**NAMPAN - Key Messages**

**Goal**: To raise awareness of, and engagement with, the North American Marine Protected Area Network (NAMPAN) by MPA practitioners, partners and the public; and to communicate the relevance and importance of marine protected areas to all stakeholders.

**Key Messages for MPA Managers:**

* Today’s threats to ocean health (e.g. climate change, habitat loss, fishing impacts, plastic pollution) require strong regional cooperation.
* Linking country-based national networks of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico provides important ecological benefits, especially in the face of climate change.
* Networks of MPAs facilitate the protection of an ecosystem or species that cannot be adequately protected in one country, such as migratory species, as well as species on the move due to climate change.
* Networks of MPA managers, like the North American MPA Network (NAMPAN), facilitate the sharing of effective conservation and restoration approaches across similar sites in different regions, for better conservation outcomes.
* Partnering through NAMPAN will increase our collective ability to: establish and manage marine protected areas; conduct research; monitor marine protected area effectiveness; and develop education and outreach initiatives in a co-operative and cost-effective manner.
* NAMPAN partnerships will also raise awareness of the collective societal benefits inherent in MPAs - economic security, tourism, aesthetic beauty, protection of Indigenous traditional and spiritual connection to marine environments – thus, drawing public attention to the importance of MPA networks.
* NAMPAN will provide a multilingual platform that connects MPA managers together as a virtual community of practice. The platform will: provide a space for networking and virtual conversations; act as a repository for insights and lessons learned; and facilitate collaboration across jurisdictions by helping to identify common issues and joint actions.

**Key Messages for Partners and the General Public:**

* North America spans diverse marine ecosystemsand habitats, including: coral reefs, mangrove forests, kelp forests, rocky intertidal areas and Arctic ice.
* A healthy ocean is essential for the maintenance of life and the well-being of humanity. However, our ocean is under immediate threat. We must act quickly to change our behavior and rethink our relationship with the ocean (and the environment in general).
* For many years, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico have been taking action to protect our ocean resources, including through the creation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). MPAs are clearly defined geographic areas in marine and coastal waters, estuaries and the Great Lakes that are dedicated to, and managed for, the long-term conservation of nature, together with the ecosystem services and cultural values they provide.
* Ocean conservation through MPAs comes with a myriad of benefits for nature, including preventing biodiversity loss and mitigating climate change.
* MPAs promote a healthy ecosystem that can better withstand climate impacts; protect “blue carbon” habitats such as seagrasses, mangroves, and salt marshes; and protect coastlines and coastal communities from storm impacts.
* Canada, the U.S., and Mexico, along with many others, have committed to protecting 30% of their waters by 2030.
* The North American Marine Protected Area Network (NAMPAN) builds on the long-standing cooperation among Canada, the U.S., and Mexico by bringing together MPA managers from across the three countries to share ideas, collaborate, and address common conservation challenges.
* MPA networks offer one of the best options to maintain our oceans’ health, to provide multiple benefits and to avoid further degradation: 1) ecological benefits come from protecting species, habitats and ecosystem functions; 2) social benefits come from engaging stakeholders in the planning and fair sharing of benefits; and 3) economic benefits come from ensuring the long-term sustainable use of natural resources and tourism income.
* Only by working together now can we ensure that these vital resources will remain for future generations to enjoy.
* You can take action now to protect our ocean. Communities in and around MPAs are especially importantdue to their longstanding traditional and spiritual connection to the marine environment and marine resources.