



# Opportunities and challenges of protected areas in the Maldives

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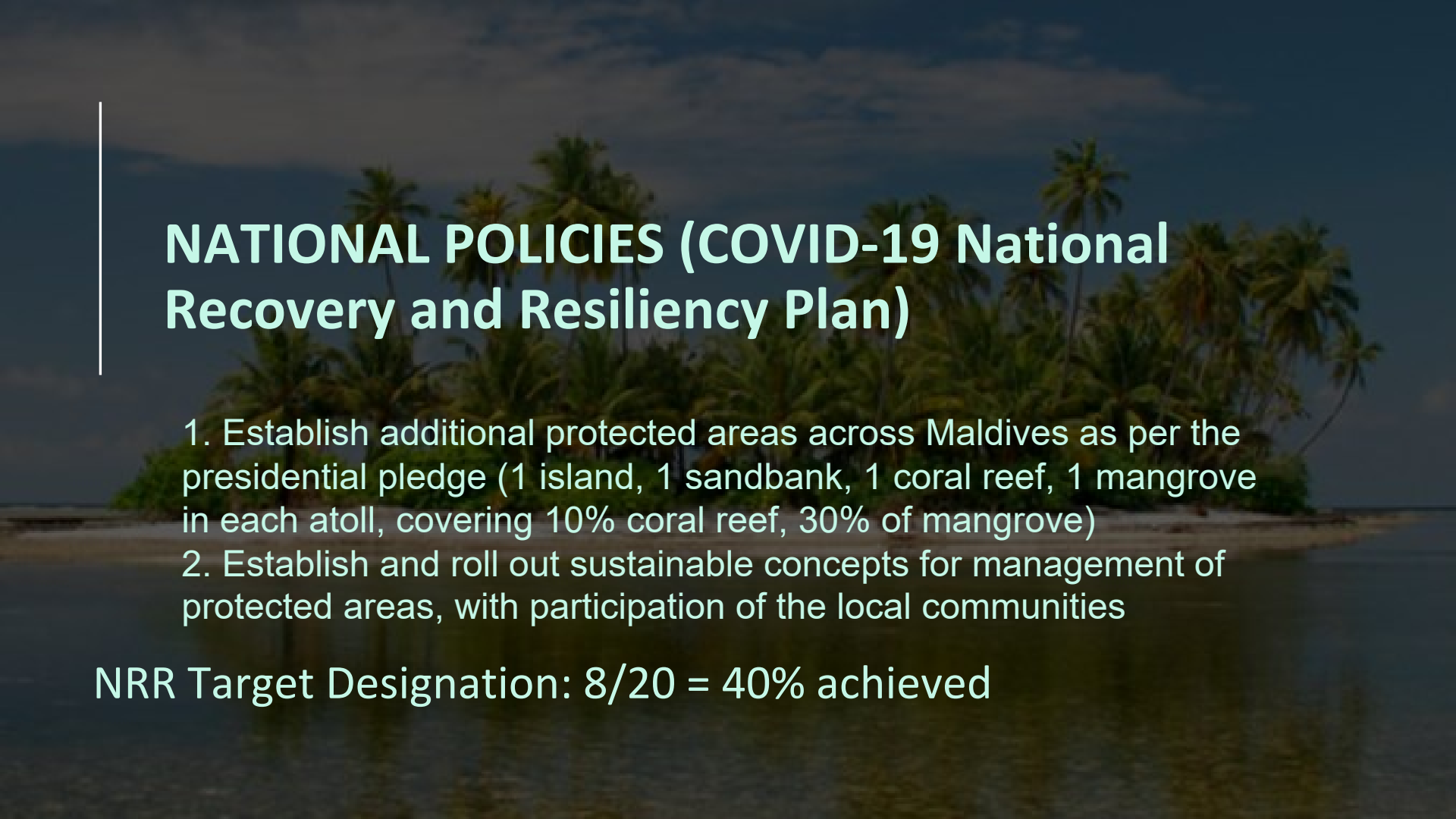
01

# Introduction to protected areas

# What is a protected area?

A protected area is a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values. (IUCN Definition 2008)





# NATIONAL POLICIES (COVID-19 National Recovery and Resiliency Plan)

1. Establish additional protected areas across Maldives as per the presidential pledge (1 island, 1 sandbank, 1 coral reef, 1 mangrove in each atoll, covering 10% coral reef, 30% of mangrove)
2. Establish and roll out sustainable concepts for management of protected areas, with participation of the local communities

NRR Target Designation:  $8/20 = 40\%$  achieved

# National : Protected Areas

## Area covered

Square Kilometers

## Target

In comparison to EEZ

79

543

13%

20%

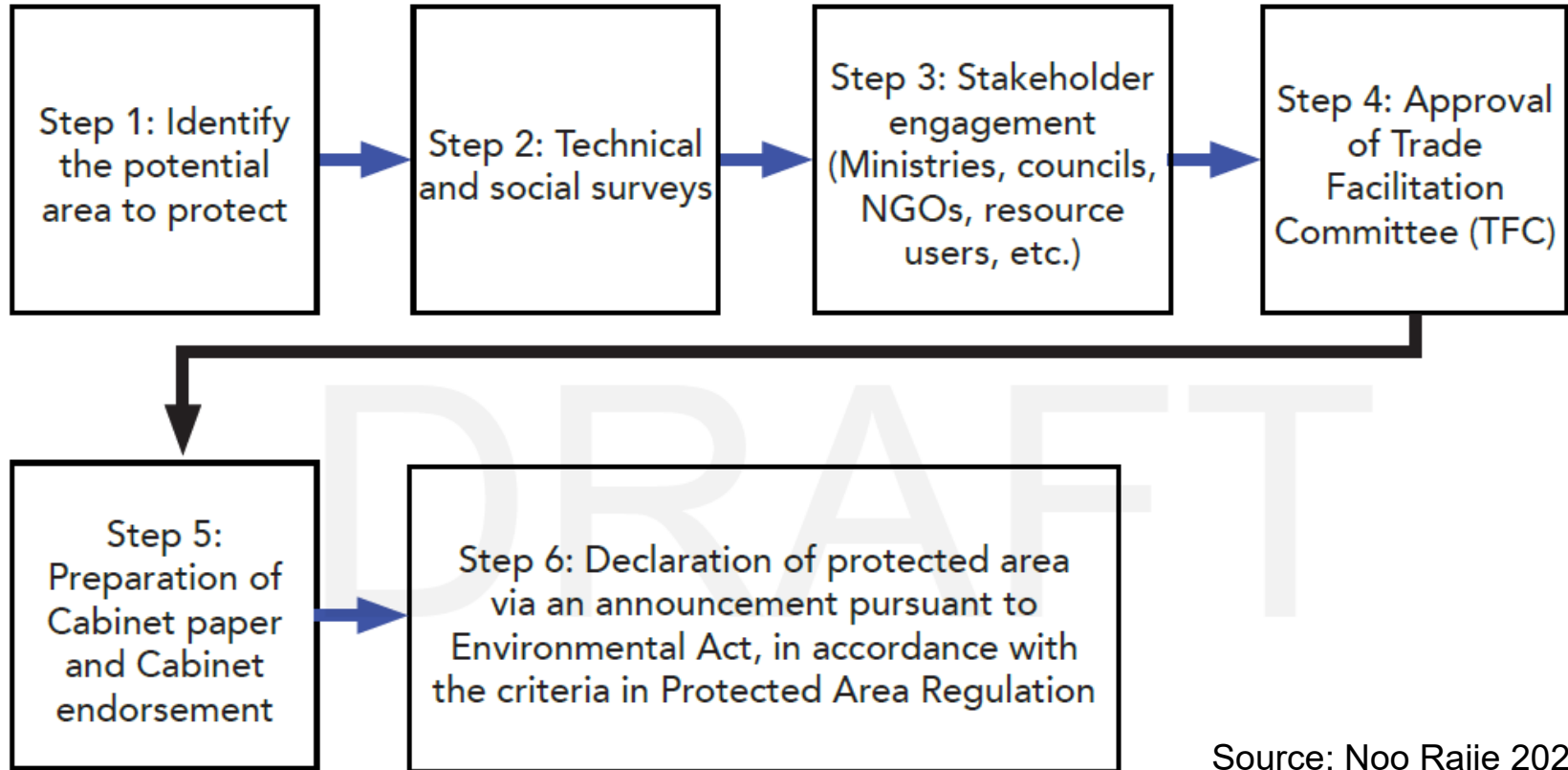
## No of Areas

Marine and Terrestrial

## Percentage

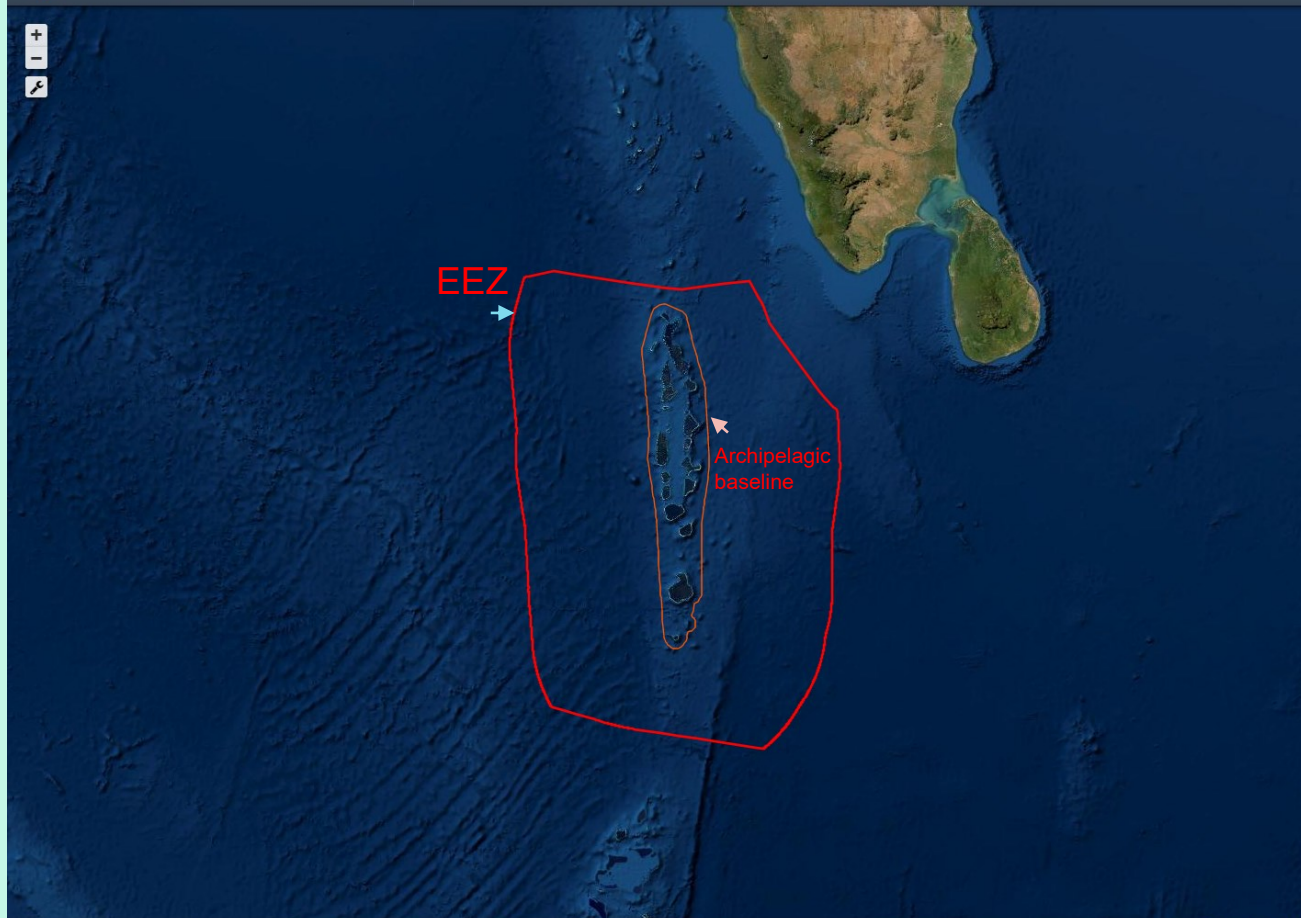
In comparison to coral  
reef area

# PA Declaration process



Declaration of  
protected areas

5. (a) Declaration of protected areas shall be made by the Ministry, by announcement via the Government Gazette.
- (b) The following information shall be included in the announcement published in the Government Gazette.
  1. Name of the protected area
  2. Area and size with GPS coordinates
  3. Zonation details, provided that the areas within has been zoned
  4. Activities that can be conducted, and activities prohibited
  5. Protected Area Category
  6. Reasons for its protection and its environmental significance



# National : Protected Areas

	Area (Km2)	Percentage
EEZ of the Maldives	859000	0.063230112
Territorial Waters	93982	4.781607116
Archipelagic waters	52492	1.034722739
Coral Reef Cover of the Maldives	4493.85	12.08644392

TOTAL PROTECTED AREA

543.14666

No of protected areas

79

79

02

## Management challenges



# Governance of PA in the Maldives



Coral reefs



Coast & beaches



Wetlands



Mangroves



## Laws and Regulations

1. Environment Protection and Preservation Act (4/93) : Clause 4
2. Protected Area Regulation (2018/R-78)
3. Hanifaru MPA Regulation(2012/R-23) : Marine Area
4. Addu City Protected Areas Regulation (2018/R-105) : Mangroves and Wetlands
5. Fuvahmulah City Protected Areas Regulation (2018/R-106) : Mangroves and Wetlands

# Current Status: Biosphere Reserves



## BAA ATOLL BIOSPHERE RESERVE

1. B. Hanifaru Marine Protected Area : Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office
2. B. Olhugiri Island: Community Based Management / Atoll / Island Council
3. B. Mendhoo Area: Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office



## ADDU NATURE PARK/ ADDU BIOSPHERE RESERVE

4. Eadhigali kilhi and Koathey Area

## FUVAHMULAJ NATURE PARK/ FUVAHMULAH BIOSPHERE RESERVE

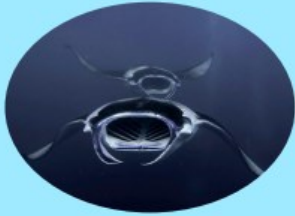
5. Dhandimagi kilhi



NRR Target Designation:  $8/20 = 40\%$

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# Management Plans



Hanifaru, Olhugiri,  
Mendhoo region

**Baa Atoll**  
...



Dhandimagi Kilhi

**Fuvahmulah**  
...



Eadhigali and  
Koathey area

**Addu**  
...

# Major Challenges



**Finance**



**Human Resource**



**Technology**

# Resource use conflicts



South Ari Marine Park (SAMPa) , Video by:  
Island Divers Maldives

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Lb-sRn8vHw>

# The case of LMPAs

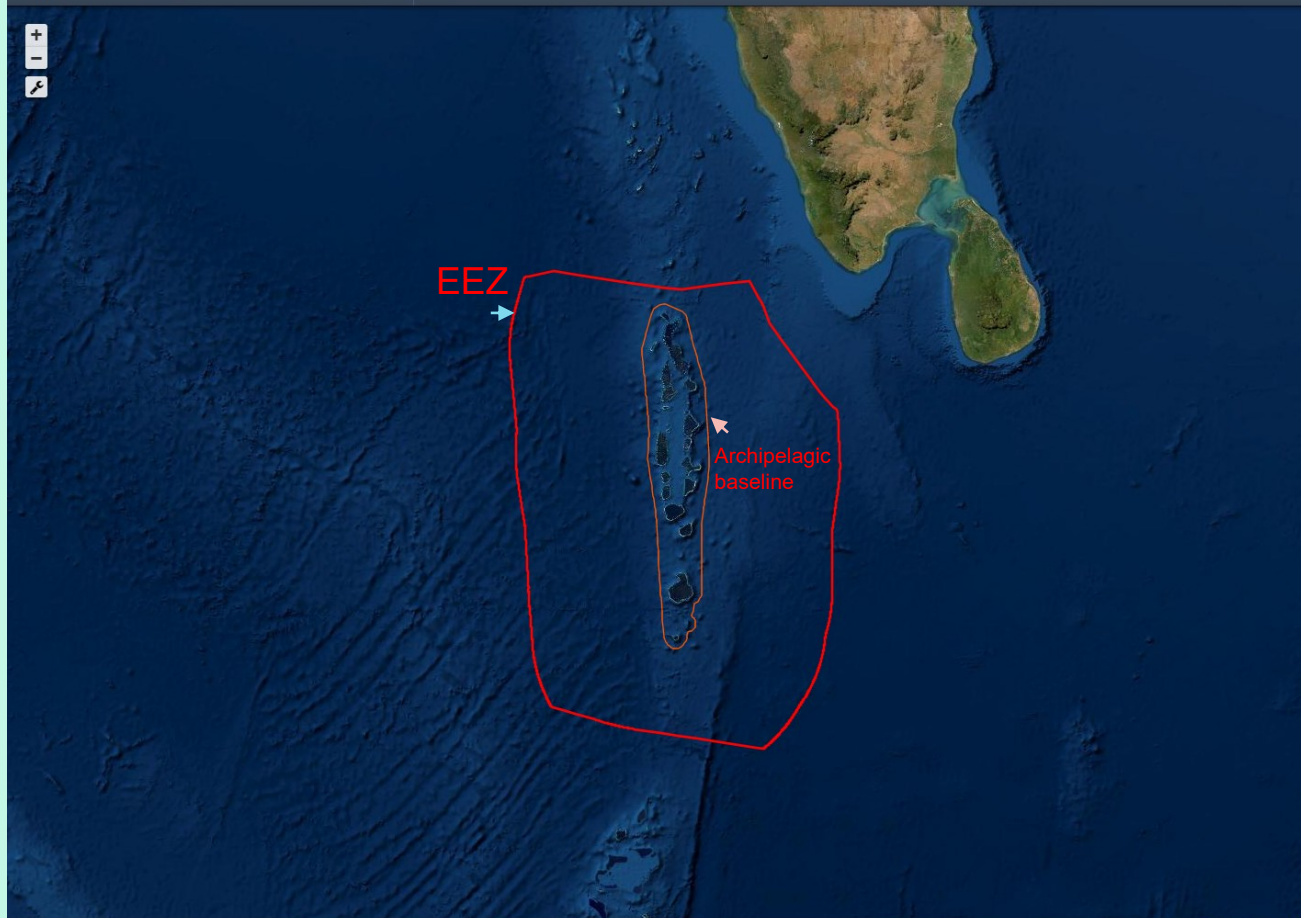
Large-scale MPAs are Marine Protected Areas greater than 150,000 km<sup>2</sup>, which are *"actively managed for protection across the entire geographic extent of the area"* (Big Ocean, 2013).

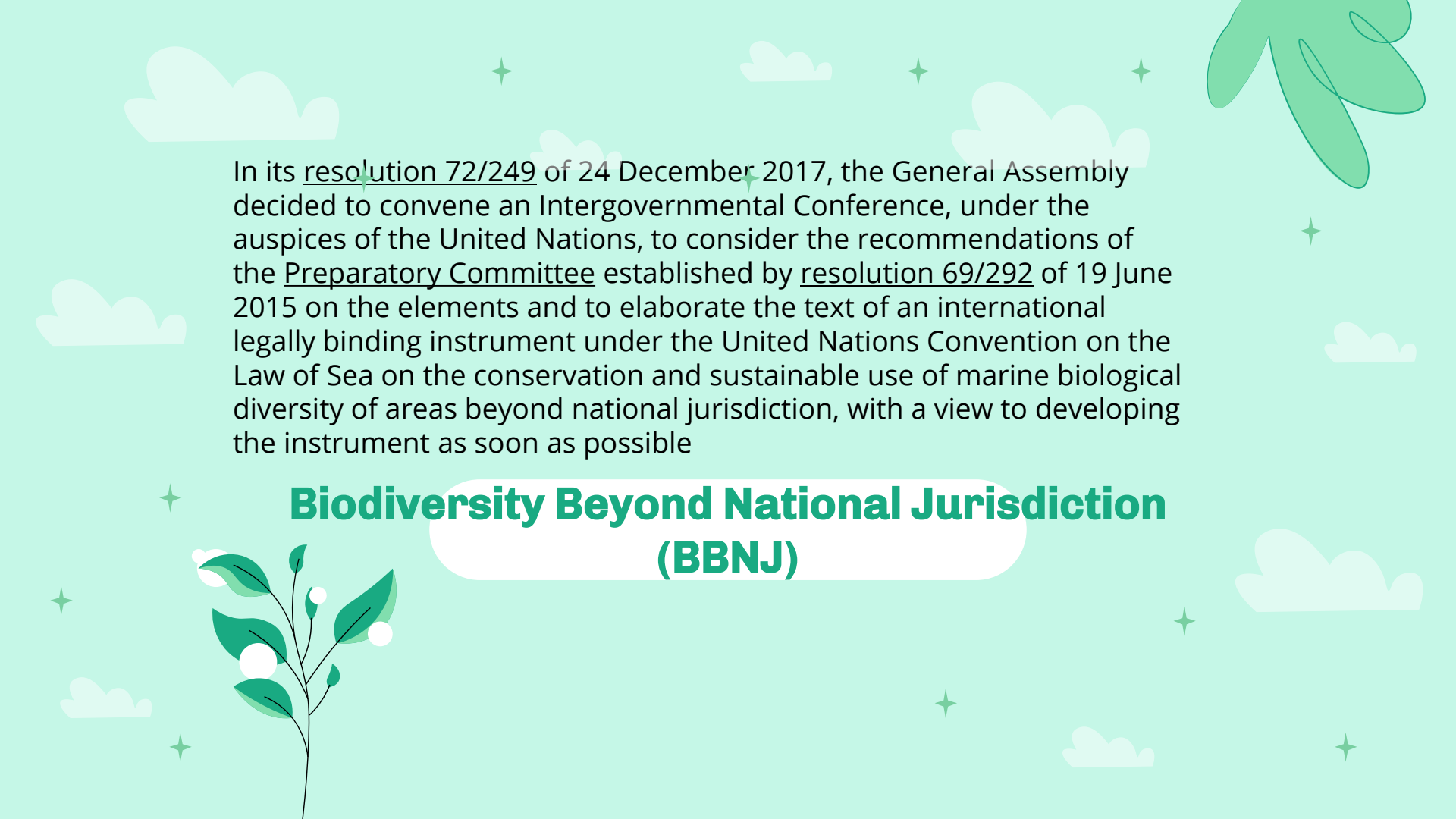
The first large-scale MPA created was the Australian Great Barrier Reef in 1975.

Since then 17 large-scale MPAs have been established.

Some of the most recent cover areas larger than 1 million km<sup>2</sup>







In its resolution 72/249 of 24 December 2017, the General Assembly decided to convene an Intergovernmental Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee established by resolution 69/292 of 19 June 2015 on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, with a view to developing the instrument as soon as possible



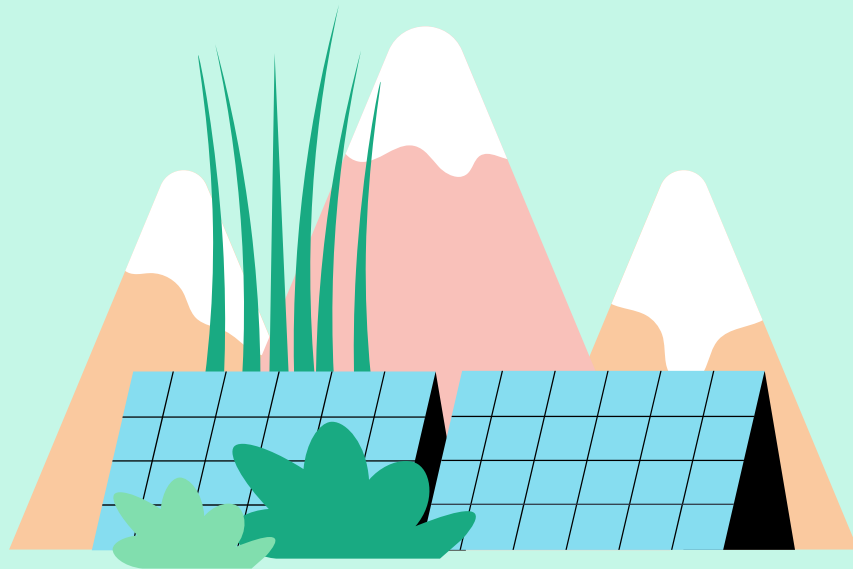
## **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)**

# Lessons from LMPAs

1. Whether going large will protect representative habitat and result in true protection, or whether it is merely a politically expedient way for some nations to attain targets by creating **paper parks**, while avoiding tough conservation decisions (Wilhelm et al 2014)
2. **Difficulties of surveillance, enforcement and monitoring** of vast offshore areas, as well as high total costs. While the cost per unit area may be lower for large MPAs, conducting surveillance and monitoring in such vast areas requires much more expensive technologies (Wilhelm et al 2014)
3. Large MPAs complement and add to existing management and conservation measures. Decision makers should consider designating them as one of a suite of possible protection measures. Besides greatly enhancing the chance of reaching agreed biodiversity targets, **large MPAs improve the quality of conservation** (Wilhelm et al 2014)
4. protecting marine biodiversity in remote places as a **precautionary approach**, supports indigenous rights (Leenhard et al 2013)

03

# Opportunities



# Opportunities



## Existing resources

Maritime security



## Technology

Lessons learnt from  
other countries



## Existing partnerships

IOTC, BOBLME



## Conservation Value

Effective conservation  
through effective  
management



04

**Way forward**



# Partnerships

NGOs, and technology providers to really step up and provide the tools and resources to governments who have the political will to pass protective legislation.

# Technology

Remote Monitoring and Surveillance

# Investing in Nature

Investment in management will improve the value of natural capital

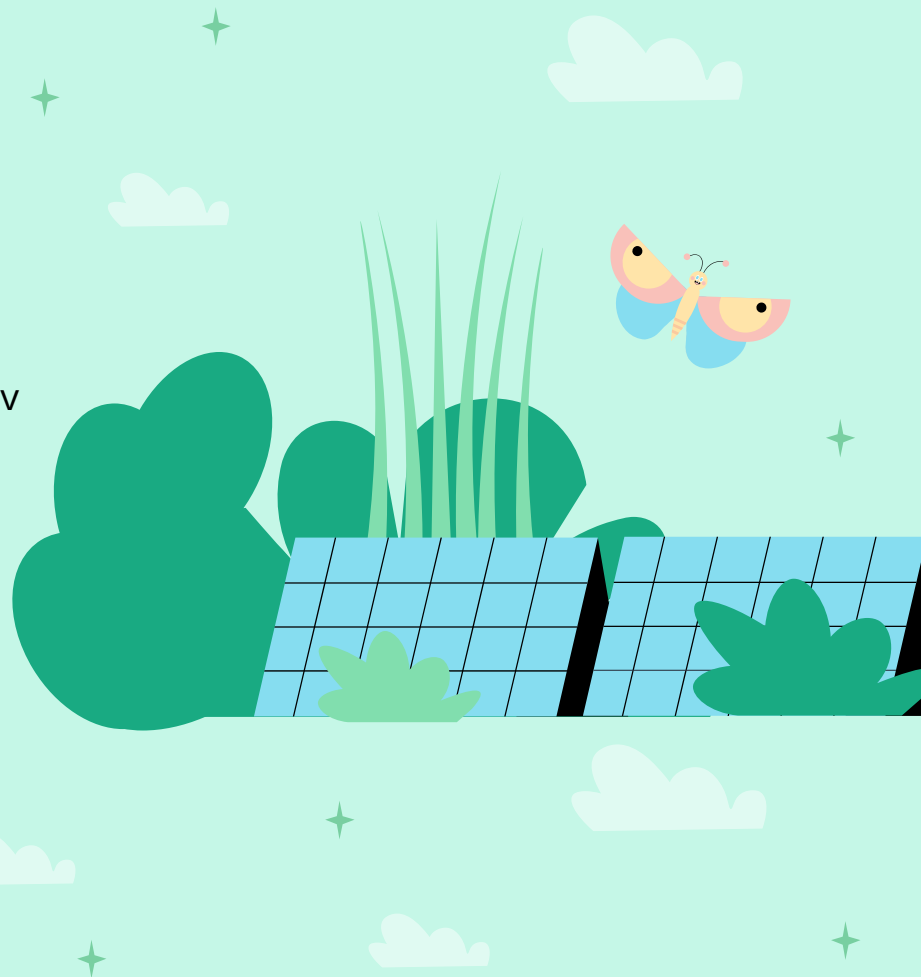
# Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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