



Marine World Heritage Site Managers Meeting  
Hawai'i Convention Centre  
Hawai'i, United States of America  
1-3 December 2010



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



World Heritage Convention

## 1. Background

World Heritage - the very words evoke the global nature of the mission to protect the highest quality and most iconic natural and cultural sites for future generations. Today, 43 exceptional places in the ocean are inscribed on the World Heritage List<sup>1</sup>. Together, they represent the **'Crown Jewels of our Ocean'**, recognized by the international community for their outstanding beauty, exceptional biodiversity, or unique ecological, biological or geological processes, and selected through a rigorous nomination, evaluation and inscription process.

But even though their disappearance would be an irreplaceable loss to humanity, many of them are on the brink of losing their core values. **Multiple stressors are threatening their conservation.** Marine pollution, habitat destruction, illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries, mineral extraction, and climate change, among others, all challenge the sustainability of our marine World Heritage. While some Marine World Heritage managers have established **good practices** and are successfully conserving the core values of their sites, others lack the knowledge and capacity to do so. Almost all marine World Heritage sites, however, are suffering from threats outside the boundaries of their site and would benefit from applying an **ecosystem-based approach** to the **management** of their site.

## 2. Purpose and aim of the meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to bring all 43 Marine World Heritage site managers together with a selection of leading marine scientists and practitioners whose work has been instrumental for marine conservation and management.

The meeting is a first attempt toward establishing a productive exchange of success stories and management experiences among marine World Heritage site managers. The meeting aims at **marking the start for a stronger site managers community** that is well informed about the good practices of each other, has access to the latest thinking in science, technology and management, and together has the capacity to safeguard the splendor and richness of Marine World Heritage sites so future generations can continue to enjoy them.

## 3. Outcomes of the meeting

The meeting is organized around short presentations on marine World Heritage management that will serve as an introduction to the moderated discussions among marine World Heritage site managers. In addition, two break out sessions are planned during which marine World Heritage

<sup>1</sup>More information on Marine World Heritage sites at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme>

site managers will have the opportunity to discuss more specifically the needs and opportunities to strengthen their community and enhance their capabilities to strengthen the conservation of their sites. The moderated discussions and the outcomes of the breakout sessions will form the basis for a draft **action plan** toward **navigating a new future for marine World Heritage**.

This draft action plan will form a central part of the future development of the World Heritage Marine Programme and will inform the activities it undertakes over the next years, particularly its strategy and initiatives for enhancing management capacity in marine World Heritage sites.

#### **4. Venue and timing**

The meeting will be held at the Convention Centre in **Honolulu, Hawai'i, United States of America** from 1-3 December 2010. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the official inscription ceremony for newly inscribed marine World Heritage site Papahānaumokuākea in Hawai'i.

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