



Conference
TCD Dublin
Sept 2-3rd 2019

**Bigger
and Better**

Marine Protected Areas in EU and Irish Waters

Organisers: Coastwatch in cooperation with Irish Wildlife Trust, SWAN, Seas At Risk and Client Earth

Location: M17, Museum Building, New Square, Trinity College Dublin and fieldtrips to Dublin Bay.

Contact: Karin Dubsky, Director Coastwatch, 086 8111 684 kdubsky@tcd.ie, Civil and Env Eng, TCD, D 2
Regina Classen, IWT MPA project officer, 089 9882 606, iwt.marineprotection@gmail.com

Conference Background

Ireland, along with many other countries, has committed to designate 10% of its seas as MPAs by 2020 and 30% by 2030. Yet so far, **we have protected only 2.3 %**.

Our ~400,000 km² EEZ is one of the biggest in Europe and with this comes a great responsibility to safeguard and indeed **restore** precious habitats and species within this region. One proven way of doing that is by establishing **well designed and managed** marine protected areas (MPAs). The recent six-yearly report by the NPWS to the EC, the so called 'Art 17 report' indicates that Ireland is failing in this task with most marine habitats in **inadequate or even bad condition**.

Conference Aims:

This conference is organised to bore into reasons for our poor performance and present ways to improve marine biodiversity protection and wise use of our marine resources with public participation. It includes:

- International speakers with legal and science backgrounds to get an outside view
- High ranking Irish government officials who can instigate change
- Panel discussion with public representatives of all parties invited as the election is coming closer and we need commitments for change
- Case studies from right around Ireland presented by local people who have achieved some improvements and are sharing their experience to make changes elsewhere
- Break-out sessions for small group discussions and drafting of recommendations
- Fieldtrips to see coastal beauty, richness mobility, problems and actions first hand.



Draft Programme

September 2nd

2.00 pm **Registration**

2.10 pm **Welcome** in TCD and the MPA conference

2.15 pm **Opening Session papers with immediate Q and A**

- From coastal to EEZ MPA designations and UN negotiations on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions. *Richard Cronin, Principle Advisor Marine Environment, DHLG*
- Marine N 2000 sites around Ireland - size, status and future plans. *Dr David Lyons NPWS*
- The international MPA project – *Marc-Philip Buckhout, Policy Officer, Seas at Risk*
- Potential for offshore site designations, inshore/coastal fill and transboundary sites and key issues which need to be addressed to halt biodiversity loss - *Karin Dubsy, Coastwatch; Cormac Nolan, SWAN and Regina Classen, IWT.*

3.15 pm **Coffee break**

3.30 pm **Panel Discussion:** Halting biodiversity loss and creating a Bigger and Better MPA network. Politicians set out their views and plans – **Eamon Ryan (Green Party), Timmy Dooley (Fianna Fáil)**
Chair: Kevin O'Sullivan

4.30 pm **Break-out sessions** running in parallel (M17, Geog Lect. Room 5A and 5B)

1. Law: Overcoming obstacles to designation in Ireland including X-border and Brexit
2. MPA proposals – Where, why and how: with 2 input papers: (i) Bantry Bay - Dolf d'Hondt and Thomas O Sullivan Kelp Campaign and (ii) inshore salmon sites tbc
3. Analysis of the panel discussion

5.30 pm **Close of Day 1**

6.30 pm Dinner in Cornucopia with imaginative feedback from break-out groups



September 3rd

8.30 – 9.00 am Registration M17 Museum Building New Sq. TCD

- 9.00 am** **Better MPAs** - MPA design, monitoring, public participation and enforcement
- Fundamental legal principles for a successful MPA network, *Tatiana Lujan, Client Earth*
 - Good practice and issues in France, case study *Sophie Mjati, France Nature Environnement*
 - Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, *Dean Eaton, Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership*

Chair: Prof James Wilson, Trinity College Dublin

Discussion

10.40 am Coffee

- 11.00 am** **Better MPAs break-out session** with short input papers to inform and draft recommendations
1. Fisheries and Aquaculture - (Waterford estuary traditional fishermen/ ecotourism, Mussel Bottom culture Emily Fair)
 2. Appropriate Assessment of plans and activities which may impact on MPAs (Lough Foyle and Brexit, tbc)
 3. Monitoring and Enforcement (Castlemaine Harbour – Maurice Murphy)

12.15 pm Analysis of the break-out sessions

1.00 pm **Close**
Picnic lunch with fieldtrips

- 2.00 – 5.00 pm** **Field trip** Dublin Biosphere and N 2000 sites
- Tackling urban MPA issues: land – sea interphase and climate change, fragile biota, seagrass bed and birds at Merrion strand, people information, engagement and pressure.
 - Managing Fishing in MPAs: from intensive, over extensive traditional lobster/crab to no take zones ferry to Dalkey island weather permitting.



Acknowledgements

The Bigger and Better project was made possible through generous funding from Oceans 5. We would also like to thank Trinity College Dublin for hosting the conference and all our speakers, chairs and facilitators for giving their time and expertise gratis and so making this event possible. Thank you to our core team for preparations and work on the day.

There will be a report with full acknowledgements on our websites together with presentations and outcomes after the event.

Bigger and Better Project Summary

Coastwatch and Irish Wildlife Trust are the Irish partners in an international MPA project coordinated by Seas at Risk and supported by the environmental law firm Client Earth. Our Irish short term goals are:

1. Establishing 10% of our seas as MPAs as promised and achieved by other EU member states. Local knowledge and participation are needed to identify missing links in the network of inshore sites.
2. Transforming the approach to MPAs from paper parks to community led well managed and resourced protected sites where nature and local communities flourish and can adapt to climate change.
3. Running a public awareness campaign so people appreciate the value of our seas, realise that marine biodiversity loss is a huge problem and are empowered to contribute to the creation of more sites, site restoration, protection and management.



SEAS AT RISK



Coastwatch