



## UPDATE – February 2018

1. The Seychelles MSP Phase 1 will be completed by March 2018, with two areas proposed for increased marine protection in waters outside the Territorial Sea. These two areas are more than 210,000 square kilometres and will cover 16.2% of Seychelles' waters. Once designated, these areas will fulfil the first milestone requirement of the Seychelles debt swap, reaching half of the 30% goal for marine biodiversity protection. This milestone will also deliver on Seychelles' commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14.4) and UN Convention on Biological Diversity Goal (10% by 2020).
2. The process of gazetting the marine protection areas began in October 2017. A nomination package was published by the Attorney General's Office on 8 November and a 48-day public comment period was open until 17 January 2018. The announcement was published in the newspaper, radio and on the Seychelles MSP website. One comment was received during the public review period.
3. The areas are being nominated under the National Park and Nature Conservancy Act (NPNCA) because the Protected Areas legislation is not finalised and does not have a category for sustainable uses. Management plans will be developed in Phase 2.
4. The Aldabra Group is a Zone 1 category area (high biodiversity protection) and is being nominated for a 'Marine National Park'. The area is 74,400 square kilometres and encompasses 5.4% of Seychelles' waters. The objective is to expand the area and increase the level of protection for the deep, marine waters and seabed surrounding the Aldabra Archipelago, conserving unique biodiversity features in these waters of the Seychelles archipelago, improving management for large marine predators and highly migratory species, and protecting the seabed from any alteration.
5. The Amirantes to Fortune Bank is a Zone 2 category area (medium biodiversity and sustainable uses) and is being nominated for an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'. The area is 136,169 square kilometres, or 10.8% of Seychelles' waters. The purpose is to expand marine protection for marine biodiversity, benthic habitats and the important upwelling ecosystem that occurs in these waters of Seychelles, and to improve sustainable management of compatible economic and recreational uses of coral reef and bank habitats found outside of the Inner Islands and off the Plateau.
6. A draft MSP Policy has been developed by a local consultant. The consultancy was awarded using an open, competitive bid process. The policy was developed with participation from the MSP committees. Two workshops were held for input and review (11 Oct and 13 Dec 2017) and a draft completed 22 Dec. The MSP Policy will undergo international peer-review and additional consultations for finalising in June 2018.
7. The inception workshop for 'Implementation and Governance Arrangements' was held on Thu 25 Jan 2018. This consultancy is held by SWIOFish3, with facilitation assistance from the MSP Initiative. A report is due June 2018.
8. The Seychelles MSP Initiative is on the Steering Committee for the SWIOFish3 project and has been assisting the committee with priorities for procurement in 2018 and 2019. The SWIOFish3 will be supporting MSP activities in the zone 2 category.
9. The Phase 1 Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan document is in progress and review by stakeholder committees. The aim is to have the Phase 1 marine spatial plan document printed by March 2018. Included in the Phase 1 plan is background, methodology, zoning design, draft implementation arrangements and a draft Phase 2 workplan.
10. The Phase 2 Inception Workshop is scheduled with stakeholders for 8 March 2018. The next milestone for the MSP is 7.5% of Seychelles' waters (5% in Zone 1 and 2.5% in Zone 2), and the deadline is December 2018.

*For more information:*

*Seychelles MSP Project Manager, Ms Helena Sims: [helena.sims@tnc.org](mailto:helena.sims@tnc.org)  
Seychelles MSP Process and Science Lead, Dr. Joanna Smith: [joanna\\_smith@tnc.org](mailto:joanna_smith@tnc.org)*