



February 15, 2021

VIA Electronic Transmission to: [COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov](mailto:COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov)

Wade Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources  
Chair, Ocean Protection Council  
California Natural Resources Agency  
1416 9th Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Support for Authorization to Disperse Funding for Agenda Items 4, 5, 6**

Dear Chair Crowfoot and Members of the Ocean Protection Council:

The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation submits this letter in support of three items under consideration by the Ocean Protection Council at your February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting.

First, we encourage the Council's approval of actions to address plastic pollution in California's coastal and marine ecosystems. The proposed items will advance and inform policies that address the many causes of plastic pollution and prioritize prevention and reduction of plastic pollution. We would suggest that a statewide communications and education campaign can complement the state's efforts and build support with the public. Increasing awareness of and solutions for dealing with microplastics, that target specific communities, can empower the public to become part of the solution.

Secondly, we encourage approval of using Prop 68 funding to build resiliency to sea-level rise, coastal storms, erosion, and flooding across the state. These projects set aside needed funding to start taking necessary actions for SLR planning. This helps reduce long term costs and targets critical wetlands, waterfront areas and disadvantaged communities. We also recommend that these projects and efforts by the state can be highlighted in the OPC's sea level rise communications campaign underway.

Finally, CMSF strongly supports dedicated ongoing funding for MPA monitoring, which is critical given the upcoming decadal review. CMSF works closely with recreational anglers across the state, who are eager to learn more about the health of our ocean and the effectiveness of our actions in protecting them. We suggest that a complementary communications effort is dedicated to translating scientific findings into simplified graphics and visual summaries that can be easily understood. In addition, results should be shared through existing recreational angler communications channels, such as Fish

Sniffer, Western Outdoor News and through many of the fishing clubs with whom CMSF works. There is growing interest in protecting both recreational fishing and the ecosystems upon which it depends, and it will be critical to continue to build relationships with this eager audience.

We appreciate the Ocean Protection Council's consideration of these projects and strongly support approval.

Sincerely,

Rikki Eriksen, Ph.D. on behalf of the CMSF Marine Program



February 16, 2021

VIA Electronic Transmission to: [COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov](mailto:COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov)

Mr. Wade Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources  
Chair, Ocean Protection Council  
California Natural Resources Agency  
1416 9th Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Consideration of Authorization to Disburse Funds for MPA Long-Term Monitoring and Data Analysis in Support of the 2022 Adaptive Management Review (Item 6) - SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Crowfoot and Members of the Ocean Protection Council:

I write on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and our more than 3 million members and activists, over 450,000 of whom live in California, to express our support for funding to support long-term monitoring and data analysis of California's marine protected area network in preparation for the 2022 Adaptive Management Review (Item 6).

California's marine protected area (MPA) network plays a critical role in securing the health of our ocean, bringing benefits to marine species and humans alike: it protects valuable species and habitats and bolsters marine biodiversity;<sup>1</sup> preserves millennia of indigenous and Native Nation culture; and plays an essential role in helping to secure the resilience of our marine ecosystems and coastal communities to climate change. Scientific monitoring of the California MPA network indicates that MPAs are working, supporting bigger fish and more abundant biomass inside the reserves.<sup>2,3</sup> NRDC is committed to the ongoing success of California's MPAs, which now serve as a model for MPA networks around the world.

California's MPA network has always relied upon strong science to support its design and implementation, and Scientific monitoring and data analysis will be fundamental to the decadal review in 2022. The monitoring and data-analysis projects that the Council is considering for funding today will be critical to evaluate MPA network performance, assess the role of MPAs in providing climate resilience, and inform the ongoing adaptive management of the network.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Statistics>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.piscoweb.org/blog-post/channel-islands-marine-protected-areas-after-ten-years>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.mlml.calstate.edu/ccfrp/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2018/02/CCFRP\\_WGC\\_2018.pdf](https://www.mlml.calstate.edu/ccfrp/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2018/02/CCFRP_WGC_2018.pdf).

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/management/monitoring#537132165-additional-reports-by-region>.

**NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL**

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*February 16, 2021*

*Natural Resources Defense Council*

*Support for Item 6: MPA Long-Term Monitoring and Data Analysis for 2022 Adaptive Management Review*

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By approving funds for long-term monitoring and data analysis, the Ocean Protection Council will help to ensure that the state is prepared for the decadal review, while continuing its investment in the long-term success of California's MPAs and helping to secure the future health of California's marine ecosystems.

We urge you to approve funding for Item 6. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/

Elizabeth Murdock  
Director, Pacific Ocean Initiative

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**From:** Richard E.T. Sadowski <r.e.t.sadowski@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 15, 2021 8:30 PM  
**To:** CNRA COPC Public  
**Subject:** Comment Item #6, OPC Strategic Plan Goal 3, Objective 3.1

Dear Sec. Crowfoot and fellow OPC Councilmembers;

The California OPC 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan acknowledges the reality that our oceans are at a tipping point: Greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution is causing Ocean Acidification (OA) and changing the chemistry of our oceans.

A triadic approach to Long-term monitoring of MPA's, that is, collecting land, sea and air data; should be used in analyzing the adaptive management practices in the MPA's. Historically, the focus on management of coastal biodiversity and ecosystems has been on land and water quality issues, such as sediment buildup and pollution runoff from various land use practices. No doubt that these issues are of great importance and need further funding and study, however, it does not diminish the fact that air quality is playing a significant role in the changing chemistry of our coastal waters. By monitoring and establishing baseline coastal air quality data around wetlands and coastal MPA's, a correlation between atmospheric GHG, such as Carbon Dioxide CO2 and OA can be further studied in this changing climate.

The goal to enhance coastal and marine biodiversity can be further strengthened by creating funding opportunities for local citizen scientists. Local citizen scientists are a catalyst of collaboration in working with local academia, environmental groups and Tribal communities.

Part of the OPC's Strategic Plan is to advance equality across ocean and coastal policies and actions. This is the Environmental Justice thread that weaves through the Strategic Plan and binds the goals together. By creating opportunities where by fixed and low income coastal citizens scientists could supplement their incomes, a culture of communication, collaboration and education are planted and nurtured in a community. Local governments, First Peoples along with Local Environmental NGO's and citizens scientists all become an integral part of the OPC's Strategic Plan.

Home Front EJ, Morro Bay supports OPC staff's efforts in securing funding for MPA Long-Term Monitoring and Data Analysis.

Richard E.T. Sadowski  
Home Front, EJ, Morro Bay

February 15, 2021

Ocean Protection Council  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Council Chair and Members:

We are writing to express our organization's support for continued marine protected area (MPA) monitoring priorities in 2021-2022 and endorse long-term monitoring and data analysis in support of California's network of MPAs leading up to the 2022 decadal review. WILDCOAST and our NGO partners across the state rely heavily on accurate science, monitoring, analysis, and reporting to drive the grassroots regional management of MPAs. Informed management and decision making critical to the success of California's network of MPAs is not possible without sound science, long-term monitoring, and continued data analysis.

The importance of support for these efforts is amplified by the upcoming 2022 adaptive management review for California's network of MPAs, which cover more than 16% of state waters. Items 6a and 6b on the February 16, 2021 Ocean Protection Council meeting agenda, directly address the needs of the MPA management community and support the hard work and investment of stakeholders in California MPAs.

WILDCOAST respectfully encourages the Council to support these important projects to continue to develop the scientific body of knowledge surrounding MPAs and provide critical information to the MPA management community. The strength of California's network of MPAs depends on well informed and engaged stakeholders reliant on strong data and analysis, and the Council's support of the staff recommendations set forth will reinforce the institutionalization of state MPAs to ensure a future for coastal and marine resources.

Sincerely,

Cory Pukini  
California Conservation Manager, WILDCOAST