

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

Socioeconomics and Public Engagement

Management Issue

Public interest and input is crucial to the sanctuary and its management. Established relationships must be maintained while new ones are made in order to gain stakeholder support, especially as the idea of sanctuary expansion is entertained. Therefore, social indicators should be established in order to understand the human dimensions of management, and research results should be presented in a way that will facilitate public understanding and discussion.

Description

The *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS or Sanctuary) partners represent a multitude of historical, cultural, educational, biological, recreational, governmental organizations. The MNMS offices are stationed in Newport News, VA while the sanctuary itself is located off the coast of the Outer Banks, North Carolina. Therefore, there is a constant need to include a large number of stakeholders in the decision-making process and partners and stakeholders need to be educated and informed when considering management actions. The challenge lies not only in collecting reliable, scientific data to support management actions, but also in effectively communicating those results to the public. This is especially important as the idea to expand the sanctuary is entertained. Education and outreach are mediation tools able to communicate information to stakeholders who have a vested interest in the change. These tools are able to increase public interest and input and establish long-standing relationships between stakeholders and managers.



SCUBA Diving on various cultural resources is a popular activity around the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary.
Photo Credit: MNMS

Questions and Information Needs

- 1) Who are the current stakeholders?
- 2) Are there other stakeholders that need to be established when considering expansion?
- 3) Are social concerns being addressed along with environmental and cultural issues?
- 4) How can discussion between managers and stakeholders be facilitated?
- 5) What are the social indicators?
- 6) How can the social indicators be measured?
- 7) How can research results be communicated and easily interpreted to the public?
- 8) How can current relationships be made stronger?
- 9) How can more stakeholders be recognized and included in management decisions?

Scientific Approach and Actions

- Surveys implemented in order to define the community's relationship with the resources
- Establish social indicators
- Implement other methods of communication, such as community forums
- Create education and outreach tools to increase public education
- Establishment of interagency relationships for research purposes

Updated: 5/1/2010

For More Information -- <http://www.sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/assessment>

Key Partners and Information Sources

NOAA's Coastal Services Center, NOAA's National Center for Coastal Ocean Science, University of Georgia, East Carolina University, University of North Carolina Coastal Studies Institute, University of Massachusetts

Management Support Products

- Scientific papers and reports
- Social indicators to be used in the future
- List of stakeholders
- Education and outreach tools to facilitate communication and interpretation

Planned Use of Products and Actions

- Social indicators can be used as a precursor to future management actions
- Appropriate management of environmental, cultural, and social interests

Program References

MNMS Management Plan,

- The MNMS is currently going through Management Plan Review

MNMS Condition Report

- What are the levels of human activities that may influence living resources quality and how are they changing?
- What are the levels of human activities that may influence maritime archaeological resource quality and how are they changing?
- What are the levels of human activities that may influence habitat quality and how are they changing?
- What are the levels of human activities that may influence water quality and how are they changing?
- Do sanctuary waters pose risks to human health and how are they changing?

ONMS Performance Measures

- 3.6: Measuring Education Performance
- 3.8: Measuring Public Awareness Performance
- 3.9: Measuring Marine Zones Performance
- 3.20: Measuring Outreach Efficiency

Other Documents

- Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions of Management Strategies and Regulations of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary by Commercial Fishers, Dive Operators, and Environmental Group Members: A Baseline Characterization and 10-year Comparison. ONMS socioeconomics science page: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/socioeconomic/research.html>

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