



Marine protected areas
in the Atlantic arc



Networking for better protection

From the Shetlands to the Azores, from the UK to Portugal, marine biodiversity conservation is at the heart of national concerns, particularly through the establishment of marine protected areas. The acronym “**MPA**” encompasses a **wide range of tools, approaches and goals that need to be better understood**.

MAIA contributes to **promoting** and **sharing** this wealth and these differences to **foster mutual understanding** and the **development of a recognized, effective, sustainable and well-managed network of marine protected areas in the Atlantic arc**. Four years is a short lifespan for any network, yet MAIA is taking off and gradually developing as time goes by.

www.maia-network.org

Septembre 2013 - Création : Y. Souche/Agence des aires marines protégées. Photos : P. PITA/Universidade da Coruna ; Y. Gladiu ; E. Donfut ; A. Eynaudi ; Y. Hourdin/ Agence des aires marines protégées



Marine protected areas
in the Atlantic arc



**MAIA : A network of marine protected areas
in the Atlantic arc**

MAIA: the birth of a new network



Launched in 2010 thanks to European Interreg funding, MAIA aims to promote the development of a recognized, well-managed, effective and durable network of marine protected areas in the Atlantic arc (from the Shetlands to the Azores, from the UK to Portugal). By bringing together and supporting MPA managers, MAIA develops a technical and operational network with the aim of spearheading initiative in MPA governance and management on an international scale.

The MAIA network **leverages and disseminates experience** gained in various countries and **initiates new projects** among the partners in the Atlantic arc.

Main results

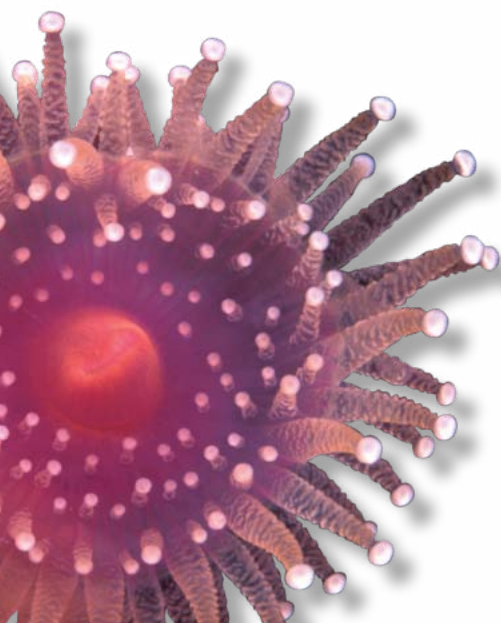
- **Technical measures in the field** that respond to managers' needs and fuel discussion within the network (monitoring professional fishing in an MPA, monitoring a population of harvested bivalves, developing management plans, etc.).
- Regular organisation of **technical regional meetings** on shared concerns.
- **Production of summary documents and methodology guides.**
- **Developing the network of players** between the various countries regularly cooperating on MPA issues. This emerging network has gained recognition among national and European institutions as a key technical correspondent.
- **Creation of a geo-portal** (www.maia-network.org).



A tailor-made tool

The MAIA geographic database has been developed to meet the needs of managers and international and national organisations in terms of **sharing official, up-to-date information about MPAs on the Atlantic seaboard**. Available for consultation via the MAIA geo-portal, the benefits of the database include:

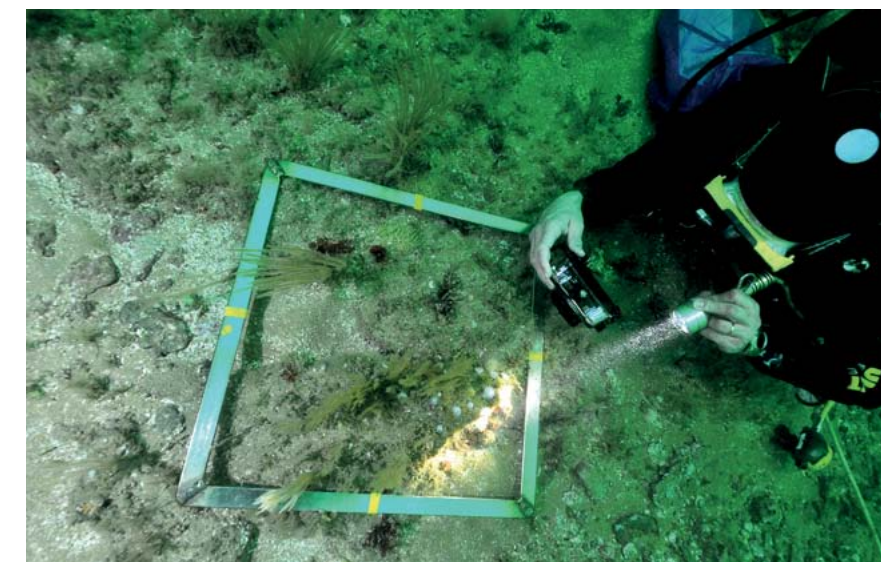
- **Greater knowledge** and a **better understanding of MPAs** in the Atlantic arc shared by stakeholders in the different countries
- The possibility of **disseminating and sharing information** about MPAs
- **Regular assessment of Atlantic arc MPA management implementation.**



International recognition

Thanks to the experience gained through the MAIA project and the technical tools developed, **France has been charged by the OSPAR Convention with the development of the OSPAR MPA GIS database.**

In parallel, the PANACHE project (Protected Areas Network Across the CHannel Ecosystem) initiated in 2012 and led by the Agence des aires marines protégées, uses tools developed by MAIA as a basis to disseminate data relative to MPAs and their management in the Channel area.



A single database for all

The MAIA database therefore forms the basis for the development of the future **North-East Atlantic MPA spatial database** consolidating geographic and management data relating to MPAs in the marine sub-regions: Bay of Biscay and Iberian coasts, the Celtic Sea, the western Channel – North Sea area, as well as the Wider Atlantic region and Arctic waters defined by the OSPAR Convention.

The North-East Atlantic MPA spatial database is developed in accordance with the **international standards on which it is founded.**

All the information contained in the database is published -and therefore available for download- on the Internet via dedicated websites (OSPAR/PANACHE/MAIA).

A real **reference tool** for the dissemination of technical data concerning Atlantic arc MPAs, **the database also serves in the assessment of MPA network implementation across the North-East Atlantic zone.**

A convention for the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic: OSPAR

Fifteen States on the coasts and islands of Western Europe and in the European Community are parties to the **OSPAR Convention** to protect and conserve the North-East Atlantic and its resources. The need to create a **network of marine protected areas** was formally recognized in 1998 through recommendation 2003/3.

