Genesis & future of Marine Protected Areas in Madagascar: A Delphi-based approach to inform sustainable management

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About 80% of the population of Madagascar depends entirely on natural resources for their livelihoods. In term of natural resources, Madagascar is well known as a biodiversity hotspot with a high percentage of endemism. This high importance of natural resources has led to the commitment of the Malagasy government, during the IUCN World Parks Congress of 2003 in Durban, to triple by 2012 the total area of protected areas in Madagascar (which now stands at 10% of the total area of the country). By 2016, only 79% of that goal was achieved and only 0.1% was assigned for Marine Protected Area (MPA). During the latest IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney (November 2014), Madagascar is now committed to triple the extent of its MPAs by 2020. Thus, information is urgently needed to support decision-makers in the selection and management of setting of a sustainable and efficient MPA network around the island. To assess and inform the process leading to the identification of MPAs, and in order to feed the reflection on the future management of MPAs in Madagascar, we performed an iterative expert survey using the Delphi approach.

We analyse the historical outline of MPA development and develop exploratory scenarios regarding the further development and management of MPAs in Madagascar. The Delphi survey was developed based on the Policy Arrangement Approach (PAA), which analyses the set-up & management of MPAs by focusing on four dimensions: the actors and their coalitions involved in the policy domain, the resources (mobilization, division and deployment), the rules of the game (actual political rules and other form of interaction, formal procedures, decision making…) and the current policy discourses (views and narratives of the actors involved).

Based on the Delphi survey, we provide a range of recommendations to decision-makers regarding MPA development in Madagascar.

Keywords: Delphi; PAA; MPA; management; governance; policy; Madagascar