



**Overall target:** ‘to present the results of the Ocean Governance project (funded by the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments -FPI- of the European Commission) and to discuss the EU marine ambition with the idea of a One Blue Belt boosting international cooperation between networks of MPA managers across the globe to achieve Post 2020 marine conservation targets.’

With the prospect of the coming CBD Conference of Parties and UN Ocean Conference that will take place in 2025, we are proposing this new event to highlight the technical and strategic role of networks of MPA managers. While harnessing marine conservation efforts and catalyzing knowledge and know-how of MPA managers and their partners, MPA networks are key to strengthen MPA management effectiveness and thus provide tangible ecological, social and economic contributions to global marine biodiversity conservation challenges and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Format:** the event will be 120 minutes long and will bring together members of the European Parliament, representatives of the European Commission, the UNOC secretariat and networks of MPA managers from across the globe.

- This event, planned on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2023, will be focused on the strategic role of networks of MPA managers at European, regional and global level. This 2nd event is coordinated in the framework of the EU Ocean Governance project with the contribution from several networks from different regional Seas (West Africa, Baltic, Western Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, etc.).

## Global network of MPAs to support ocean governance



**2<sup>nd</sup> hybrid event**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023, 14:15 – 16:00 CET**

**Co-hosted by MEP Stéphane Bijoux,**

Co-Chair of the 'Islands and Overseas Entities' Working Group of the European Parliament Intergroup on 'Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development'

**and MEP Catherine Chabaud**

Co-Chair of the 'Ocean Governance' Working Group of the European Parliament Intergroup on 'Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development'

According to the latest assessment (Protected planet 2020), the past decade has seen substantial gains in protected areas coverage. The greatest growth over the 10-year period has been in marine and coastal areas, where 68% of the protected areas is less than ten years old. Further efforts are however still needed to ensure that all areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are conserved: 33.9% of marine Key Biodiversity Areas remains outside protected areas coverage.

The Global Biodiversity Framework and the EU 2030 Biodiversity strategy provide a real opportunity to ensure that **future efforts take into account both the quantity and quality of protected and conserved areas in equal measure**. In this regard, the networks of MPA managers are key. The best

available scientific information confirms indeed that, to protect biodiversity and manage resources, well managed and representative MPA networks across seas and oceans are critical.

**Regional MPA networks are very diverse** in terms of the area covered as well as in terms of the governance models. Examples include the Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) network in the Pacific, the Western Indian Ocean Marine Protected Areas Management Network (WIOMPAN), the Mediterranean Protected Area Network (MedPAN), the West Africa MPA Network (RAMPAO), the North American MPA Network (NAMPAN), the North East Asia MPA Network (NEAMPAN), the Gulf of Mexico Network (Red Golfo); networks in the framework of regional seas conventions such as OSPAR, HELCOM or the Caribbean MPA Managers Network (CaMPAM); or others networks developed as working groups under larger regional structures such as Redparques or the Patagonian Forum.

Despite their importance, **today, there is no global initiative that brings together all the MPA networks**. This situation is preventing to scale-up their valuable services of knowledge, know-how sharing, and is hindering to further enhance ecological connectivity and to mobilise a resourceful community of practice. The need for a global network becomes particularly acute with the adoption of the Treaty on Biodiversity beyond National Jurisdiction that would highly benefit from the experience of such a global community of practice of the different MPA networks and their strong multiple-decade experience. A continuum and good synergy of efforts are of outmost importance to support marine conservation efforts in the high seas, in encompassing the seascapes, joining and catalysing efforts to tackle common challenges, for instance migratory species and climate change.

**MPAs social networks facilitate the sharing of experiences, challenges and successes amongst practitioners and countries and there is a need to further enable such exchanges between regions.** Networks of MPA managers, at national, sub-regional and regional levels, provide a framework for an individual MPA to coordinate with others to share experiences, tools, and methods and to enhance efforts in managing their respective MPAs. They share a common language, and encourage harmonization and coherence by offering knowledge development and capitalization tools. Networks support effective governance of oceans as they build “MPA community” by connecting managers, management authorities, local stakeholders as well as scientists and donors towards a similar overall goal. Networks of managers also contribute to improve MPA-related policies and other sectoral policies at national and international level as they make the link between experiences on the ground (and in the sea) and decision-making processes.

**Because better ocean governance can only be achieved through consolidated international cooperation and partnerships**, this event is aiming at **sharing the valuable insights and results of the European Ocean Governance project** and discussing **the EU marine ambition with the idea of a One Blue Belt** bolstering international cooperation between MPA networks across the globe.

## Background on the EU Ocean Governance project



Ocean governance is about taking a coordinated approach to tackle major challenges that face the world’s oceans, seas and coastal areas: over-fishing, climate change, acidification, pollution, biodiversity

decline and ecosystem degradation. This four years project is led and supported by the Service of Foreign Policy Instruments – Partnership Instrument (FPI-PI) of the European Commission and it gives continuity to the previous FPI-PI project “Cooperation with Northern and Southern Transatlantic Dimension -Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)” implemented in two phases, 2016-2017 and 2018-2019. This FPI action found its background in the Report on the role of the EU in promoting a broader Transatlantic Partnership by MEP Francisco José Millán Mon from 14 May 2013.

The EU Ocean Governance project objective is to **build links between marine protected areas in the Atlantic basin and South-East Asia for the benefit of wildlife conservation and local economies**. The project brings together **partners from North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia and will last 4 years**.

The project carried out site restoration works in South East Asia. In and between the Atlantic and South-East Asia, it built ‘twinning partnerships’, groups of marine protected area managers and other experts coming together to work on topics of shared interest (such as whale conservation or coastal resilience) to build skills and understanding and deliver more effective management of the marine environment. One of the “twinning” is dealing with networks of MPA managers.

More information available at: <https://oceangovernance4mpas.eu/>

## FINAL AGENDA:

- 14:15 – 14:20: Opening remarks by **MEP Stéphane Bijoux**
- 14:20 – 14:35: Keynote interventions by:
  - **Ambassador Olivier Poivre d’Arvor**, Special Envoy of the President of the French Republic for the UN Ocean Conference France 2025
  - **Celine Idil**, Director for International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries (Dir. B), DG MARE, European Commission
- 14:35 – 15:05: Achievement and insights of the EU Ocean Governance project, with the participation of:
  - **Ms. Eva Raute**, Managing Director of GOPA, Leading company for the EU Ocean Governance Project
  - **Dr. Purificació Canals**, Team Leader and Technical Coordinator EU Ocean Governance Project and President of MedPAN
  - **Carole Martinez**, Policy Manager of MedPAN
  - **Andrea Michelson**, Regional Coordinador, Foro para la Conservación del Mar Patagónico y Áreas de Influencia



- 15h:05 – 15h35: Coordinating protection networks of MPAs as key allies, with the participation of:
  - **Jihyun Lee**, Director of Science, Society and Sustainable Futures Division, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity / UNEP
  - **Alice Belin**, Policy Officer, Marine Environment and Clean Water Services Unit (C2), DG ENV, European Commission
  
- 15:45 – 15:55: **Q&A discussion with the audience**
  
- 15:55 – 16:00: Closing remarks by **MEP Catherine Chabaud**