



Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast

Regional Research Statement and Guidelines

November 2024

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Research Statement

MaPP implements world-leading marine plans for ocean conservation, economic sustainability, and community and ecological wellbeing in the Northern Shelf Bioregion of the Pacific Coast, through collaborative governance, a Regional Action Framework, four [marine plans](#) implemented at the sub-regional level, and community-based research partnerships. MaPP's approach to Indigenous and western research spans the natural and environmental sciences, engineering, social sciences, humanities and health. This whole-systems research approach bridges knowledge systems, embraces participatory approaches to knowledge development, exchange and transfer, and establishes long-term, place-based research capacity within communities for the health and wellbeing of all our relations.

Research Guidelines

These guidelines are intended for researchers who are proposing to do collaborative research in the MaPP [study area](#). However, where any proposed research takes place in First Nation territories, MaPP Partners request researchers to engage early and often, share information and develop working relationships with the First Nation(s). MaPP Partners welcome research collaborations with external partners at the co-creation stage, where the research being proposed aligns with ecosystem-based management principles and MaPP Partner priorities.

1. Introduction

a. MaPP Ecosystem-Based Blueprint

Building on the world-celebrated and landmark conservation and land use agreements for the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii, 17 First Nations and the Province of British Columbia (collectively the MaPP Partners) collaboratively developed the first large-scale marine planning initiative in B.C., known as the Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (MaPP). Four MaPP sub-regional marine plans and a Regional Action Framework were endorsed by First Nations leadership and B.C. Cabinet ministers in April of 2015, laying out an ecosystem-based blueprint for advancing the protection of oceans, informing growth of the 'blue economy', and supporting the resiliency of coastal B.C.'s rural communities. The plans are being implemented at the sub-regional level and focus on uses and activities within Provincial and First Nation government jurisdictions and mandates and provide for more efficient engagement in trilateral discussions with Canada in support of related interests.

b. Ecosystem-Based Management Framework and Principles

The MaPP initiative uses western, local and Indigenous scientific knowledge and research to advance Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) for healthy ecosystems, sustainable uses and delivery of ecosystem services to human communities. This marine EBM framework is consistent with the holistic and integrated approach to knowledge and resource management that First Nations on the North Pacific Coast have practiced for millennia. Guided by EBM Principles, MaPP research:

1. Seeks to ensure ecological integrity.
2. Includes human well-being.
3. Is precautionary.
4. Is adaptive.
5. Includes the assessment of cumulative effects.
6. Is equitable, collaborative, inclusive and participatory.
7. Respects Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal titles and treaty rights.
8. Is area-based.
9. Is integrated.
10. Is based on science and on wise counsel.
11. Is transparent.
12. Is balanced and reciprocal.

c. Selected Examples of MaPP Research Projects, Methods, Outputs

● Community-based monitoring

[Regional Kelp Monitoring on the North Pacific Coast: A Community-Based Monitoring Initiative to Inform Fisheries Habitat Conservation, Climate Resilience and Marine Spatial Planning](#)

● Collaborative Research

Cumulative Effects: [A framework for the assessment and management of cumulative effects on the North Pacific Coast](#)

[North Coast Cumulative Effect Program](#)

Northern Shelf Bioregion Climate Change Assessment: <https://northernshelf.docu.li/>

● Capacity Development

Regional Kelp Monitoring Training, including [training videos](#) and a [kelp monitoring methods protocol](#) document.

● Knowledge Exchange

IMPAC5 Conference Presentations

[IMPAC3 Conference Presentations](#)

Coastal Zone Canada Conference

Marine Policy Papers

● Research for Health and Wellbeing

Research into the biological carrying capacity of shellfish and aquatic plants aquaculture is shaping responsible development on Haida Gwaii, and comprehensive market analyses and

pilot grow-out projects for shellfish aquaculture and [kelp aquaculture in North Vancouver Island](#) are testing the feasibility of new products in new places. The results of this work are expected to reduce the financial risk for future businesses and set up First Nations and other coastal communities for success.

- [Research Snapshots](#)

Stories of selected research efforts in the MaPP region

2. Principles for Engaging in Collaborative Research with MaPP Partners

a. Who to Contact

Contact the First Nation(s) in whose territory your proposed collaborative research takes place and copy the MaPP Regional Projects Coordination team at info@mappocean.org. Before approaching a First Nation, be sure you have familiarized yourself with the respective Nations' research priorities, protocols and contacts. All MaPP First Nations have websites describing their culture, history, and governance, and many have information about research priorities. See section 2b: MaPP First Nation Research Guidance for links to each Nations' websites and the appropriate contacts and documentation.

Prepare a plain-language concept note with acronyms defined (not more than two pages) that describes your proposed research, and share the following: how your research expertise aligns with the First Nation's identified research priorities, what you are asking for, the level of support you are proposing to provide, potential methodologies if known at this stage of the project, what the intended outcomes will be, your proposed study area, other Nations/organizations potentially involved in the research, and how you propose to co-create the research project and share the results.

The proposed collaborative research should not occur until researchers have made meaningful contact with Nation(s).

b. Research Guidance from MaPP First Nations

This is a directory of MaPP First Nation Partner links to key contacts and research guidance for those First Nations that have established research guidance and protocols. Please follow the recommendations listed for any Nations' territories in which you would like to consider doing research, including for projects conducted through MaPP and/or with multiple Nations. Additional data sovereignty principles may apply, and respective First Nations will be able to provide more information.

Should your research include work in the broader MaPP subregion (Haida Gwaii, North Coast, Central Coast, or North Vancouver Island) and/or if you are uncertain where your work will take place within the subregion, please contact the respective subregional coordinating body:

- **North Coast:** [North Coast-Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society](#)
- **Haida Gwaii:** [Council of the Haida Nation Marine Planning](#)
[Council of the Haida Nation Research and Film Application](#)
- **Central Coast:** [Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance](#)
- **North Vancouver Island:** [Nanwakolas Council](#)

Should your research include the full MaPP Region, and/or you are uncertain where your work will take place regionally, please contact the MaPP Regional Projects Coordination team at info@mappocean.org

3. Current Regional Research Priorities

MaPP's collaborations with academia, industry, governments, civil society organizations, external Indigenous Nations and funders has been essential to our applied research in the Northern Shelf Bioregion. We especially welcome discussion on research interests aligned with the following:

- European Green Crab Response Management
- Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge Impacts on Cultural, Archeological and Harvesting Sites
- Eelgrass Monitoring
- Kelp Monitoring and Restoration

Further regional research priorities will be added here when identified and agreed by MaPP Partners.

4. Reading Recommendations

If you have not already done so, please read and understand the following documents (*updated August 2025*):

1. The First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP): <https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training>
2. Tri-council policy on research ethics - Chapter 9 - Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2018_chapter9-chapitre9.html
3. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA): <https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/19044>
4. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP): https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf
5. CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance: [Overview of the CARE Principles](#)