Participatory Marine Spatial Planning in Madagascar

T. Tantely, R. Andriamandimbisoa
Wildlife Conservation Society, Madagascar
Wildlife Conservation Society, Madagascar
ttianarisoa@wcs.org

Madagascar's marine and coastal ecosystems harbor exceptional biodiversity and ecosystem services including coastal protection and fisheries that play a role in national economic development and significantly contribute to local livelihoods. However, threats to marine and coastal ecosystems are numerous and include oil and gas development, unplanned coastal development for tourism, climate change, and overexploitation of natural resources. In recognition of this fact, the Government, through the President of Republic, announced during the World Parks Congress in Sydney (November 2014) that Madagascar would triple its number of marine protected areas in the next ten years. Additionally, Madagascar had previously committed to the CBD Aichi target of 10% of its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) to be covered by MPAs. Thereby, increasing the scope and effectiveness of marine resource management across large areas requires a large-scale spatial synthesis of biological, socio-economic and environmental patterns. Therefore, Madagascar's marine conservation communities including Government institutions and NGOs have enthusiastically carried out in a participatory manner to identify potential marine site for future MPA. WCS support the Secretary of state in charge of the Ocean (SEMer) in running a technical process of Marine Spatial Planning to model and identify marine priority areas for conservation, using GIS (Spatial analysis tools) and systematic conservation planning software package (MwZ: Marxan with Zones), a data driven process. Thereby, biodiversity and socio-economic data were gathered and used to generate scenarii of priority sites for conservation that meet the pre-defined biological and social objectives. The results show a set of marine conservation priority areas that together meet conservation and socioeconomic targets. Participatory Marine Spatial Planning to select additional marine conservation areas helps identifying marine conservation and management priorities across Madagascar, in order to help the country respects its commitment to the CBD Aichi target and the 'Sydney Promise'.
