

# BLUE AZORES



## BLUE AZORES SCIENTIFIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT

### WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

The Blue Azores Scientific Workshop took place in Horta, Faial on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of February.

The workshop had the following goals:

- Present and discuss results of two modeling exercises that present scenarios to achieve an additional 15% of fully protected areas within the Azorean EEZ, considering socioeconomic and ecological trade-offs
- Provide advice on improvements and gaps
- Define a roadmap to achieve goals
- Suggest products for discussions with stakeholders

In order to achieve these goals, the following agenda was followed:

### 19 of February 2020 | PROGRAM

1. Workshop overview - Emanuel Gonçalves
2. MPA's network implementation process - Inês Gomes
3. The Azores deep sea ecosystems - Marina Carreiro-Silva
4. Principles, goals, and objectives guiding the systematic conservation planning for the deep waters of the Azores - Telmo Morato
5. Deep sea: Priority areas for conservation - IMAR-UAz Deep Sea research group
6. Wrap up of the first day - Emanuel Gonçalves

## 20 of February 2020 | PROGRAM

1. Marine ecosystems services report and spatial bioeconomic model of the domestic demersal fishery - Lennon Thomas
2. Coastal Planning: What we know - Pedro Afonso
3. Recommendations draft
4. Existing spatial management and conservation efforts - Filipe Porteiro
5. Wrap up of the workshop - Emanuel Gonçalves

Attendees:

Name	Entity	Name	Entity
Alexandra Guerreiro	GRA - DRP	Jordi Blasco-Ferre	UAz
Ana Colaço	UAz	Jorge Fontes	UAz
Andreia Nobre	BA	Laurence Fauconnet	UAz
Andy Estep	WI	Lennon Thomas	UCSB
Anthony J Grehan	National University of Ireland	Luís Rodrigues	UAz
Carlos Dominguez-Carió	UAz	Mara Schmiing	UAz
Christopher K. Pham	UAz	Manuela Ramos	UAz
Emanuel Gonçalves	OA	Maria João Cruz	BA
Fernando Tempera	IFREMER	Marina Carreiro-Silva	UAz
Filipe Porteiro	GRA - DRAM	Monty Priede	University of Aberdeen
Gerald H. Taranto	UAz	Murray Roberts	University of Edinburgh
Gilberto Carreira	UAz	Nadine Les Bris	Sorbonne Université
Hugo Diogo	GRA - DRP	Pedro Afonso	UAz
Inês Gomes	GRA-DRAM	Rogério Feio	GRA - SRMCT
Joana Brito	UAz	Telmo Morato	UAz

GRA, Regional Government of the Azores; SRMCT, Regional Secretariat for the Sea, Science and Technology; DRP, Regional Directorate for Fisheries; DRAM, Regional Directorate for Sea Affairs; BA, Blue Azores; UAz, University of the Azores; UCSB, University of California, Santa Barbara; OA, Oceano Azul Foundation; WI, Waitt Institute;

Two documents were presented for discussion:

1. Marine ecosystems services report and spatial bioeconomic model of the domestic demersal fishery
2. Draft Blue paper on systematic conservation planning for the Azorean deep sea

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Both documents presented were endorsed by the participants regarding their quality and in-depth analysis. The following recommendations were made:

### **Marine ecosystems services report and spatial bioeconomic model of the domestic demersal fishery**

The participants suggested:

- That the marine ecosystems services report should be updated to include the annual revenue generated from the tuna canning industry. Rogério Feio and Andreia Nobre should make efforts to get the data needed for this update.
- The spatial bioeconomic model of the domestic demersal fishery should separately consider take the two fleets: the industrial bottom longline and the handline fleet comprising of smaller vessels. This will make it easier to evaluate the effects of reducing the bottom longline fleet fishing effort.
- Economic assessments could inform policy interventions and stakeholder consultations.

### **Blue paper on systematic conservation planning of the Azorean deep sea**

The participants suggested:

- This document represents world class science regarding the Azorean deep sea and identifies priority areas to achieve goals that include biodiversity and socioeconomic objectives.
- The ecosystem modelling forecast is challenging. Some issues were pointed out regarding important areas not being shown in some modeling scenarios and the need to clearly specify the modelling limitations and consequent impacts in the conclusions.
- There is a need to integrate pelagic systems and pelagic fisheries information in the paper to facilitate the offshore stakeholder process.
- The approach for the data-poor areas should be reviewed in terms of the possible overrepresentation of deeper areas, which are larger and more homogenous (which should be reflected in the spatial weighting), in the overall percentage, and underrepresentation of specific data-poor regions that may have high conservation value.

- Coastal priority areas need to be defined together with the needs of researchers to validate, organize and integrate the available information.
- How best to deal with the perceived double cost of the plan to fishers: less area to fish and less fishing effort? The reward of predicted increase in catch is low.
- Show also the benefits of protection, plans to avoid decrease in catch, benefits of resilience to climate change and compliance with EU rules that allow fishing to continue if protection measures are adopted.
- How to improve the model in order to use this tool to calculate costs and benefits based on different areas selected for conservation.
- Need to integrate additional information (e.g. connectivity / EBSAs criteria / water column).
- Partnerships are important added value for these projects, highlighting the ATLAS project.

### **General recommendations for MPA implementation:**

The participants highlighted:

- That the Regional Government took a brave decision in proposing upfront the percentage of area for protection. This can pioneer a way of preserving the ocean and improving the livelihood of citizens not only on the long term but also on the short term.
- That given: the political goal of having 15% new no-take MPAs; the deadlines to achieve it; and that the conversations with the stakeholders are already taking place. There is the need to address the offshore pelagic conservation areas of interest as soon as possible. As for now there is good information on the Deep Sea and there is an ongoing plan for the Nearshore areas, but the areas of conservation interests for Offshore Pelagic habitat is missing.
- The level of information available, within the University and the ocean users, should be enough to identify areas of interest for conservation as long as the objectives are defined with the stakeholders.
- For a successful implementation of MPAs, a sustainable finance mechanism should be included. It is also necessary to show the economic and ecosystem benefits of protecting those areas.
- Need to define the process moving from priority areas to maps of conservation interest that can feed the stakeholder engagement process.

- How to build solutions whilst empowering stakeholders in this process? – build solutions together. Not be blinded by science – how to reach the public and build a positive message?
- Consider the best practices for the process of MPA network development (e.g. bigger is better – resilience, management, conservation outputs) – use existing best practices such as the IUCN Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas: Guidelines for Design and Management.
- Use the Condor case study to promote goodwill and reach stakeholders and the wider society with the benefits of fully protected MPAs.
- Monitoring of MPAs should be considered from the beginning to ensure thorough understanding of the adequate investment and human resources needed.

