in the figure below).

| Higher priority | Medium priority | Lower priority |
|---|---|---|
| •Marine mammals<br>•Sea turtle nesting and feeding sites<br>•Marine Critical Habitat<br>•Mangroves<br>•Seabirds<br>•Coral reefs<br>•Saltmarsh<br>•Migratory routes (*)<br>•Fish (benthic) and fisheries (*) | •Estuaries<br>•Cold corals<br>•Seagrass<br>•Sponges (*)<br>•Shipping intensity (*)<br>•Fishing grounds (*) | •Dive centre locations<br>•Biodiversity indicators<br>•Marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces |

**Priority developments by thematic areas -** Participants i) identified key priorities for improvement for three thematic areas: Data quality, Usability and Workflows (i.e. how to improve integration of data or products in company workflows); ii) Prioritised topics identified under these three themes (results are presented in order of priority in the figure below).

| Data quality | Usability | Workflows |
|---|---|---|
| •Enhanced spatial resolution, for increased usability at site-level<br>•Enhanced temporal resolution<br>•Communicate reliability, accuracy and uncertainty of data, for instance:<br>•National accuracy ratings<br>•Addressing true/false absences)<br>•Tying reliability to scale of data (e.g. identifying high/medium/low confidence based on intensity of information-gathering efforts) | • Linking to local/national databases for additional information<br>• Integration with Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT)<br>• Better software compatibility (e.g. smartphone applications)<br>• Training for technical users<br>•Establishment of GIS focal points, and a mechanism for regular feedback | •Facilitate cross-sector data sharing (e.g. shipping), by showcasing the benefits of data sharing and supporting the development of data sharing guidance<br>• Development of tools for rapid screening (e.g. via IBAT), allowing to have a "quick-look" for rapid assessments or presentations<br>• Enhanced integration with internal GIS software |

# *Vision for the future*

The Centre's vision for enhancing marine and coastal data draws on expertise gained through the development of the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), while adapting to users' needs and data characteristics specific to the marine realm.

The WDPA has undergone major improvements over the past five years, resulting in a significant increase in its impact. For instance, the database is frequently used within scientific publications, contributes to indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and is integrated within online systems such as ProtectedPlanet.net and Global Forest Watch. A large part of this success is due to the implementation of standardized attributes within the database, which facilitate integration of the data within processes in the private sector, civil society and the public sector.

The draft strategy for enhancing marine and coastal data until 2020 integrates lessons learned from the trajectory of the WDPA.

Key elements of the proposed marine data strategy include:

- Implementing standardised attributes across the datasets UNEP-WCMC curate, as well as communicating clear quality assessment protocols and implementing quality metrics for tracking improvements;
- Establishing partnerships with existing global biodiversity monitoring networks, and in-country focal points through national governments, to be identified through a call via the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- Harnessing the technological advances that have occurred globally, and governments' increased capacity and commitment to biodiversity monitoring; and
- Ensuring ongoing relationships with data providers through mutually-perceived benefits, and prioritisation of data-poor regions through capacity development and partnerships.

Priorities highlighted by Proteus Partners during this workshop will be considered in the further development of the Centre's action plan for enhancing marine and coastal data until 2020. It was agreed with Partners that GIS focal points will be nominated within each company, to provide continued feedback on Partner needs.

Data quality was frequently cited by Partners as a crucial element to the value of data provided by UNEP-WCMC, and will continue to form a central part of future work.

Partners also expressed willingness to explore options for mobilising companies' data, whether through national focal points or some other means.