

Summary of Marine Protected Area (MPA) Regulation Change Petition Framework Discussion

(07/27/23) Revised 08/10/23; Revised 8/17/23

At the California Fish and Game Commission's (CFGF) July 20, 2023 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting, MRC, CFGF staff, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff, and stakeholders discussed potential next steps in pursuing the MPA Decadal Management Review (DMR) report recommendations and goals. The discussion included a potential framework to assist in evaluation of petitions the CFGF may receive related to changes to the MPA network and management program. At the request of MRC, staff from CDFW summarized the input received at the July 20, 2023 MRC meeting regarding these MPA petition framework considerations.

Broadly, petitions submitted to the CFGF are evaluated on a case by case by basis. To help guide petition development and subsequent review by CDFW, the MRC received the following input for evaluating petitions related to MPAs:

- Compatible with the goals and guidelines of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA);
- Help advance one or more of the [six goals](#) of the MLPA;
- Garner strong community support; and/or
- Advance adaptive management recommendations under the cornerstones of MPA governance, MPA Management Program activities, and MPA Network Performance outlined in [DMR Table 6.1](#) to ensure that petitions meet MPA management priorities.

The MRC also received input organized by cornerstone as follows:

- MPA Governance:
 - Simplifies regulatory language or enhances public understanding
 - Addresses inaccuracies or discrepancies in regulations
 - Accounts for regional stakeholder group intent identified during the regional MLPA planning process (including MPA-specific goals/objectives and design considerations)
 - Accounts for CDFW's [MPA design and management feasibility guidelines](#)
 - Advances tribal stewardship and co-management, consistent with the CFGF [Co-Management Vision Statement and Definition](#)
 - Improves access for traditionally underserved or marginalized communities, consistent with the [CFGF Policy on Justice Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
 - Acknowledges socio-economic implications, such as access for consumptive or non-consumptive users
- MPA Management Program Activities:
 - Clearly addresses or identifies scientific need for MPA Network based on best available science and scientific advancement since Network completion
 - Improves compliance and/or enforceability
- MPA Network Performance:
 - Maintains or enhances the protections and integrity of the MPA Network
 - Maintains or enhances habitat and species connectivity
 - Adheres to science guidelines, such as maintaining minimum size and spacing, and protection of diverse habitats
 - Enhances climate resilience and/or helps mitigate climate impacts