



## UPDATE – September 2018

1. The Seychelles MSP Phase 1 zone areas were gazetted in Feb 2018. These new areas 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). The boundaries were gazetted under the National Park and Nature Conservancy Act (NPNCA) because other existing legislation does not have a category for sustainable uses. Management plans will be drafted in Phase 2 and completed during implementation.
2. The Aldabra Group is a MSP Zone 1 category area (high biodiversity protection) and was gazetted as a 'Marine National Park'. The new area is 71,612 square kilometres and encompasses 5.3% 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.
3. The Amirantes to Fortune Bank is an MSP Zone 2 category area (medium biodiversity and sustainable uses) and was gazetted as an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'. The area is 136,753 square kilometres, or 10.1% 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.
4. A draft MSP Policy has been developed by a local consultant with participation from the MSP committees and stakeholders. Two workshops were held for input and review (11 Oct and 13 Dec 2017) and a draft completed by 22 Dec 2017. The draft policy will undergo international peer-review and additional consultations for finalising in December 2018.
5. The inception workshop for 'Implementation and Governance Arrangements' was held on 25 Jan 2018. This consultancy is held by SWIOFish3, with facilitation assistance from the MSP Initiative. The main objective of the workshop was to select and elaborate on a governance structure for the Seychelles MSP from three options that were proposed. The MSP Project Manager, Principle Secretary of Environment and consultant presented the options on 4 July 2018 to the Cabinet of Ministers and they unanimously approved a decision to create an independent MSP Authority, the preferred option. A full framework will be finalized by December 2018.
6. 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. There is also ongoing collaboration with other national projects including the GoS-UNDP-GEF Outer Islands Project, PA Finance Project, and BioFinancing.
7. The draft Phase1 Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan document is in progress with the aim of completion by October 2018. Included in the Phase 1 plan is background, methodology, zoning design, draft implementation priorities and a Phase 2 workplan.
8. 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. Phase 2 Inception Workshops with stakeholders were held on 8 Mar 2018 for Mahe and 2 Jun for Praslin and La Digue. The main objectives of the workshops included (i) Phase 2 objectives, outputs, stakeholder engagement, timeline and workplan; (ii) to discuss areas of consideration for Phase 2 zoning design and reaching next milestone; and (iii) to draft SMART objectives for climate change adaptation and the Blue Economy.

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9. The MSP governance framework was revised in Phase 2 and five new Technical Working Groups were created to assist with planning outputs: energy, finance, fisheries, maritime security and tourism.
10. The MSP team is working in collaboration with SeyCCAT and a GoS-UNDP-GEF PA Finance project to develop financing options to implement the MSP, in particular the new marine protection areas. The scope of work was developed and approved by the MSP Executive Committee, the work is being completed by UNDP-GEF (a partner of the MSP), and a call for information has been advertised to gather estimates for costs. The work is planned to be completed by February 2019.
11. Revisions to the MSP Zoning Design are underway based on stakeholder input in Feb-Mar and May-Jun, as well as relevant previous comments 2014-present. To support revisions, the spatial data catalogue was recently updated for the domestic and foreign fisheries and extensive spatial analyses were undertaken to identify trends and priority areas for fishing within the EEZ.
12. The first Seychelles MSP Atlas is nearing completion and a total of 43 maps are being produced including new maps for archipelagic island groups, ocean surface currents, bathymetry, industrial tuna fisheries and seabird colonies. Updates have been made to other maps including petroleum exploration and WIOMER ecoregional priority areas.
13. A high-level socio-economic analysis for the benefits and costs of the draft zoning design for fisheries is underway with two expert consultants and will be completed by October 2018. These consultancies are in collaboration with SWIOFish3 and TNC. The analyses at this stage in the MSP process primarily focuses on the potential costs of the zoning design in terms of possible economic impact because benefits to MSP are not usually realised or measured until the 5-year review is undertaken. The MSP is looking also at the use of ecosystem service models to measure some of the potential economic benefits for the zoning design.
14. MSP Project Manager sits on the SeyCCAT Grants Committee. The first call for proposals used proceeds from the debt swap and led to the approval of six projects to the value of US \$350,000. The first call was focussed on sustainable fisheries. Funding disbursement for these projects is underway. Please see SeyCCAT website for more information: [www.seyccat.org](http://www.seyccat.org)

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