

**ECONOMIST
IMPACT**



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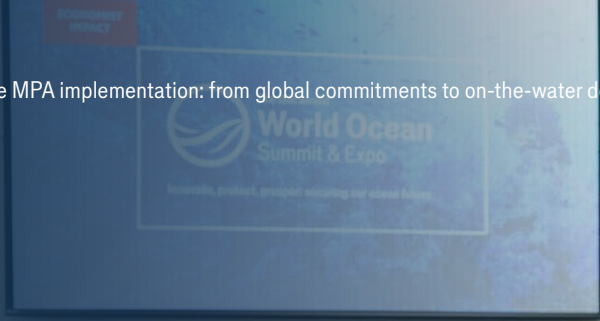
World Ocean Summit & Expo

Workshop summary

How to accelerate MPA implementation:
from global commitments to on-the-water delivery

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Overall summary



Discussions focused on bridging global commitments and practical action on marine protected areas (MPAs). Participants emphasised trust, governance, data usability and stakeholder alignment. They argued that success depends less on new commitments than on delivery systems, social licence, storytelling and tools to aid decision-making. Agreement emerged on needs to integrate science, policy, finance and community engagement.



Action points

Policy, governance and incentives

- Position MPAs as tools for economic development (building employment, tourism and resilience), not only as conservation measures.
- Align political incentives with long-term outcomes for ecosystems and economies.
- Develop transboundary legal frameworks to support ecosystem-scale MPAs.
- Integrate MPAs into broader strategies for ocean governance and development.

Legal design and enabling conditions

- Strengthen legal frameworks to support implementation, enforcement and adaptive management.
- Use concrete, local examples of community benefits to support adoption.
- Ensure legal, scientific and policy processes are co-ordinated from the outset.

Participation, trust and social licence

- Build trust early through inclusive and ongoing stakeholder engagement.
- Identify and empower trusted local leaders to convene communities.
- Design MPAs with stakeholders from planning through to management.
- Establish shared values and common goals before formal design processes.
- Create collaborative governance structures (eg, stewardship groups, co-management models).

Data, tools and decision support

- Prioritise tools for decision-making over data volume; focus on usability and accessibility.

- Integrate datasets (ecological, spatial, socio-economic) to guide implementation.
- Tailor tools to local, regional and legal contexts rather than applying global solutions uniformly.
- Invest in training and capacity-building to enable effective use of tools.
- Strengthen trust in data and tools through transparency and validation.

Technology and innovation

- Use AI and satellite data to support monitoring, enforcement and transparency.
- Combine technological tools with local knowledge and on-the-ground validation.
- Focus innovation on specific user needs rather than creating new stand-alone tools.

Communication and storytelling

- Develop clear narratives that show the tangible benefits of MPAs for stakeholders.
- Improve ocean literacy to strengthen public and political support.
- Use case studies and peer learning to show what works and establish replicable models.

Financing and implementation pathways

- Link funding to trust, governance quality and stakeholder alignment.
- Move from pilot projects to scalable systems through long-term partnerships.
- Align incentives across governments, communities and investors to enable sustained delivery.

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