

CALIFORNIA'S MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Our oceans cover roughly 70% of Earth's surface, but less than 3% are protected. California is leading the way in ocean and coastal conservation by establishing a network of "underwater Yosemites" along its coastline.

What is a marine protected area?

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are areas of coastal ocean set aside to protect marine life and habitat. MPAs have varying levels of protection and allowed uses.

3 Types of MPAs in CA

State
Marine
Reserves



State
Marine
Parks



State Marine
Conservation
Areas



Why establish MPAs?

#1

CA fisheries have declined



#2

MPAs allow whole ecosystems to recover and thrive

#3

Local marine ecosystems are stressed



What are the benefits of MPAs?

MPAs minimize human impacts and allow marine life to grow more diverse, abundant, and larger in size.



MPAs protect whole ecosystems, not just individual species. They can also improve our oceans by increasing resilience to environmental changes, such as climate change.

MARINE LIFE PROTECTION ACT

In 1999, California's Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) was passed into law with a clear mandate: to re-evaluate all existing marine protected areas (MPAs) and design new MPAs with input from a broad array of stakeholders.

When were CA's MPAs created?

2003 Channel Islands

2007 Central Coast

2008-2010
MLPA process and MPA
adoption in SoCal

2010 North Central Coast

2012 Southern California

2012 North Coast



How were MPAs established?

California State Fish and Game Commission

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Blue Ribbon Task Force

Regional Stakeholder
Groups

Science
Advisory Team

Local knowledge
and concerns

Biophysical/
Socioeconomic
Data

How can I help
MPAs?

Join Heal the Bay's
citizen-science program,
MPA Watch!

healthebay.org/mpawatch

Report violations to the
CalTIP app or call (888)
334-CALTIP

For more information:

www.wildlife.ca.gov

Visit Us!



Heal the Bay

