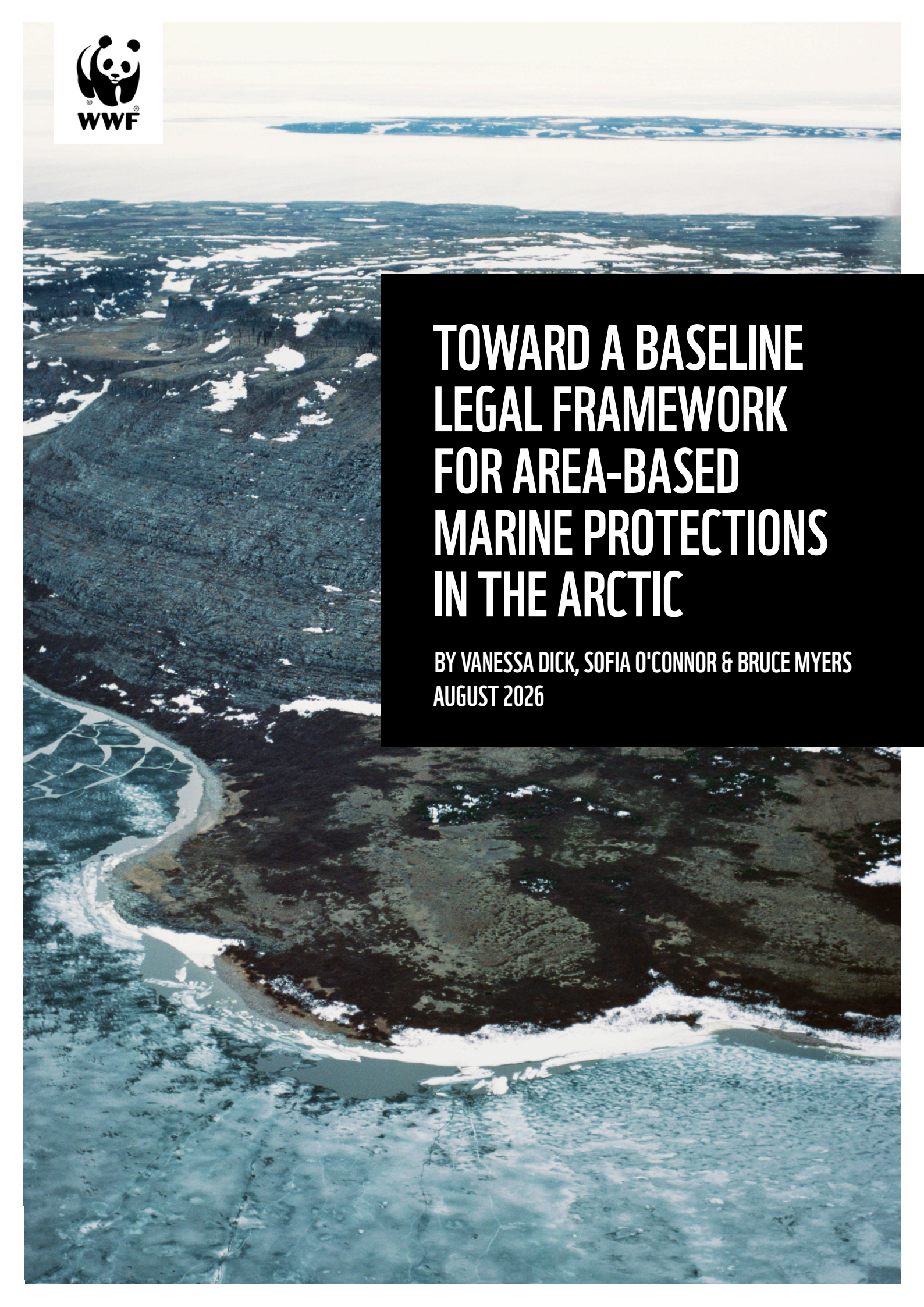


An aerial photograph of an Arctic coastline. The foreground shows a dark, rocky shoreline with patches of snow and ice. A river or stream flows from the land into the water, creating a white, frothy wake. The water is a deep blue-grey color. In the background, a long, low island or peninsula stretches across the horizon under a pale, overcast sky.

TOWARD A BASELINE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR AREA-BASED MARINE PROTECTIONS IN THE ARCTIC

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Purpose of this Document

This discussion draft is intended to support and stimulate conversation on how national legal frameworks can strengthen the effectiveness of area-based marine protections in the Arctic. It does not propose definitive conclusions; rather, it identifies key legal elements, as informed by Arctic themes, and offers preliminary analysis to inform further dialogue and refinement.

The document focuses on area-based marine protections established within national jurisdictions and does not address the high seas or transboundary areas. Within this scope, it examines how legal and policy frameworks can shape conservation outcomes, governance processes, and long-term durability of protections.

Countries rely on legal frameworks to enable effective marine protection, including clear designation processes and criteria, participatory governance, sound management, and consistent enforcement. Where these elements are incomplete or weak, protections may fall short of their intended conservation benefits. This draft explores these considerations in the specific context of the Arctic, recognizing both the region's distinct challenges and the importance of durable, cohesive, well-designed legal structures. It focuses on legal and policy dimensions; questions of implementation, funding, and capacity, while critical, are beyond its scope.

What We Mean by the “Legal Framework”

For our purposes, the term “legal framework” includes legislation/statutes/law enacted by a legislative body (e.g., Act, Law, Code), as well as regulations, orders, decrees, and other legal instruments, with terminology depending on the country and its legal system. Countries often use combinations of these various legal instruments to secure area-based marine protections under law. They might, for example, address definitions and general requirements for the designation, management, and enforcement of protected areas in one (or several) legal instrument(s), then build on certain requirements and aspects of management (such as co-management or creation of an MPA network) in other legal instruments. Some countries adopt various legal instruments over time, then consolidate them into one or several key laws and related legal instruments. A national legal framework for marine protection often evolves unevenly over time and for different purposes and thus may lack internal consistency.

Periodic review and revision of existing legal instruments help ensure that legal requirements align with the country's current policies and commitments (national, bilateral, and international). It can also help update standards and legal definitions, address identified gaps and conflicts, consolidate requirements, streamline or clarify processes to make them more effective, strengthen enforcement, and improve overall benefits to ocean ecosystems.

What We Mean by the “Baseline” for the Arctic

This document presents a set of basic legal elements that, when present in the legal framework and informed by a set of Arctic-specific themes, can facilitate effective designation, management, and enforcement of area-based marine protections in the Arctic. The baseline was developed by the authors based on desk research, experience working in the area of marine protection and governance, and consultation with WWF experts.

This “baseline” represents a menu of options, rather than a prescriptive list. This is because one size does not fit all. As the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has explained, “the legislative approach appropriate for a particular country should be responsive to its international obligations, the scientific and management needs of the current and envisioned [marine protected area] system, and the existing policy framework and institutional capacity.”

What We Mean by “Area-Based Marine Protections”

This baseline focuses on two broad categories of area-based marine protections: marine protected areas (MPAs) and what are known as marine “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs).

MPAs

The term “protected area,” introduced in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), was later more fully defined and explained by IUCN as “a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.” Protected areas can exist on land or water. Areas in the marine environment are often referred to as marine protected areas. Countries often have their own legal definitions of protected areas (for land and water) and may have separate definitions for MPAs. Countries’ definitions often address an area’s purpose, level of protection, and uses. Protected areas can vary widely by name (e.g., marine park, marine reserve, wildlife protected area, conservation area, etc.) and may address protection of species and ecosystems, protection of areas of Indigenous and customary use, protection of cultural and historical resources, and various other conservation purposes.

Marine OECMs

The CBD’s Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) refers to “other effective area-based conservation measures.” An OECM is “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values.” Thus, OECMs provide conservation benefits to marine ecosystems.

Some examples include: permanent or long-term fisheries closure areas designed to protect species or ecosystems; connectivity areas between protected areas; shipwreck areas; and areas managed by Indigenous Peoples where such areas, while not recognized as MPAs, have low levels of use and do not degrade biodiversity.

A key distinction between a protected area and an OECM is that while a protected area “must have a primary conservation objective,” an OECM need not. Instead, “OECMs may be managed for many different objectives” (including with conservation as a primary or secondary objective), yet “they must deliver effective conservation.”

Baseline Legal Framework Elements, Arctic Themes, and Analysis

The discussion that follows is structured around two complementary components. First, it identifies a set of baseline legal framework elements commonly found in effective systems for area-based marine protection. Second, it highlights a set of cross-cutting Arctic themes that reflect the specific ecological, social, and governance conditions in the Arctic. While not necessarily unique to the Arctic, these themes (e.g., climate change) are of particular importance in the Arctic.

The sections that follow detail these baseline elements within the context of the proposed Arctic themes, examining in turn how they may be designed and implemented to address Arctic-specific conditions. In this way, the analysis moves beyond a general framework that may be applied anywhere in the world and explores how legal approaches should be adapted to improve effectiveness in the Arctic.

Baseline Legal Framework Elements for the Arctic

The 13 baseline legal framework elements for area-based marine protection in the Arctic are summarized in Table 1. These elements reflect widely recognized components of effective legal frameworks. While these elements are not unique to the Arctic, they provide a foundation for analyzing how legal systems can be designed and adapted to address Arctic-specific conditions.

Table 1. Summary of Baseline Legal Framework Elements for Area-Based Marine Protection in the Arctic

No.	Baseline Legal Framework Element	Significance of Element
1	Objective	Sets forth governmental (i.e., legislative or administrative) goals
2	Guiding principles	Establishes scientific, social, and policy principles
3	Institutional authority	Clarifies institutional authority and roles

4	Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations	Clarifies roles and secures authority of Indigenous Peoples, and groups with traditional and customary rights to marine resources
5	Area designation	Provides for formal legal designation of area
6	MPA network	Supports a framework for holistic network of marine area protections
7	Area management	Provides for on-the-water management of area
8	Monitoring & evaluation	Allows for collecting data and assessing effectiveness of conservation measures within area
9	Enforcement	Supports compliance with area's prohibitions and restrictions
10	Sustainable financing	Addresses sustainable funding for area management
11	Definitions (Interpretation)	Ensures accuracy of and consistency among legal terms
12	Application/scope	Establishes legal coverage (e.g., with respect to maritime zones)
13	Harmonization	Ensures alignment with domestic and international requirements/commitments

This “baker’s dozen” of baseline legal elements may be reflected in a single legal instrument or distributed across multiple instruments, depending on a country’s legal framework. Where these elements are clearly established and effectively implemented, they can support robust, coherent, and durable area-based marine protection. Conversely, gaps or inconsistencies across these elements may result in fragmented or ineffective protection, increasing both management challenges and legal risk.

While these elements are broadly applicable across jurisdictions, their effectiveness in the Arctic depends on how they are designed and implemented in light of Arctic-specific conditions. Thus, it is important to further consider the extent to which these elements are capable of addressing Arctic thematic concerns.

Arctic Themes

We have identified seven themes that are of particular importance in the Arctic context:

- Unique Arctic ecosystems & features;
- Climate change;
- Industrial pressures – particularly fishing and shipping;
- Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations;
- Intra-governmental coordination;
- Minimum protection standards for areas; and
- Pan-Arctic governance & processes.

These themes, which were identified through discussions with WWF experts, are cross-cutting, with many related to multiple baseline legal elements. If a country's legal framework fails to address these themes, it could be challenging to effectively address Arctic marine area protection needs.

Next, we discuss these themes in the context of reviewing each of the 13 baseline legal elements.

1. Objective

WHAT IT IS

The stated purpose of the legal instrument, generally part of the country's statutes/acts/laws.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legal frameworks often include objectives related to biodiversity conservation, ecosystem protection, sustainable use, and protection of cultural heritage, including Indigenous rights.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Objectives may need to explicitly address a context or circumstance unique to the Arctic, such as rapid environmental changes and climate dynamics, ice-dependent ecosystems, or Indigenous rights, livelihoods, and knowledge systems. Explicitly embedding these considerations in legal objectives can help ensure that downstream decisions (designation, management, enforcement) are aligned with Arctic realities.

2. Guiding Principles

WHAT IT IS

A set of principles, generally included in the country's statutes/acts/codes, that guide institutional authorities with regard to the designation, management, monitoring, and enforcement of the areas, and further guide the courts as they interpret the law.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legal frameworks often include guiding principles that address ways to maximize conservation benefits and effectiveness of the areas (e.g., ecosystem approach, precautionary principle, polluter pays, participatory management, etc.).

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Some guiding principles, including the precautionary principle and taking an ecosystem-scale approach, are of particular importance in the Arctic.

3. Institutional Authority

WHAT IT IS

Identification of one or more entities that have been assigned power or authority related to marine protection, such as area designation, management, monitoring, and enforcement, with regard to MPAs and/or OECMs. There may be different institutional authorities with powers over different types of MPAs and OECMs (e.g., national parks vs. fisheries reserves vs. community conservation areas).

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Identification of the lead Agency/Ministry or other body responsible for area-based marine protection.
 - Specific powers related to designation, management, monitoring, and enforcement are generally addressed in the related provisions for those elements.
- Designation of relevant committees and advisory bodies, with provisions describing purposes, functions, membership, meeting requirements, and other operational aspects.
- Others involved (local governments, communities, Indigenous Peoples, conservation organizations), with provisions describing their roles, powers, and jurisdiction.
 - National/federal government may have powers over national/federal waters; state or local governments over state or local/municipal waters.
 - Laws sometimes allow non-governmental entities to participate in management (see “co-management”).

- Laws sometimes allow community members to participate in co-management, surveillance, and enforcement.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Intra-governmental coordination: inter-ministerial/cross-sectoral coordination can help limit or ban conflicting ocean uses, address zoning, establish barriers, resolve inter-agency conflicts, and coordinate on climate change – though mandatory unanimous inter-ministerial consultations can delay or prevent creation of protected areas.
 - Coordination across institutional authorities can help protect ocean biodiversity through combined data on climate impacts, biodiversity, harmful activities, and pollution.
- Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations: the role of Indigenous communities in designating and managing MPAs and OECMs is receiving increased attention, including the creation of Indigenous protected areas, advisory boards that elevate Indigenous voices above general stakeholder consultation, and the designation of Indigenous communities as co-managers or institutional authorities.

4. Indigenous, Traditional, & Customary Considerations

WHAT IT IS

Clarifies roles and secures authority of Indigenous Peoples and other groups with traditional and customary rights to marine resources as they relate to marine area protections. In the Arctic, addressing this element is particularly important to protect and secure these communities' rights, ensure long-standing relationships with and dependence on marine resources are adequately protected, and empower the protection and stewardship of marine resources.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Ties Indigenous Peoples have to marine resources, including historical, traditional, cultural, and religious ties, and dependence on marine resources for livelihoods.
- Rights to marine resources (access, withdrawal/use, management rights, etc.).
 - Customary rights.
 - Rights recognized in formal legal instruments, including agreements with governmental entities.
- Existing role in area-based marine protections (temporary or permanent).
- Ways to support – through legislation – existing or desired approaches and needs (e.g., financial support, technology, equipment).
- Ways to facilitate – through legislation – community-led processes and community-initiated, community-managed protected areas.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Historical and on-going stewardship: Arctic Indigenous Peoples have served as stewards of the marine environment since time immemorial through systems of knowledge, governance, and sustainable use that have maintained marine ecosystems and biodiversity. Legislation can recognize and support this enduring stewardship role as a foundation for effective marine protection.

Governance and co-management: Building on the institutional approaches identified under Element 3 – Institutional Authority, legislation can recognize Indigenous communities as co-managers or institutional authorities, establish Indigenous protected areas where appropriate, and create advisory bodies or other governance mechanisms that elevate Indigenous leadership beyond general stakeholder consultation in the designation, management, monitoring, and enforcement of MPAs and OECMs.

5. Area Designation

WHAT IT IS

Establishes the legal authority, criteria, and process for formally designating MPAs and marine OECMs. Different types of MPAs and OECMs may have their own distinct authorities, criteria, and processes for designation.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The types of MPAs and OECMs that may be designated, including their legal definitions.
- The authority or authorities responsible for designation, which may vary by type of area or jurisdiction.
- The criteria that areas must meet for designation (e.g., ecological significance, representativeness, vulnerability, connectivity, significance to Indigenous Peoples).
 - Different types of areas may have different designation criteria, including for boundaries; some areas can be designated only as part of an existing network.
- The procedural requirements for designation, including consultation, review, and approval processes (which may vary by area type).
- Mechanisms for public, stakeholder, and rights-holder participation, including nomination procedures where applicable.
 - Some laws allow specific authorities, entities, Indigenous community members, other groups, or the public generally to nominate areas for designation.
- Requirements for clearly defining and demarcating geographic boundaries.
- Clear and transparent designation processes can help ensure legitimacy, scientific credibility, and legal durability of protected areas.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Climate change: dynamic ecosystems and shifting species distributions, which may require flexible or adaptive approaches (e.g., dynamic ocean management, or DOM) and legal mechanisms to define and/or adjust boundaries as needed.
- Unique Arctic ecosystems & features: the importance of sea ice and surface-dependent ecological features, which may not be captured by traditional area-based criteria but are critical to Arctic biodiversity.
- Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations: legal mechanisms that facilitate community-initiated designation processes, and the need to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and governance systems early and meaningfully, including in identifying candidate areas and defining conservation objectives.
- Industrial pressures: increasing pressures, particularly from shipping and fisheries in newly accessible areas, which may heighten the urgency of timely designation while complicating decision-making.
- Intra-governmental coordination: the role of cross-sectoral coordination, as designation decisions may intersect with sectoral decision-making on shipping, fisheries, and resource development.
- Minimum protection standards: opportunities to embed or reference minimum protection standards at the time of designation, helping avoid creation of areas with weak or unclear conservation measures.
- Pan-Arctic governance & processes: pan-Arctic ecological scales, shared data platforms, protected areas in neighboring Arctic countries, regional and transboundary protected areas, and high seas protected areas relevant to designating new domestic areas.

6. MPA Network

WHAT IT IS

Network created for the relevant areas. Some countries have MPA networks to maximize ecosystem benefits, including biodiversity conservation and habitat protection, and to accommodate species movement among areas; OECMs can be components of MPA networks.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Purpose and location of the MPA network.
- Types of areas that may or must be part of the network.
 - Sometimes certain types of areas can be designated only as part of the MPA network.

- Whether all relevant areas must form part of the network or may be designated independently of it, and the consequences that follow.
- Criteria that areas must meet to join the network, and the process for joining.
- Management of areas within the network.
 - Whether management of network areas differs from areas outside the network, and whether management changes once an area joins.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations: whether Indigenous protected areas or areas designated/managed by other groups with traditional and/or customary rights must become part of the MPA network or may be designated independently, and whether such areas keep or change their management structure once part of the network.

7. Area Management

WHAT IT IS

Addresses management authority and various other aspects of management for MPAs and/or OECMs. This element is critical, as an unmanaged area – like one that lacks enforcement – risks becoming an ineffective “paper park.”

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Management authorities (entities that manage MPAs and OECMs) and their management powers; different entities may have authority over different types of areas.
- Co-management (if applicable), including:
 - The type(s) of co-management approach(es) used (e.g., co-management council/committee, agreements, or plans) for specific area types.
 - The types of entities and groups that may participate and qualifications required (certification, registration, residency, membership, etc.) – often conservation organizations, rights holders, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and small-scale fishers.
 - The process government uses to decide which qualified entities/groups may engage in co-management (e.g., application submission and review).
 - Support the government provides to co-managers, including financial support, training, and technology.
- A management plan, including required contents, preparation criteria, procedural requirements for preparation/approval, and periodic review based on monitoring and evaluation.
- Zoning – different zones and levels of protection within the area, and authorized/prohibited activities for each zone.
- Prohibited and authorized activities within a specific type of designated area.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations: the role of Indigenous communities and other rights-holding groups in management, including as co-managers and participants in preparing co-management plans (sometimes ecotourism activities are allowed within areas that benefit Indigenous Peoples and local communities).
- Unique Arctic ecosystems & features: protecting sea ice and surface features from harmful ocean activities through effective management – prohibiting harmful activities, establishing authorized-activity and buffer zones, and applying the precautionary principle.
- Industrial pressures – particularly fishing and shipping: zoning to designate shipping routes and zones for activities consistent with conservation objectives (e.g., community subsistence and small-scale fishing zones); prohibited/authorized activities that allow some fishing types and ban others; regulating shipping via vessel type, speed, distance, lanes, and traffic separation schemes.
- Intra-governmental coordination: mechanisms to avoid and resolve conflicts among activities governed by different agencies, including inter-agency consultations, use of zones and prohibited activities, and aligning regulated activities (such as fishing) with conservation objectives.

8. Monitoring & Evaluation

WHAT IT IS

Addresses the legal authority, requirements, and processes for monitoring ecological and management conditions within MPAs and OECMs, and for evaluating their effectiveness over time.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The authorities responsible for monitoring and evaluation, which may vary by area type.
- The powers granted to those authorities to collect data and assess conditions.
- Requirements for data collection, management, and reporting.
- The involvement of other entities, such as scientific institutions, local communities, or non-governmental organizations.
- The use of monitoring results to inform adaptive management, including periodic review and revision of management measures.
- The use of technology (e.g., remote sensing, vessel tracking) to support monitoring and compliance.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Climate change and unique Arctic ecosystems & features: rapid environmental change – warming, sea ice loss, shifting ecosystems – increases the need for continuous, responsive monitoring and DOM; significant data gaps and baseline limitations can make it difficult to assess trends without sustained investment; legal mechanisms are needed that enable DOM and adaptive management, including adjusting measures or boundaries in response to new information.
- Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations: the importance of integrating Indigenous knowledge systems alongside scientific data to improve understanding of ecosystem changes and long-term patterns.
- Pan-Arctic governance & processes: the potential for pan-Arctic data sharing and coordination across national boundaries to better understand large-scale ecological changes and cumulative impacts.
 - Coordination among governments can help protect ocean biodiversity through combined data on climate impacts, biodiversity, harmful activities, and pollution.
- Intra-governmental coordination and pan-Arctic governance & processes: the use of remote and emerging technologies (e.g., satellite monitoring, autonomous systems), which may be particularly important in remote and logistically challenging Arctic environments.

9. Enforcement

WHAT IT IS

Provisions related to offenses and penalties, as well as surveillance and law enforcement with respect to MPAs and OECMs.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The types of offenses and penalties applicable within the area.
 - Increasingly, this may include fixed-fine systems (“ticketing”) to facilitate enforcement of minor infractions.
 - Laws often address corporate liability, repeat offenders, and continuing offenses.
 - Laws may address civil or criminal liability for damages done to natural resources.
- Authorized officers, their qualifications, and enforcement powers.
- Adjudication of violations and collection/use of evidence in court.
 - This may include evidentiary presumptions that facilitate on-the-water enforcement.

- The use of technology – authorized types, purpose and methods of use, authorized parties and their responsibilities, information collection/processing/management, and approaches to privacy concerns.
- Participation of community members, entities, and groups authorized to engage in enforcement activities, and requirements they must meet (e.g., training and certification).
- Support the government provides to authorized entities and groups (training, technology, financial support).

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Indigenous, traditional, & customary considerations: participation of Indigenous community members and other groups with traditional and customary rights in enforcement tasks, including surveillance of the areas.

10. Sustainable Financing

WHAT IT IS

Continuous streams of funding that facilitate effective management, monitoring, and enforcement of an area, along with acceptable sources and uses of funding.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Mechanism(s) used to ensure sustainable financing of MPAs and/or OECMs, if applicable.
 - Countries sometimes create special mechanisms (e.g., environmental or conservation funds) to ensure continuous funding streams.
- Information about the mechanism – whether it already exists or is being created by the law, how it will function, and the body that will operate the fund (if applicable).
- Sources of funds allocated for the area's needs (e.g., taxes, donations, activity fees, penalties for violations).
- Use and management of funds by the area.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

No distinct Arctic-specific considerations are identified for this element in the current draft.

11. Definitions (Interpretation)

WHAT IT IS

Definitions used in the context of area-based marine protections.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Clear and consistent definitions of all relevant terms throughout the various legal instruments that compose the country's legislative framework.
- The need to avoid conflicting legal terminology.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

No distinct Arctic-specific considerations are identified for this element in the current draft.

12. Application/Scope

WHAT IT IS

Application of the law (generally part of the country's statutes/acts/codes) within the country's jurisdiction – where, to what, and to whom the law applies.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legal frameworks often include provisions clarifying the application of the law within the country's entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

No distinct Arctic-specific considerations are identified for this element in the current draft.

13. Harmonization

WHAT IT IS

Addresses harmonization between the area-based marine protection legal framework and other relevant legal frameworks, including international and regional conventions, bilateral and regional agreements, and national, sub-national, and local legislation. Harmonization provisions are generally part of the country's statutes/acts/laws.

CORE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Alignment with relevant international conventions.
 - E.g., defining maritime zones and making extended continental shelf claims in accordance with UNCLOS.
 - E.g., aligning with new environmental standards under the High Seas (BBNJ) Treaty.
- Alignment with relevant bilateral agreements (if applicable).
 - E.g., agreements relating to environmental standards, prohibited activities, and creation of protected areas aligned with those in a neighboring country's waters.
- Alignment with regional frameworks (such as regional fisheries management organizations, or RFMOs) and agreements.
- Alignment with national, sub-national, and local legal frameworks.
 - Federal nations typically have state/provincial-level regimes providing a layer of area-based marine protection separate from the national layer.

ARCTIC-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Pan-Arctic governance & processes: Alignment of domestic legislation with existing international law, regional and bilateral agreements, and other regional commitments. Regional cooperation can support area-based marine protection and management at ecological scales that transcend political and jurisdictional boundaries, helping to conserve interconnected ecosystems and shared species.

Conclusion

This discussion draft is intended as a starting point for dialogue on the legal foundations needed to support effective area-based marine protection in the Arctic. The baseline legal framework elements and Arctic-specific themes presented here are not intended to prescribe a single model. Rather, they are offered as a practical framework for examining existing legal systems, identifying strengths and gaps, and considering how legal frameworks can better support durable conservation outcomes under rapidly changing Arctic conditions.

As governments, Indigenous Peoples, practitioners, researchers, and other stakeholders continue to advance area-based marine protection in the Arctic, we invite them to consider what legal provisions are necessary to achieve effective, enduring protection. Which legal elements are essential? How should they be adapted to reflect Arctic ecosystems, Indigenous stewardship and governance, climate change, and the need for cooperation across jurisdictions and ecological boundaries? We hope this discussion draft provides a useful foundation for those conversations and contributes to the continued evolution of legal frameworks that are fit for purpose in the Arctic.

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The contents of this report, including any errors or omissions, are solely the responsibility of the authors. The authors welcome corrections and additions. This document is an educational resource, and nothing contained herein is intended to serve as legal advice.

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SUPPORTING HEALTHY VIABLE POPULATIONS OF
WILD SPECIES AND BENEFITING THE WELL-BEING OF
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