

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



MPA Spacing Evaluation Methods for the MLPA North Coast Study Region

Presentation to the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team
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Master Plan Guidelines: MPA Spacing



- **MPAs should be placed within 50-100 kilometers (31-62 miles) of each other** to facilitate dispersal and connectedness of important bottom-dwelling fish and invertebrate groups among MPAs
- Because many populations are habitat-specific, spacing is evaluated **for each habitat**



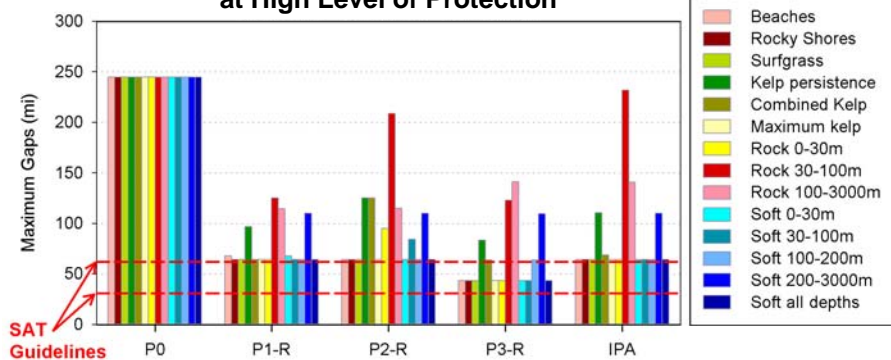
MPA Spacing Evaluation Methods

- MPAs or clusters must meet minimum size guidelines (9 square miles) to be included in the spacing analysis
- Identify habitats included in sufficient amounts to count as a “replicate” within each MPA cluster at moderate-high level of protection (LOP) or above
- Measure gaps between adjacent MPA clusters that contain a given habitat



Maximum Gaps: High Protection

Maximum Gaps Between Habitat Replicates at High Level of Protection



The MPA spacing evaluation is conducted for MPAs at very high, high and moderate high levels of protection.

Example from MLPA South Coast Study Region



Summary

Approval sought for:

- Methods for evaluation of MPA spacing to be inserted into the *Methods Used to Evaluate MPA Proposals in the North Coast Study Region* as Chapter 7
- Evaluation of MPA spacing will be applied to round 1 – evaluation of *external MPA arrays* – and subsequent rounds of evaluation of MPA proposals