



TRANSATLANTIC-PLATFORM FOR ACTION ON THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT (T-PAGE)

TRANSATLANTIC CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE ON MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

**15 - 16 May 2008
Brussels, Belgium**

Conference Purpose

IEEP and our US partner, the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) are jointly implementing a programme of activities of cooperative research and analysis of public policies on climate change and sustainable energy systems and ocean management (with a special emphasis on the potential contribution of marine protected areas). These activities aim to identify areas of convergence and divergence in EU and US approaches and key issues for political debate. IEEP and NRDC aim to facilitate a fruitful exchange of ideas on these topics between environmental NGOs and other interested civil society organisations in the EU and US.

In line with these considerations, IEEP and NRDC will be holding a conference in Brussels which aims to facilitate a transatlantic political dialogue and improve understanding of EU and US policies and legislation relating to marine protected areas (MPAs). The audience for this conference will mainly include non-governmental representatives as well as academia, industry, and research institutes. Members of the European Parliament, Commission officials and other governmental representatives will also be invited to participate. Additionally, key representatives from the EU and US will be invited to speak at this event.

The conference will build on the outcomes of two teleconferences hosted under the Transatlantic Platform for Action on the Global Environment (T-PAGE) project and will focus on progress at the EU and US level towards meeting the CBD target of establishing a network of marine protected areas by 2010. The conference in Brussels will be a one-day event and will be preceded by a workshop for US and EU experts who have been involved in the planning and implementation of MPAs at a national/Member State level in the US and EU.

The conference will comprise of thematic sessions targeting key aspects of the MPA process identified during the last two teleconferences. These will include:

- The mechanisms for involvement of partners in the MPA process

- Both top-down and bottom-up approaches in the MPA implementation process, and differences between coastal MPAs and high seas MPAs regarding these approaches
- The link between fisheries management and nature conservation within MPAs
- The high seas MPAs and MPAs network, the current political support for high seas marine protected areas. What is the way forward?
- Multi-dimensional objectives for MPAs: socioeconomics, cultural heritage, education, etc.
- Barriers to meeting the 2010 target for an MPA network

Outcomes of the conference will include a report which will be widely distributed throughout the EU and US using IEEP and NRDC's extensive network of contacts in their respective regions. Other less tangible, but nonetheless important outcomes will include the sharing of best practice in the establishment and development of networks of MPAs. A key conference outcome will be a list of recommendations for further action required by the US, the EU and its Member States in order to meet the 2010 target. The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD will be held in Bonn, Germany one week after the T-PAGE conference. Outcomes of the T-PAGE conference will therefore aim to nourish the debate on MPAs within the context of the COP-9 meeting and similar future events.

For further information on T-PAGE, the May conference on MPAs, previous teleconferences on MPAs or to download papers on MPAs, please visit: <http://www.ieep.eu/projectminisites/t-page/index.php>

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