Ocean planning

Ocean planning, also known as marine spatial planning, means thinking about our oceans in three-dimensional zones and co-ordinating multiple uses to ensure that humans get the access needed for various activities without compromising the health of marine ecosystems and species. Ocean planning is also generally defined as a public process through which multiple groups of ocean users come together to discuss the allocation of ocean space for various activities for the long term.

Why do we need ocean planning?

In Canada, our oceans are used by everyone – wildlife, industry and communities – and a **healthy ocean is essential** to all their activities. In some areas all three of these groups live, work and play in the same ocean space, creating the potential for conflict that can diminish benefits to all three.

Canada's oceans are getting busier

With all its natural functions (e.g. providing habitat, ecosystem services like storing carbon), industrial utilization (e.g. shipping, laying of cable) and community uses (e.g. food, recreation), the demands on ocean spaces are rapidly increasing.

Nature
- Habitat
- Food
- Reproduction
- Communication
- Ecosystem services

Industry
- Transportation
- Resource extraction
- Tourism
- Energy production
- Telecommunications

Communities
- Food and medicine
- Recreation
- Traditional use
- Employment
- Coastal residents

Understanding needs and activities

Ocean planning helps us understand how these groups use the same ocean space, how those uses overlap, and how their activities are best managed together. Planning helps us manage resources and prevent conflicts so that people and nature can thrive together, with benefits for all.

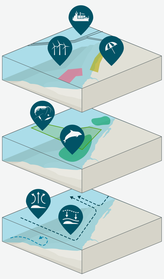
Defining goals and objectives

What are the long-term needs of this region?

- Economic objectives
- Sociocultural objectives
- Ecological objectives

Analysis and planning

In order to develop a plan, data gaps must be addressed, such as where and how activities are occurring, as well as identifying important ecosystem features and functions.

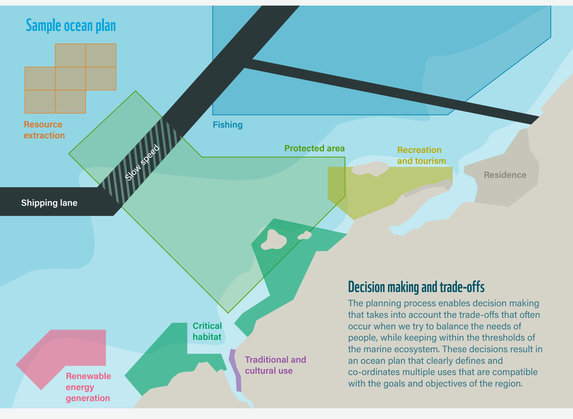


Socio-economic analysis
Includes economic activities, like tourism, fisheries, and energy production, along with community values such as traditional use and recreation

Biological analysis
Includes areas significant for wildlife and their habitat, like feeding grounds and areas of nutrient-rich water where biological productivity is high

Oceanographic analysis
Includes understanding physical processes and features, like tides, currents and bathymetry

Planning for multiple uses

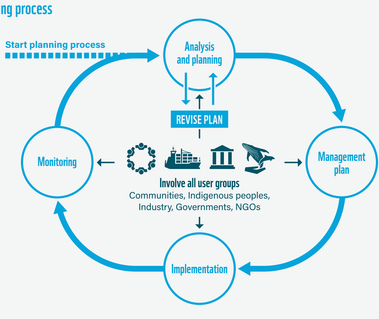


Decision making and trade-offs
The planning process enables decision making that takes into account the trade-offs that often occur when we try to balance the needs of people, while keeping within the thresholds of the marine ecosystem. These decisions result in an ocean plan that clearly defines and co-ordinates multiple uses that are compatible with the goals and objectives of the region.

A continuous and adaptive process

The plans that result from effective ocean planning can be adapted to changing circumstances, for example the effects of climate change or the emergence of a new ocean industry. Importantly, these ocean plans must be implemented by the appropriate authorities, and the various components and activities of the plan must be monitored and managed over the long term.

Ocean planning process



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