

Marine Spatial Plan Insights

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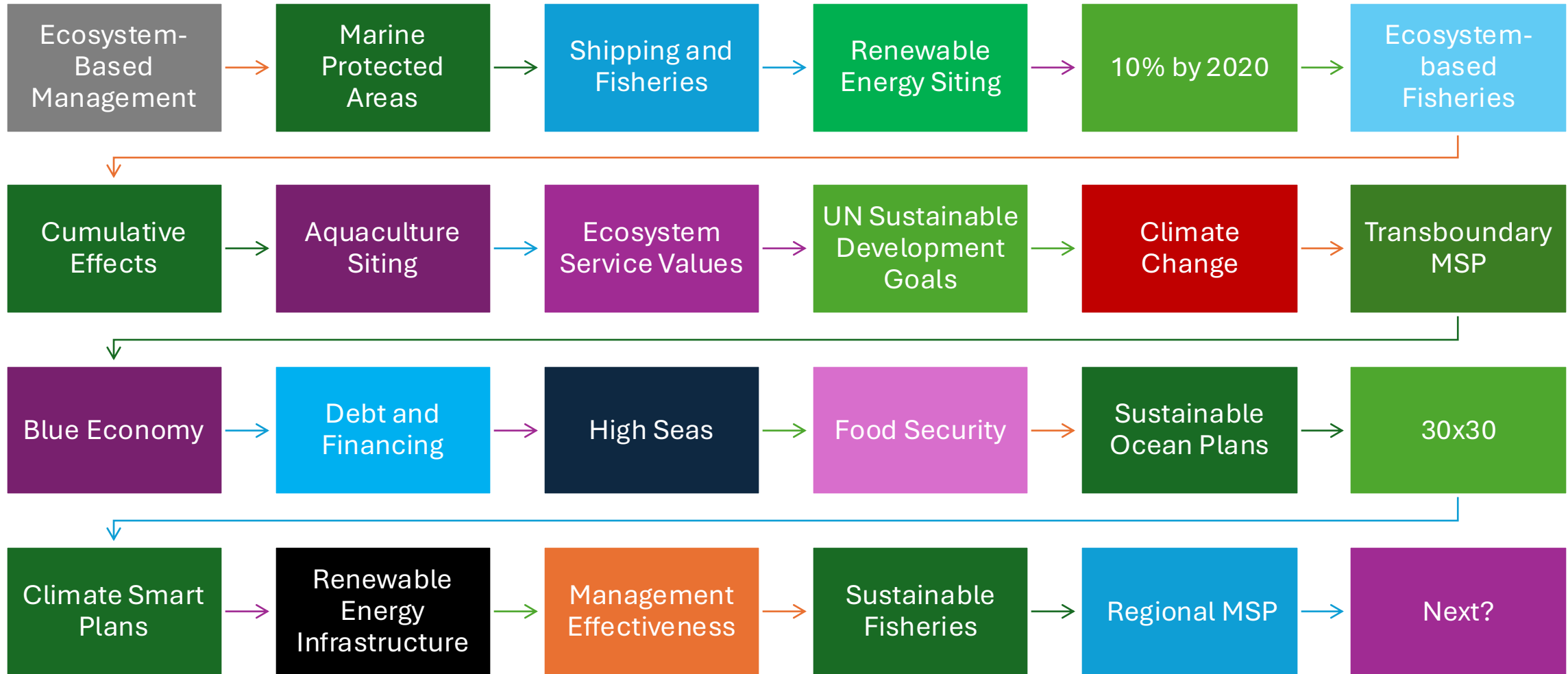
Director Ocean Planning and Mapping

The Nature Conservancy (Nature United, Canada)



NMRPC Forum, Montréal – Feb 2026

Since 2009 ... MSP objectives have changed and expanded



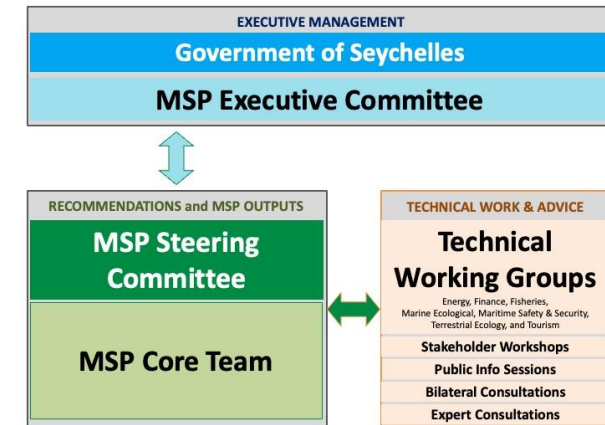
MSP Typology is on a continuum – not ‘one size fits all’



Adapted from: Smith, J.L. 2018. Options for Adopting Marine Spatial Planning In: Cervigni, R. and P. L Scandizzo, Editors. The Ocean Economy in Mauritius. Making it Happen. Making it Last. World Bank. 329 pp.

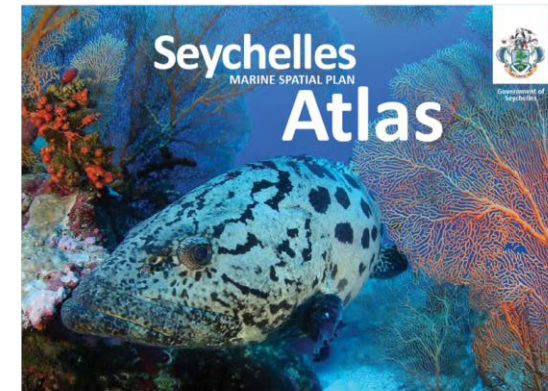
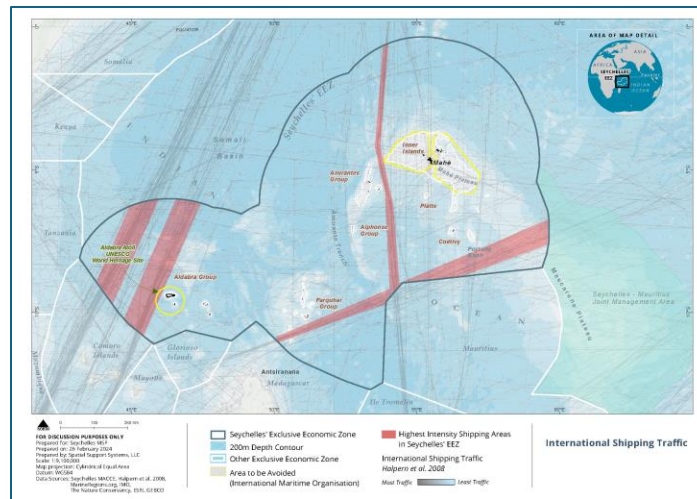
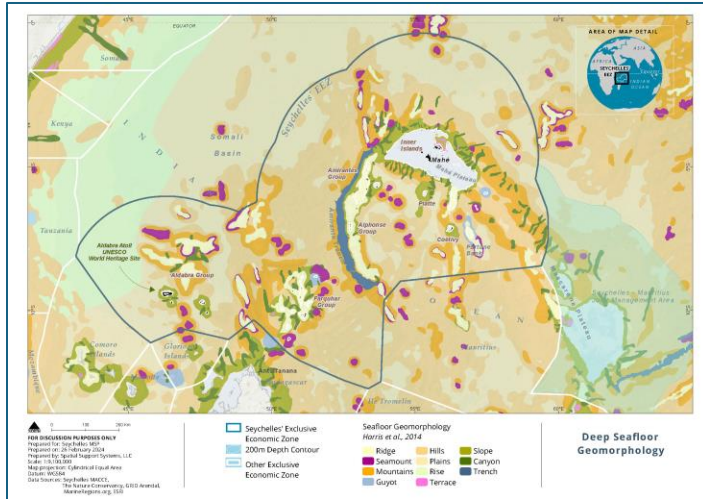
Insights from global MSP

- 1. Approved governance structures.** Buy-in for governance is critical for progress, to make decisions, and to finish.
- 2. Transparency and communication.** Sharing information is important for discussions and evidence-based decisions. Use multiple platforms.
- 3. Knowledge and information.** Integrate multiple knowledge sources, decision support tools, maps, planning tools and scenarios.
- 4. Build trust.** Develop durable mechanisms for meaningful engagement within the planning teams and with communities.
- 5. Data and Visioning.** Explore the numerous options and the value that spatial data can bring to support key decisions.

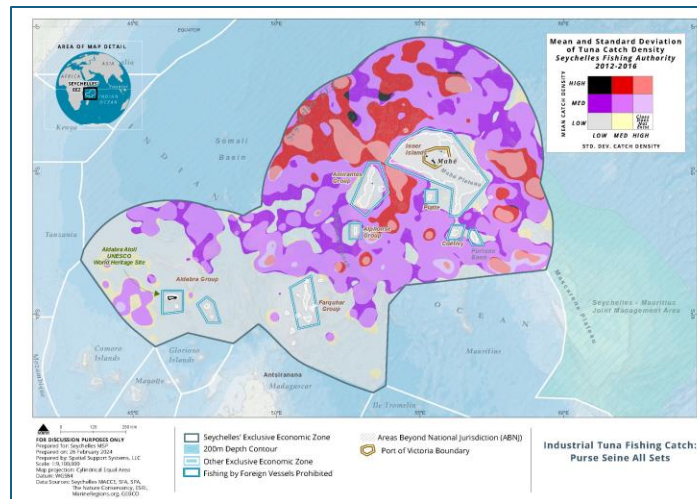
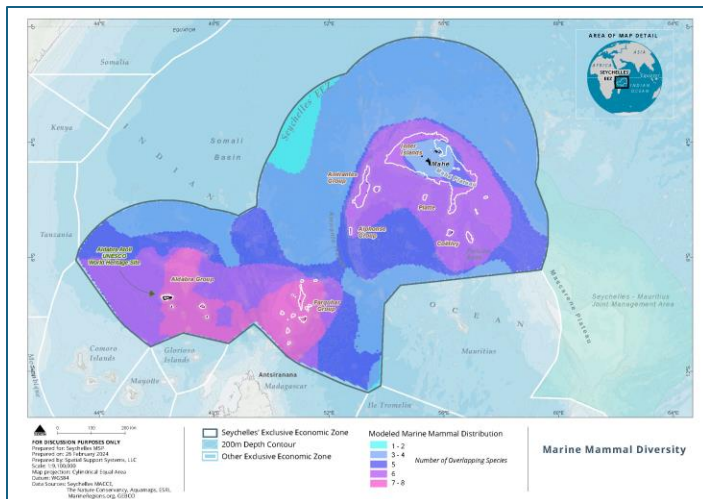


The screenshot shows the website for the Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan Initiative. The header includes the logo and the text "Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan Initiative" with the tagline "Supporting healthy oceans, communities, and the Blue Economy." Below the header is a navigation menu with links for HOME, THE INITIATIVE, OUTPUTS, RESOURCES, UPDATES, NEWS, EVENTS, and STAKEHOLDER GROUPS. A "CONTACT" link is also visible. The main content area features a large image of the "Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan" cover, with a text box stating: "Marine spatial plans provide guidance for decision makers and of ocean space using a public, participatory approach to plan for the ocean and address multiple objectives: ecological, economic and social." Below this are several news items, including "7 January 2026 Cabinet approves SMSMP governance mechanism" and "25 June 2025 Livestream SMSMP Final Ceremony Fri 27 June".

Map and analyse marine features, species, human uses.



QR Code SMSP Atlas

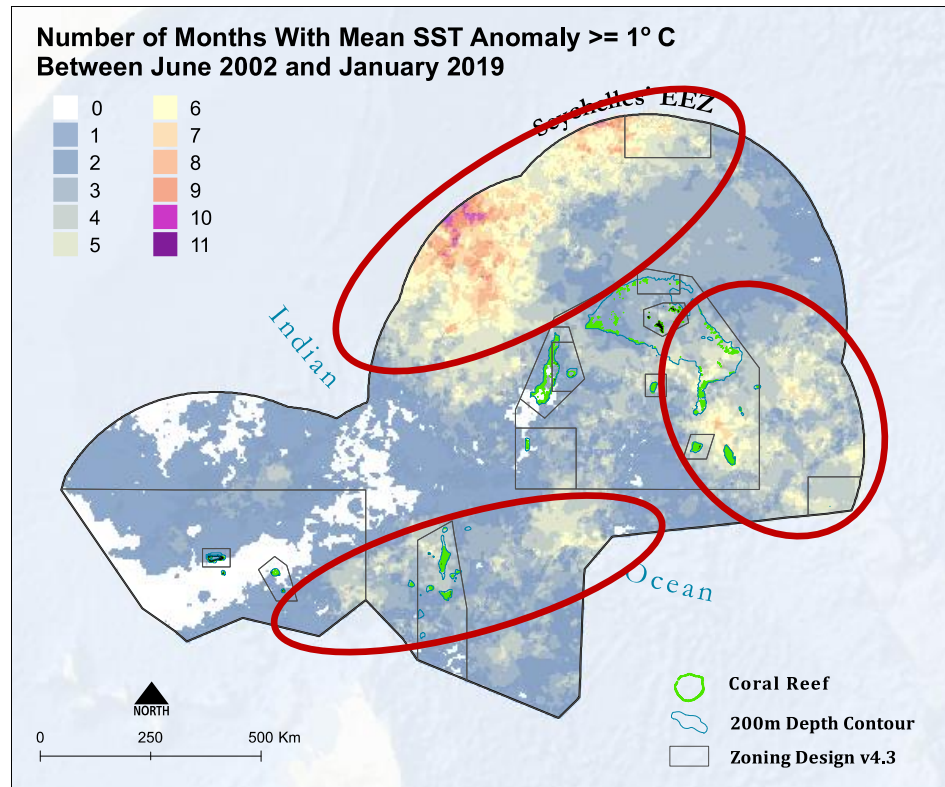


QR Code SMSP Plan

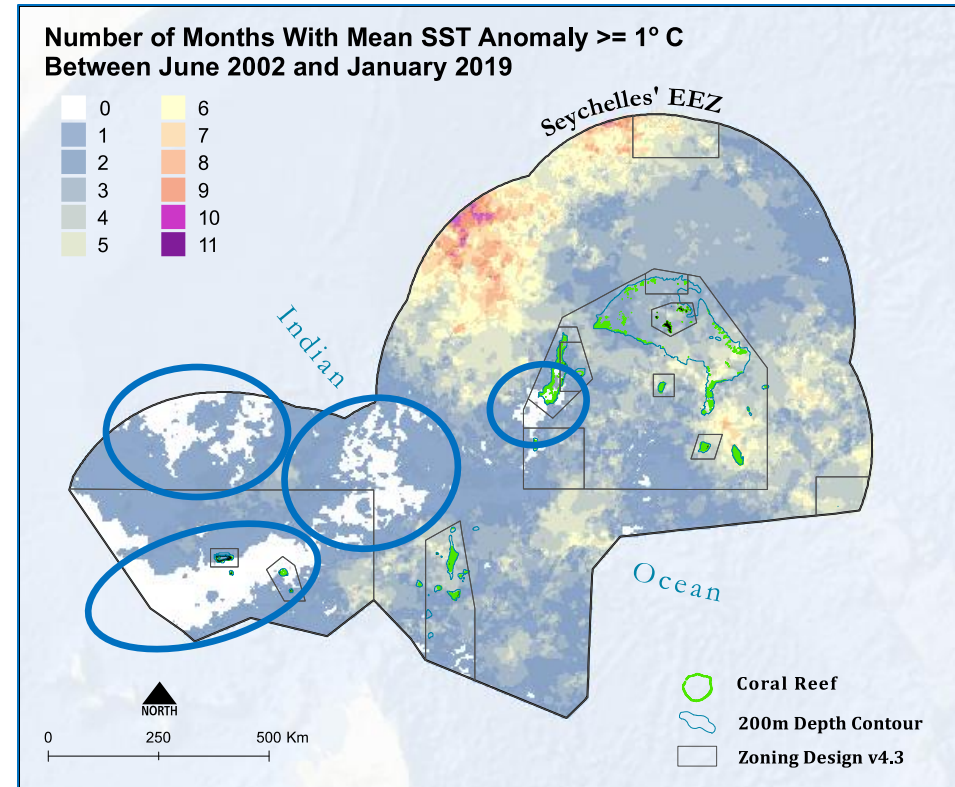
Example: Climate change risk mapping in Seychelles

Spatial analyses identified key areas for climate refugia

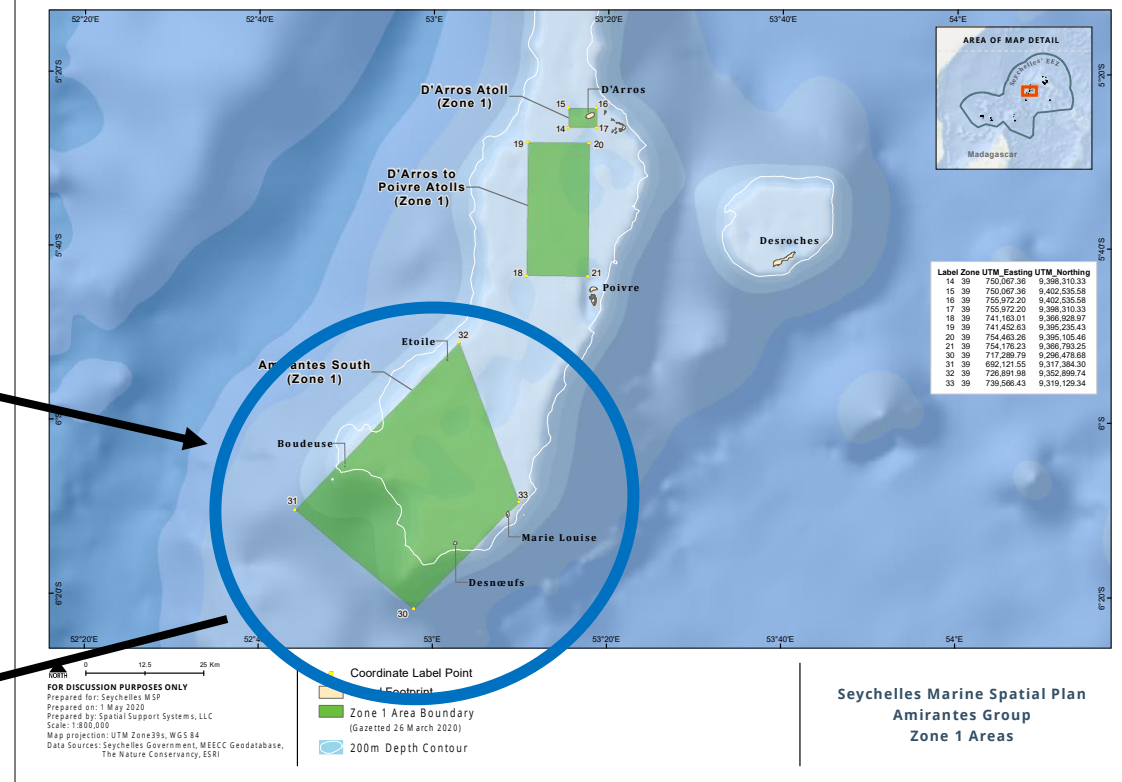
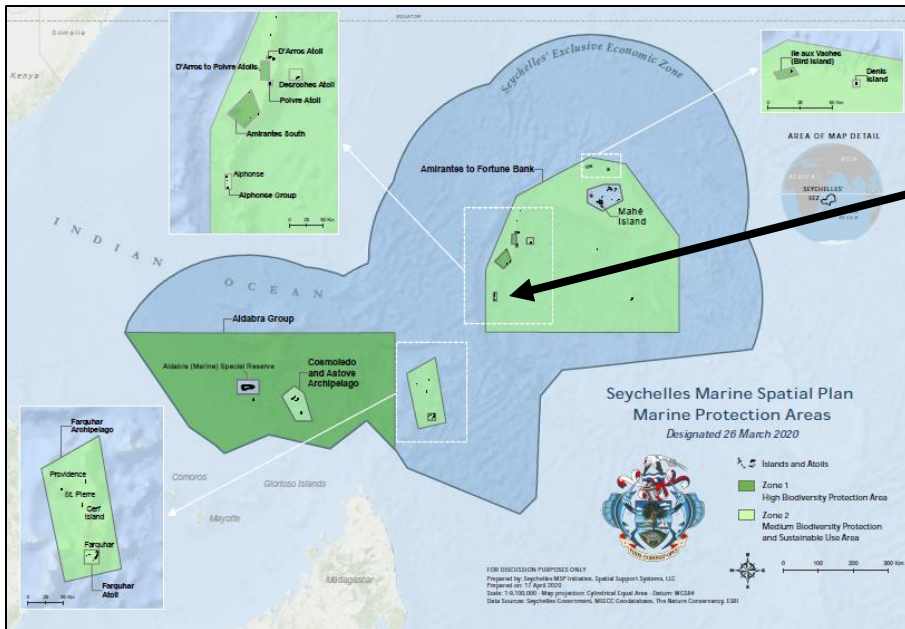
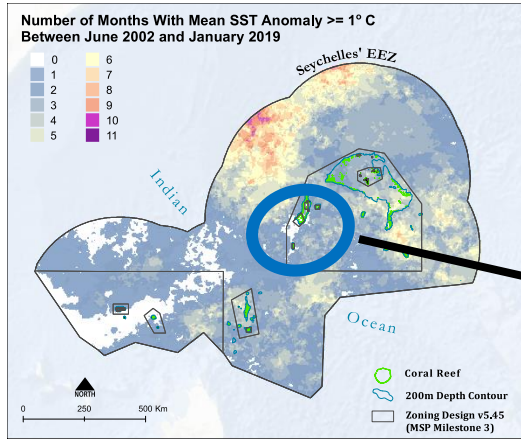
Persistently warm areas



Persistently cool areas



Climate change refugia identified key location for a new MPA



The Seychelles MSP zoning design included an MPA with persistently cool temperatures in the Amirantes Group – a 1,000 km² climate refugia site.

Insights from global MSP

- 6. Set clear objectives.** MSP can address many goals – don't try to do everything in the first Plan.
- 7. Champions.** Find and support champions for the MSP.
- 8. Equity and people.** Create safe spaces for engagement and equitable access to inform the planning process. Balance benefits and impacts. Marine plans take time; patience and persistence is needed. Give stakeholders time to review information and provide inputs.
- 9. Learn from others.** Gather lessons learned from MSP around the world
- 10. Keep moving forward.** Establish deadlines, commit to meeting them.



An aerial photograph of a small, crescent-shaped tropical island in the Seychelles. The island is covered in lush green vegetation, including several palm trees. A small white boat with a blue canopy is anchored in the shallow, turquoise water just off the island's shore. The surrounding ocean is a deep, dark blue, with visible patterns of coral reefs and sandbars. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The text "MSP is about places" is overlaid in the center of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

MSP is about places



MSP is about people



Thank you!

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