



Applying the Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) Concept in the Pacific Islands



*Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and Erich Hoyt
IUCN Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas*

The imperative of conserving marine mammals

- the world's nations are committed to marine mammal conservation through international, regional and national legislation;
- marine mammals are also very popular with the public, and their wellbeing is a widespread human aspiration.

yet, conservation efforts often falter because the wellbeing of marine mammals is jeopardised by human activities at sea

- Impacts include direct killing, bycatch, prey depletion, ship-strikes, increasing noise, pollution, habitat degradation, and ecosystem effects caused by global warming;
- 25% of 129 marine mammal species have IUCN Red List threatened status.

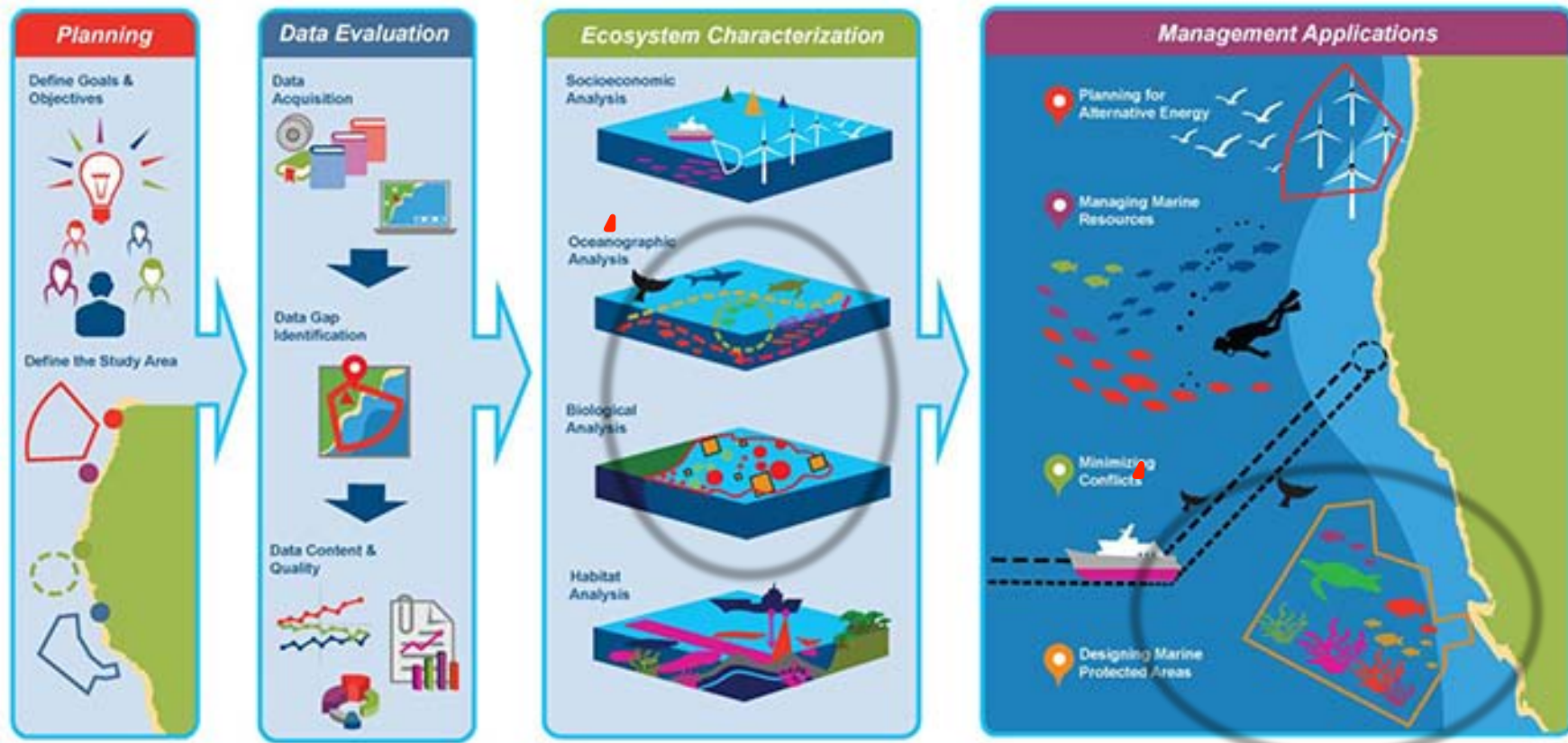
Sufficiently detailed knowledge of marine mammal habitat is scarce

In the effort by decision-makers of complying with marine mammal conservation legislation, and of addressing the aspiration of their constituencies,

a clear understanding of the geographic location and extent of important marine mammal habitats is strongly needed,

e.g., in the designation of Marine Mammal Protected Areas, or in the implementation of Marine Spatial Planning processes.

Marine Spatial Planning



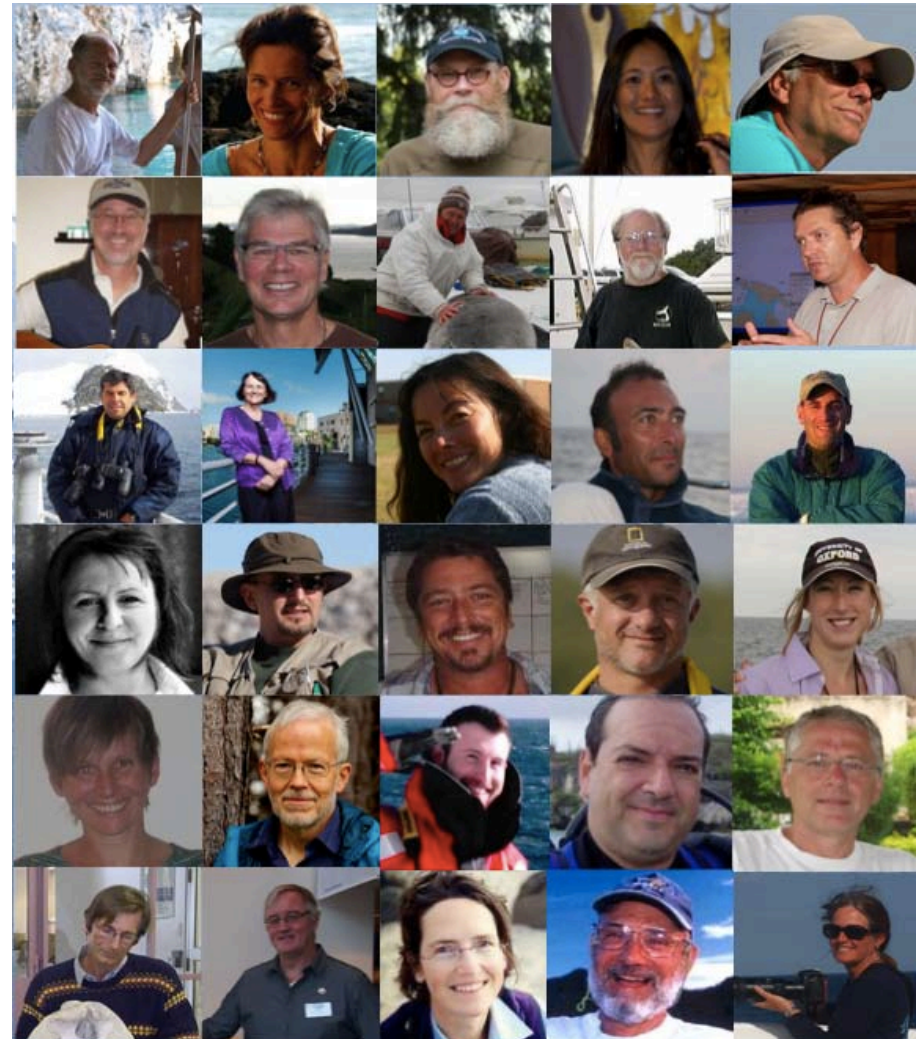


launched in October 2013

Task Force Objectives:

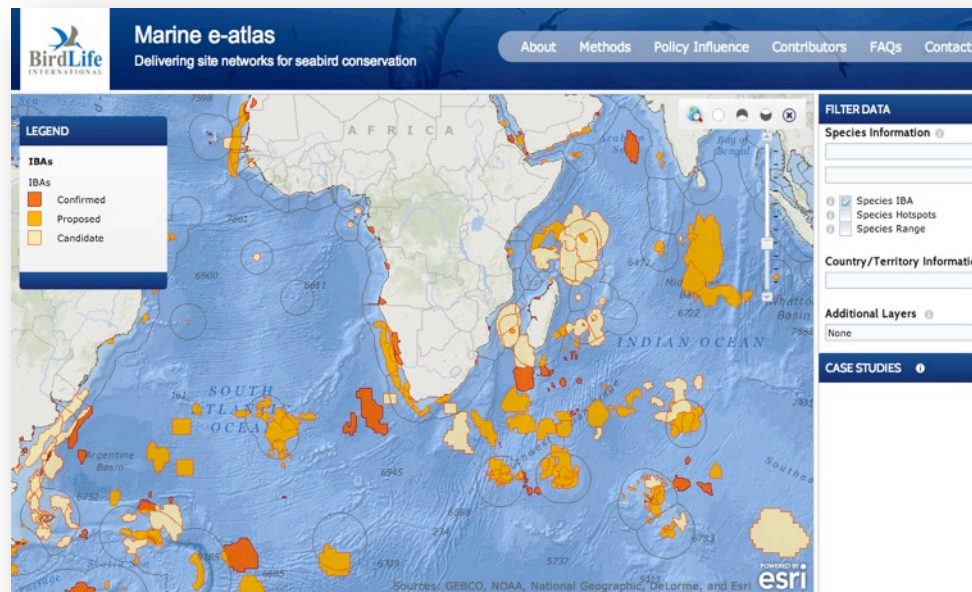
- **Facilitate collaboration** in our community of practice
- **Enhance opportunities** for cooperation and communication
- **Assist in achieving MPA targets** and agreements
- **Bolster capacity** with new conservation tools

www.marinemammalhabitat.org



Considering BirdLife approach: Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)

IBAs use agreed criteria to identify important areas that conservation groups and researchers think are important for bird protection (%s of world population, etc.).



Key to IBA success is that areas are selected and backed up by 1000+ bird scientists and millions of birdwatchers plus many NGOs and research staff.

Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA)

A discrete portion of habitat, important for one or more marine mammal species, that has the potential to be delineated and managed for conservation.

An IMMA is not an MPA

An IMMA is a tool to inform the development and management practice of place-based conservation

International Cooperation



- Convention on Migratory Species



Convention on
Biological Diversity

- Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas

Criteria for IMMA Identification

Criterion A - Species or Population Vulnerability

Criterion B - Distribution and Abundance

Sub-criterion Bi - Small and Resident Populations

Sub-criterion Bii - Aggregations

Criterion C - Key Life-cycle Activities

Sub-criterion Ci - Reproductive Areas

Sub-criterion Cii - Feeding Areas

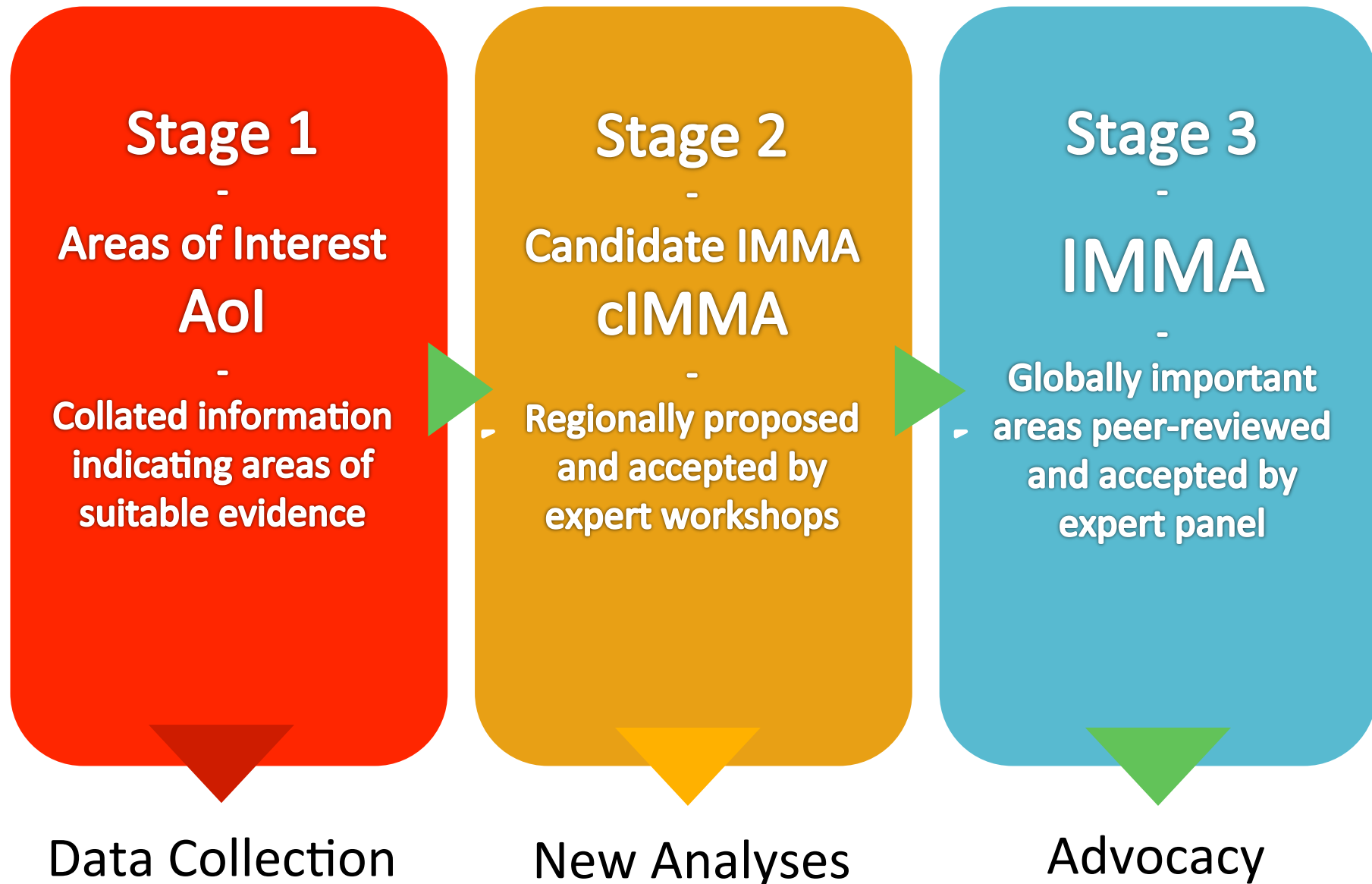
Sub-criterion Ciii - Migration Areas

Criterion D - Special Attributes

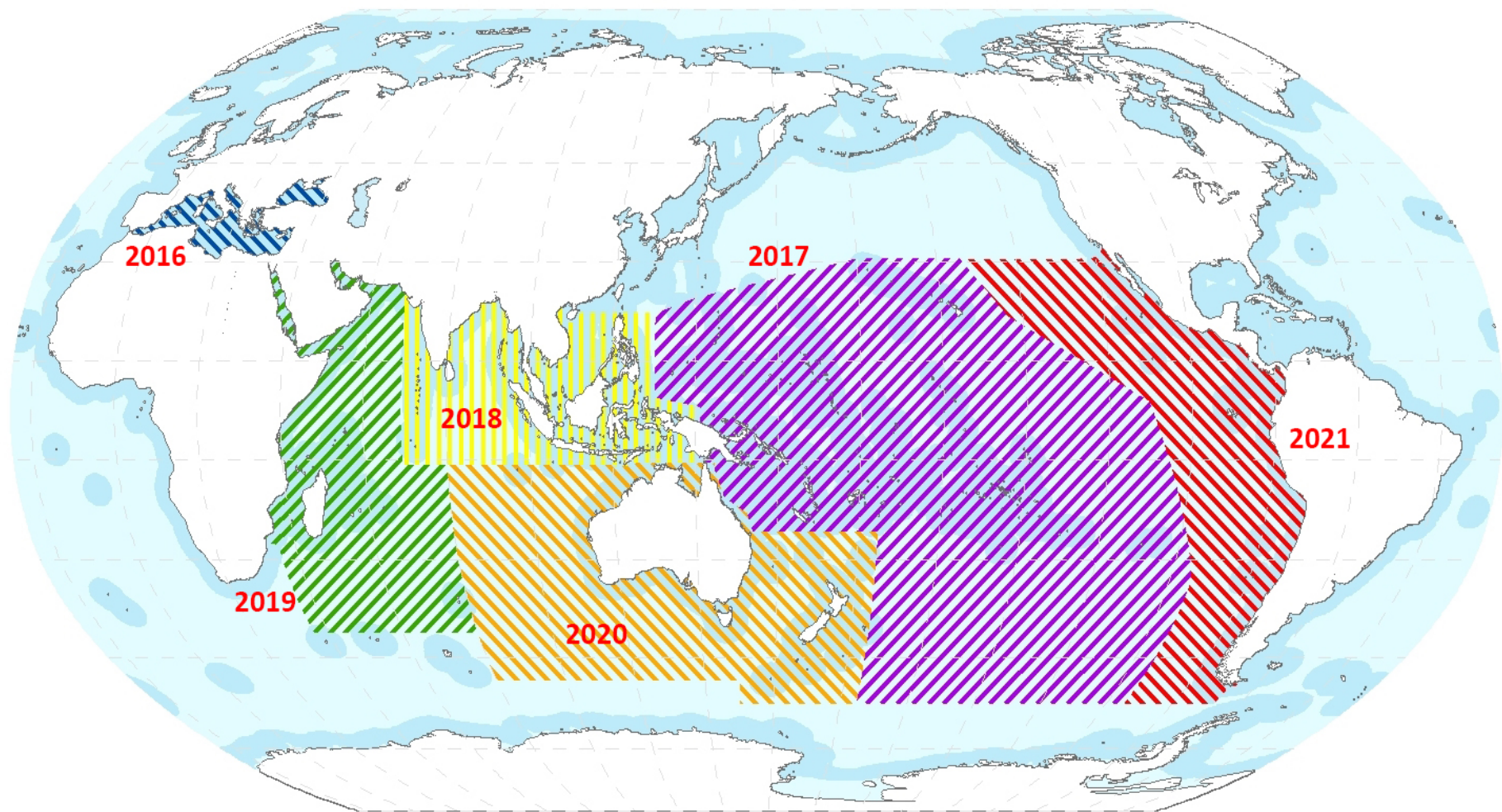
Sub-criterion Di - Distinctiveness

Sub-criterion Dii - Diversity

Process for IMMA Identification



2016 – 2021 Programme of Work



IMMA Regional Workshop

Apia, Samoa, 27-31 March 2017



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation,
Building and Nuclear Safety

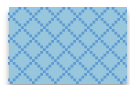
INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE
INITIATIVE (IKI)



**pending
review**



candidate IMMA (CIMMA)



Area of Interest (Aoi)

IUCN MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTED AREAS TASK FORCE

www.marinemammalhabitat.org