



## Marine Protected Area Decadal Management Review Report: Prioritized Recommendations

The [first comprehensive decadal management review](#) (Review) of California's Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network and Management Program included a suite of 28 recommendations ([Table 6.1](#)) to guide adaptive management of the MPA Network. The recommendations were developed from a wide range of sources, including California Native American Tribes, core partners, the fishing community, the public, and existing reports. Following the release of the Review in January 2023, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) hosted several public meetings from March through April 20, 2023, to discuss the adaptive management recommendations included in the Review. More than 100 entities or individuals provided several hundred distinct comments over that period. The comments were carefully reviewed and linked to the 28 recommendations and their associated action items. Feedback was provided by a diverse suite of voices, including California Native American Tribes, government agencies, the fishing community, non-governmental organizations, MPA researchers, and individual members of the public.

To forge a path forward, the CFGC requested at their April meeting that CDFW review the recommendations and corresponding management actions in [Table 6.1](#) of the Review, along with public recommendations submitted and presented, to propose near- and long-term priorities and associated tradeoffs, for discussion and guidance for next steps at the July 20 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting. While all 28 recommendations in [Table 6.1](#) remain important, the tables below prioritize recommendations based on 1) identified need, 2) expected timeframe, 3) input received, and 4) level of information and resources that are available to advance recommendations. This approach will help focus the work of CDFW, CFGC, Tribes, and partners to implement the recommendations to achieve near-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities.

The MRC discussed and finalized the prioritized list of recommendations in [Table 6.1](#) at their [July 20, meeting](#). Recommendation 25 was moved from mid-term to near-term, and CFGC requested CDFW place initial focus on developing a proposed petition review process for implementing Recommendation 4. For more information about upcoming CFGC meetings, [visit this webpage](#).

Prioritization tables in order of expected timeframe: 1) Near-term Priorities, 2) Mid-term Priorities, and 3) Long-term Priorities.

**1) Near-term Priorities (Ongoing – 2 Years)**

Cornerstone	Category	Recommendation
Governance	Tribal Coordination	01. Improve state agencies' tribal engagement and relationship building efforts
Governance	Regulatory and Review Framework	04. Apply what is learned from the first Decadal Management Review to support proposed changes to the MPA Network and Management Program
Governance	Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	07. Expand targeted outreach and education materials and events to under-represented user groups.
Governance	MPA Statewide Leadership Team and Partner Coordination	09. Continue to coordinate and collaborate with OPC and other agencies on California's ocean and coastal priorities to enhance coastal biodiversity, climate resiliency, human access and use, and a sustainable blue economy.
Governance	MPA Statewide Leadership Team and Partner Coordination	10. Improve partnership coordination across the four pillars of the MPA Management Program.
Management Program	Research and Monitoring	11. Update the MPA Monitoring Action Plan framework to improve and sustain a cost-effective long-term monitoring program, including guidelines to ensure monitoring consistency and sustainable funding.
Management Program	Outreach and Education	16. Conduct more targeted outreach to specific audiences to connect stakeholders with coastal resources and to encourage stewardship and compliance with regulations.

Management Program	Policy and Permitting	17. Improve the application and approval process for scientific collecting permits.
Management Program	Policy and Permitting	18. Utilize OPC's Restoration and Mitigation Policy to develop a framework to evaluate and approve appropriate restoration and mitigation actions within MPAs and MMAs.
Management Program	Enforcement and Compliance	20. Increase enforcement capacity.
Management Program	Enforcement and Compliance	21. Enhance MPA citation record keeping and data management.
Network Performance	Climate Resilience and Adaptation	25. Develop and implement climate change research and monitoring priorities and metrics for California's MPA Network.
Network Performance	Fisheries Integration and Other Influencing Factors	27. Improve understanding of MPA Network effects on fisheries and fish stock sustainability and further integrate MPA monitoring data into fisheries management.

**2) Mid-term Priorities (2 – 5 years)**

Cornerstone	Category	Recommendation
Governance	Tribal Coordination	02. Create a clear pathway to tribal MPA management
Governance	Tribal Coordination	03. Build tribal capacity to participate in MPA management activities
Governance	Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	06. Include and fund more diverse researchers and stakeholders in research and monitoring projects that directly contribute to the MPA Monitoring Program.
Governance	Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	08. Evaluate the accessibility of MPAs to various community groups.

Management Program	Research and Monitoring	12. Invest in improving understanding of the human dimensions of MPAs and develop a human dimensions working group and research agenda.
Management Program	Research and Monitoring	13. Explore the use of innovative technologies such as remote sensing, drones, and eDNA, to enhance and streamline traditional monitoring projects.
Management Program	Research and Monitoring	14. Develop a comprehensive community science strategy for MPAs and better utilize community science to supplement core monitoring programs.
Management Program	Outreach and Education	15. Evaluate outreach needs, assess effectiveness of resources, identify, and pursue the most impactful and cost-efficient outreach tools for increasing MPA awareness and compliance.
Management Program	Enforcement and Compliance	22. Increase information gathering regarding MPA violation prosecutions and judicial outcomes.
Network Performance	MPA Network Design	23. Expand and target monitoring and research efforts to examine the design attributes of the MPA Network more effectively.
Network Performance	Climate Resilience and Adaptation	26. Consider climate change impacts from the outset of planning for monitoring MPA human dimensions.
Network Performance	Fisheries Integration and Other Influencing Factors	28. Further integrate influencing factors into ecological and human study designs and interpretations of MPA performance.

**3) Long-term Priorities (5 – 10 years)**

Cornerstone	Category	Recommendation
Governance	Regulatory and Review Framework	05. Establish targets for meeting the goals of the MLPA and how the Management Program and Network will evolve as targets are met
Management Program	Enforcement and Compliance	19. Create and implement a cohesive and actionable MPA Enforcement Plan.
Network Performance	MPA Network Design	24. Work with CFGC and partners to better incorporate marine cultural heritage into the design of the MPA Network.