

Using Marine Protected Areas to Visualize the Property Rights Infrastructure of a Canadian Marine Cadastre

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ABSTRACT

The ability to establish Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) has provided additional management tools that can be used for better stewardship of marine resources and their habitats. MPAs are being identified, established and managed using existing environmental and ecological data that has often been collected for other purposes. Little attempt is being made to identify what the real information requirements are, due to cost of new data collection and the need to expedite MPA creation. It is acknowledged that accurate information on the marine environment, its resources and uses is critical in identifying, evaluating, and managing MPAs. Yet it is accepted practice that management decisions concerning MPAs are being made with limited information, especially with regard to marine property rights.

There are several marine property questions that also need to be answered in the planning stage of a Marine Protected Area (MPA): Who has the rights to issue private rights offshore? Where are the public rights in the near and offshore? How are these rights surveyed and what is their spatial extent? Who maintains this (and other) marine property information? How do you visualize various levels of jurisdiction and administration in the marine environment? etc.

This paper provides answers to some of these questions by outlining how these and other issues were addressed in the proposed Musquash Marine Protected Area in New Brunswick Canada. In this paper, we outline what an MPA is, outline the relationship between marine property rights and MPAs, outline our research on MPA governance, outline the components of a MPA property rights infrastructure, show how this fits into the broader picture of a Canadian marine cadastre, and conclude by outlining the problems encountered in defining this infrastructure.

JS12 Marine Cadastre

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