

# GLOBAL LEADERS IN BUILDING EFFECTIVE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Marine protected areas (MPAs)—like national parks on land—set aside dedicated areas for conservation to help the ocean thrive, provide jobs, protect coral reefs, rejuvenate marine wildlife & habitats, and feed millions of people. MPAs are one of the most important conservation tools we have.

In the past five years there has been a significant upsurge in support for the creation of new MPAs. This is great news for the future health of our oceans, but we need more than 'paper parks'. The reality is that nearly 60% of MPAs around the world lack the necessary resources, training, and enforcement capacity to be successful.

Over the last 20 years, WildAid's comprehensive approach to MPA enforcement has been proven to help build successful MPAs. In fact, MPAs with strong enforcement capacity perform almost 3 times better than those without. After partnering with WildAid, the Galapagos National Park and Misool Marine Reserve in Indonesia, have seen dramatic improvements in revitalizing coral reefs, shark populations, mantas, nesting sea turtles, whales, and important commercial fisheries.

WildAid is working to make the promise of MPAs real. We created the BLUEprint for MPA Success to expand our marine program to new sites, allowing more MPAs to fulfill their conservation potential and for ocean wildlife to recover and flourish.



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**MARINE**  
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# THE CHALLENGE

- 25% of marine mammal, shark and ray species are endangered,
- Six of the seven sea turtle species face extinction,
- Fish used by humans have decreased by half since 1970,
- 50% of coral reefs, which harbor a quarter of all marine species, have disappeared and are further threatened by climate change.

# BENEFITS OF MPAs

MPAs can help to address many of these challenges. If managed effectively, they can:

- Quadruple fish populations,
- Provide a refuge for endangered species,
- Increase the resiliency of coral reefs against climate change and other external impacts,
- Provide coastal communities with vital protein supplies and income.

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26.72 MILLION SQ KM

TOTAL AREA OF DECLARED MPAs

Equal to 3.5x the area of the U.S.\*



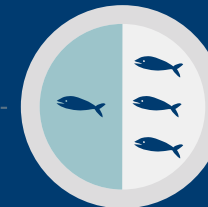
60%

OF MPAs ARE NOT EFFECTIVE\*\*



WildAid is working to change that, by strengthening MPA enforcement worldwide. Well-enforced MPAs achieve almost 3x greater conservation benefits.

Poorly enforced  
MPAs



Well-enforced  
MPAs

\*Contiguous United States- not including Alaska, Hawaii, and other territories.

\*\*This statistic refers to implemented MPAs. Currently there are over 15,000 worldwide.

# BLUEprint FOR MPA SUCCESS

## MAKING THE PROMISE OF MPAs REAL

WildAid's Marine Protection Program has developed a highly effective, 6-step 'Blueprint for MPA Success' tailored for local partners that stops illegal fishing, enforces regulations, allows wildlife recovery, and encourages positive economic opportunity for communities. By the end of the BLUEprint, our sites will have measurable improvement in their Marine Protection System and can act as Regional Leaders, exemplifying successful marine conservation in the region.





Discovery

**GOAL:** Identify prospective project sites and in-country partner organizations.



Enforcement Plan

**GOAL:** Conduct a full assessment of the Marine Protection System and develop a multi-year enforcement plan.



Mentorship

**GOAL:** Provide guided mentorship to improve enforcement system efficiency and empower partners to manage it independently.



Partnership

**GOAL:** Establish a long-term partnership agreement with an in-country organization and begin joint fundraising.



Improvement

**GOAL:** Carry out enforcement plan: conduct training and annual re-assessments, purchase equipment, engage community, track progress, and modify plan as needed.



Regional Leader

**GOAL:** Sites can now act as regional leaders with a self-sufficient and complete enforcement system.

## PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION ARE KEY

For 20 years, WildAid’s Marine Program has built successful MPAs through close collaboration with the right in-country partners. Other criteria for success in the BLUEprint includes the following:

- The site has abundant marine wildlife, unique habitat or valuable fisheries.
- The primary threats to the site include poaching, illegal fishing, or other enforcement issues.
- The partner is committed to joint fundraising.
- The government is committed to making legislative and policy changes, and allocating necessary resources.
- The site has the core building blocks for effective enforcement: an existing management staff, operational budget, and legal designation for the MPA.

TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIP, PLEASE EMAIL US AT [MARINE@WILDAID.ORG](mailto:MARINE@WILDAID.ORG).

# WILDAID MARINE PROTECTION SYSTEM

There are five components necessary for a complete and successful Marine Protection System that will discourage illegal activity and encourage law-abiding behavior. Our BLUEprint process strengthens all five elements. By the time a site becomes a Regional Leader, they will have achieved measurable improvement throughout the System and will be able to manage it independently.

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## Surveillance and Enforcement

**Poachers will be found and caught.** Sites need surveillance systems (such as cameras and radar) and patrol resources (such as boats) to find and apprehend poachers. We tailor each system design, based on local needs.



## Consistent Funding

**Protection requires consistent funding.** We develop long-term budgets that streamline operating costs, and create new revenue streams to ensure the protection system has long-term funding.



## Policies and Consequences

**Poaching has consequences.** We work with lawyers, judges and governments to strengthen laws and ensure meaningful penalties for illegal activities.



## Training and Mentorship

**Comprehensive Training is essential.** Staff must understand the system, their responsibilities within it, and how to operate and maintain tools. We provide training, mentorship, and professional development.



## Community Engagement

**Poaching hurts the whole community.** We integrate fishers, tourism operators, and local people in the protection of marine resources. We train rangers to educate their communities, design awareness campaigns to foster understanding and buy-in, and support community-based management strategies.

CASE STUDY:

# GALAPAGOS MARINE RESERVE

HOME TO THE DENSEST SHARK POPULATION IN  
THE WORLD

**WILDAID**

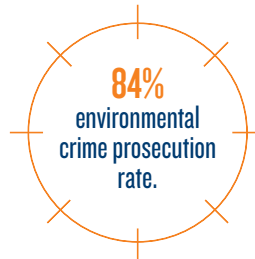
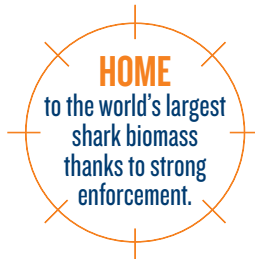
**MARINE  
PROGRAM**

## ABOUT THE SITE

The Galapagos Islands are home to nearly 3,000 marine species, many which are found nowhere else on earth. Its rich marine ecosystems support the concentration and reproduction of migratory marine species including humpback whales, sea turtles, giant manta rays, and endangered hammerhead sharks. The islands are a priceless world heritage. In Galapagos, there was once extensive illegal fishing, with an estimated 12,000 sharks poached annually in 2009, and park rangers did not have the skills, tools, or resources to do their job. WildAid partnered with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment and Galapagos National Park to change this.

## OUR IMPACT

With the implementation of our program, surveillance systems now monitor 100% of the park, all rangers are fully trained and certified, and successful prosecutions of environmental crimes increased to 84%. The Galapagos now boasts the densest shark population in the world; and although fishing boats surround the reserve, they fear to enter due to the threat of prosecution for illegal entry. The Galapagos National Park is a Regional Leader, sponsoring training workshops in Ecuador, providing mentorship and sharing their best practices for other sites in the region.



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CASE STUDY:

# COASTAL ECUADOR

HOME TO THE LARGEST REMAINING POPULATION OF  
OCEANIC MANTAS



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## ABOUT THE SITE

The eastern shores of Ecuador's Pacific coast harbor an amazing diversity of marine life including five species of sea turtles, twenty kinds of whales and dolphins, hammerhead and whale sharks, and the largest remaining population of oceanic mantas in the world. Ecuador's government made a commitment to protect these waters for both marine biodiversity and the economies of coastal communities, establishing a national network of marine protected areas (MPAs). Timing is of the essence as commercially valuable fish species, which provide food and livelihood for coastal communities, are now becoming scarce due to overfishing, destructive shrimp trawling and degradation of coastal habitats. In 2015, WildAid partnered with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment and five MPAs to replicate our success in the Galapagos and strengthen enforcement of the region.

## OUR IMPACT

We began our work with a comprehensive assessment of coastal Ecuador's MPA network. We developed enforcement plans for five priority MPAs, developed patrolling strategies to cover 100% of each reserve, acquired patrol equipment and uniforms for each site, and conducted annual trainings for MPA managers and staff. We donated two patrol vessels, an HD surveillance camera, radio communication equipment, and satellite vessel monitoring software. In sea turtle nesting sites, we focused on beach patrols and community outreach to protect 65,000+ sea turtles over 3 years, and partnered with a ranger-run wildlife rehabilitation hospital, which has treated 400+ sea turtles over 5 years.



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CASE STUDY:

# MISOOL MARINE RESERVE

THE JEWEL OF RAJA AMPAT'S CORAL REEFS

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## ABOUT THE SITE

Situated in a remote corner of Indonesia, Raja Ampat's reefs lie at the epicenter of marine biodiversity, in the heart of the Coral Triangle. The region is home to 75% of the world's known coral species and close to 1,500 species of fish. Due to its remote location and population density, the reefs remain remarkably intact, providing sanctuary for manta rays, sharks, and pristine coral reefs. WildAid and Misool Foundation partnered in 2007 to strengthen enforcement of marine protected areas in Southern Raja Ampat and engage the community in conservation activities and alternative livelihoods. Overfishing, turtle/egg harvesting, shark finning, manta hunting, and even dynamite fishing threatened to destroy this unique ecosystem.

## OUR IMPACT

In the Misool Marine Reserve Indonesia, our support over the last 10 years helped patrol hours to increase 800% and there was an 86% reduction in illegal fishing in the reserve. As a result, marine species biomass in Misool has nearly tripled over a decade. There are 25x more sharks inside the reserve than in comparable areas outside the reserve and oceanic manta sightings have increased 25-fold between 2010 and 2016. The local communities have also garnered benefits, with income earned by the community increasing 8-fold since 2013, provision of alternative livelihoods for over 250 fishers, the launch of community recycling, construction of a kindergarten, and donation of two school libraries.

**25X**

more sharks inside the reserve than just outside.

**20X**

increase in oceanic manta sightings in 6 years.

**800%**

increase in community income as a result of the reserve.

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CASE STUDIES:

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM WILDAID'S MARINE PROGRAM

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## PALAU

The tiny Pacific island nation of Palau made history when they moved to protect 80% of their national waters. Pala's communities rely almost exclusively on fish for their diet and economy. Its numerous coral reefs, volcanic atolls, nesting beaches and mangroves offer spawning and aggregation sites for various migratory reef fish, sharks, rays, sea turtles, dugongs, crocodiles and giant clams. Together with The Nature Conservancy, we designed a practical and feasible enforcement system for the Northern Reefs. Since 2015, we provided: a long-range camera, dedicated patrol kits and equipment, comprehensive patrol strategies, ranger training, and mentorship.

## MALAYSIA

In cooperation with the U.S. Department of State, Sabah Parks, and WWF, we developed an enforcement plan for the newly created, one million hectare Tun Mustapha Marine Park (TMP) in 2017. Home to the second largest concentration of coral reefs in Malaysia, whale sharks, dugongs, over 715 fish species and sea turtles, it is threatened by: bomb fishing, overfishing, illegal commercial fishing in protected areas, and wildlife trafficking, among others. Over the last year, WildAid worked with our partners to build a robust VHF marine communications network launched a community outreach campaign to increase awareness of the new reserve, train honorary rangers, and sponsor peer-to-peer exchanges for rangers.

## GABON

WildAid launched a new project in Gabon's coastal MPA network, home to the world's largest nesting population of leatherback sea turtles and critically endangered humpback dolphin, shark and ray populations. In 2018, we provided a comprehensive assessment of four MPAs, developed a multi-year enforcement plan, and have begun implementing its strategy.

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