

northern abalone scenarios are of potentially closed populations (e.g., perhaps Kunghit Island populations are separated from Langara Island populations) and limited distance larval dispersal (e.g., connectivity between Houston Stewart Channel and Scaang Gwaii populations). Recruitment of red sea urchins in northern California has now been linked to relaxation of winds that induce upwelling (Morgan *et al.* 2000). This enabled larval delivery from offshore areas to coastal areas back across the continental shelf. There are insufficient data to link this process driving spatial recruitment patterns to fishable adult abundance (Morgan *et al.* 2000), but this will come.

The fecundity of all species in Table 30 is great. Females of all species except prawns and crabs produce eggs by the million each season and most have the high-risk strategy of external fertilization of broadcasted gametes in the water column. For example, a female northern abalone of 135 mm shell length was estimated capable of producing 7.8 million eggs annually (Campbell *et al.* 1992). Female geoduck have a dramatic fecundity, producing hundreds of millions of eggs over an active reproductive life perhaps exceeding a century. There is, therefore, likely no shortage of juveniles of these species, but few larvae survive to successfully settle, because larvae “... *lead transitory lives of great risk and grave uncertainty*” (Rumrill 1990).

Concerns of ecosystem-related effects of harvest of dense shellfish populations are beginning to contribute to management decision-making. For example, a potential goose barnacle fishery has set a precedent as the first species to be closed by DFO Pacific coast-wide (in 1999), solely for reasons of potential ecosystem impacts of harvesting. The concern was that harvesting the barnacle clumps, along with California mussel – the other community dominant,

could damage the essential microhabitat that goose barnacles and California mussels provide for ≈300 other species (Jamieson *et al.* 1999; Schmidt 1999; Jamieson and Levings 2001). This is a manifestation of a broadening fisheries mandate for conservation beyond the well-being of single species. Further, this underscores the need for ecosystem (not species) reference points for evaluating what are acceptable levels of ecosystem impacts of fisheries (Jamieson and Levings 2001). Ecosystem-based fisheries management will be an increasing influence in regional marine conservation and an opportunity for deepening inter-agency cooperation.

Case Study: Northern Abalone

Northern abalone cannot currently be fished legally by anyone, and the species’ cultural, species-at-risk and political profile is high (Neis *et al.* 2000). Further, there is high black market value stimulating poaching (Campbell 2000). The Gwaii Haanas area is a major stronghold for this “threatened” species and, therefore, a strategic opportunity is at hand to work with partners in using Gwaii Haanas for long-term northern abalone restoration in keeping with Parks Canada policy (Parks Canada 1994, subsection 3.1.2). Provided that there is consensus and clarity on the population objectives for northern abalone, the species is well suited for inclusion in marine area protection (Jamieson 2000).

The model of local, sub-populations linked by larval dispersal into genetically distinct metapopulations is robust for abalone species (Keesing and Baker 1998). Northern abalone (and red sea urchin) are exemplary in their spatially persistent clumping. Abalone restoration is certainly amenable to a range of refugia-based strategies (Davis 2000). Understanding the dynamics of clump size, density and between-clump proximity and connectivity will be central

to sustainable management (Quinn *et al.* 1993; Shepherd and Brown 1993). Further, being a kelp forest-associated species, northern abalone is a useful surrogate for exploring implementation of area-based conservation. Finally, we already know that northern abalone respond well to area protection by increasing in density, average body size and reproductive output in British Columbia refugia (Wallace 1999).

Abalone can be affected by other shellfish species where there are ecological or behavioural interactions between them. In their worldwide review, Andrew and MacDiarmid (1999) reported that high densities of sea urchins may have a negative effect on abalone populations. This may be related to two species competing for the same sea weed food supplies. Perhaps a fishery for one species could make more food available for adults of the other species? However, in both California (Rogers-Bennett and Pearse 2001) and South Africa (Mayfield and Branch 2000), the spine canopies of adult sea urchins provide a refuge for young abalone. The California study suggested that red sea urchin fishing could decrease important hiding habitat for abalone species. The South African study suggested that a lobster (sea urchin predator) fishery would decrease predation pressure on the sea urchins, thus increasing the amount of hiding (sea urchin spine canopy) habitat for abalone. In other words, abalone can be involved in cascading effects between different shellfish species according to which species is locally fished. The multispecies ecosystem approach, therefore, needs to be used in both fisheries and marine area management.

Numerous studies are now available demonstrating the benefits to shellfish populations provided by protected areas mentioned previously. A report on the genetic characteristics of Haida Gwaii

northern abalone populations collected from sites throughout the archipelago is in preparation (R. Withler, DFO, *personal communication*). Such information can reveal the distinctiveness of abalone populations (Withler 2000). Local information could provide insights on the appropriate spatial scale for northern abalone stock rebuilding and area conservation efforts. The application of genetic knowledge to marine area-ecosystem conservation and fishery management is underutilized (Policansky and Magnuson 1998). Clearly, genetics studies have tremendous potential in future marine area conservation science.

The following are examples of topics on northern abalone that could be explored:

- *would protecting northern abalone habitat areas lead to enhanced larval settlement in adjacent (fishable) areas?* – The issue of net export of recruits from protected areas to adjacent areas is the key unanswered science question in marine area conservation. Science has not yet demonstrated this potential benefit (NRC 2001) and this will be very important in consultations with the fishery sector (Jamieson and Levings 2001);
- *can fisheries biology reference points be applied to northern abalone population restoration?* – for example, this could relate to comparing total egg production of a population of individuals permitted to grow to their full potential size with that of the proportion of a population fished (theoretically) above the old legal size limit [100 mm shell length for northern abalone pre-1990 closure] and asking how does this relate to differences in recruitment success? (Shepherd and Baker 1998);

- *what is the spatial scale of larval source/sink dynamics of northern abalone metapopulations?* – this relates to refugia sizes [sufficient densities to maintain adequate fertilization, larval production and recruitment], shapes [in order to maximize kelp forest habitat inclusion], locations [species' optimal habitat criteria and distance between sub-populations] and connectedness [sub-population linkage by larval transport by nearshore oceanographic processes and according to different larval residence times in the plankton] (Tegner 1993);
- *can northern abalone genetic studies provide insight into the connectedness between sub-populations in Haida Gwaii or Gwaii Haanas?* - this could enable spacing no-take northern abalone areas within Gwaii Haanas based on known genetic connectivity between those sub-populations; and
- *do the spine canopies of red sea urchins provide important hiding spaces for young northern abalone?* - this could link abalone well-being to red sea urchin fisheries effects.

Case Study: Geoduck Clam

Geoduck have great commercial importance in Gwaii Haanas and will be a key linking species between the fishery sector and all other stakeholders. There is increasing focus on the engagement of the British Columbia fishery sector into marine area conservation (Burrows 2000; Symington and Jessen 2001). Undisturbed geoduck populations consist of dense populations of old clams whose beds are presumably stable over long periods and whose biomass likely dominates the infauna of these sand bed ecosystems. Because this species is so important commercially, and because its life-history (excluding stock assessment) is

not well understood for the Haida Gwaii region, geoduck are an important conservation area science target for better biological understanding.

The following are relevant topic areas in early geoduck life-history applicable to Haida Gwaii conservation-related science:

- *would protecting geoduck habitat areas lead to enhanced larval settlement in adjacent (fishable) areas?*
- *what is the spatial scale of larval source/sink dynamics between geoduck sub-populations within their regional metapopulation?*
- *how does fishing affect the diversity and abundance of other species in the fished area?*
- *what are the impacts of fishing on juvenile geoduck?* – relates fishing impacts to unearthed larvae or juveniles being eaten by opportunistic predators (not unlike predation following gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*) bottom-feeding (Oliver and Slattery 1985)) and exacerbated by the possibility that geoduck larvae are alleged to settle near (attracted to?) adults;
- *what is the importance of the refuge for geoduck that live below safe, compressed air diving depths (>30 m) to maintaining populations at fishable depths?* – relates to whether shallow-water refugia are needed if there already are refugia (at depth) for the unfishable proportion of the population; and
- *does fishing improve larval geoduck settlement opportunities in crowded clam beds?* – relates to the issue of whether beds thinned by fishing could provide better (less cannibalism of larvae?)

settlement opportunities compared to crowded (unfished) beds.

Case Study: Sea Otter–Shellfish Interactions

Sea otters were heavily hunted in the immediate post-contact era of \approx 1790s to 1840s (Gough 1989; Gibson 1992; Robinson 1996). By the early 20th century, they were considered effectively extirpated from the Haida Gwaii region (Watson *et al.* 1997). They have been internationally protected since the 1911 Northern Fur Seal Treaty signed by the U.K. (for Canada), U.S., Japan and Russia. They are protected federally under the *Fisheries Act* and provincially under the *British Columbia Wildlife Act*. Finally, they are listed as “*threatened*” in the EC species-at-risk database and *red-listed* (“*endangered – threatened*”) at the Conservation Data Centre, Victoria, British Columbia.

There have been three published sightings in Haida Gwaii, all from the Gwaii Haanas area, between 1972 and 2001 (Table 31). All were of single individuals, likely free-ranging males. There is another report (no photographs) by Patche (1922) who mentioned a sea otter skull from a cabin near Rose Spit plus one killed in 1921 and 27 taken in one day in \approx 1890 by Old Massett villagers. Recently there have been anecdotal reports. These could be mistaken identity with the river otter (*Lutra canadensis*), which is common in Haida Gwaii. There is as yet no indication of sea otters establishing breeding populations in the Haida Gwaii region.

The removal of sea otters from Haida Gwaii has undoubtedly effected kelp forest-associated species such as northern abalone and red sea urchin. The intense predation effects of sea otters on shellfish species in the Northeast Pacific are well known and these effects are mentioned for each of the

species discussed above. Watson and Smith (1996) and Watson (2000) speculated that the absence of sea otters allowed some invertebrate stocks, such as northern abalone and red sea urchin, to accumulate to unnaturally high levels. Further, there likely was widespread decline in kelp abundance after release of red sea urchin populations from sea otter predation pressure in Haida Gwaii.

The possibility that commercial red sea urchin fishing could have similar effects of increasing kelp abundance as predation on red sea urchins by sea otters seems unlikely. One reason is that divers fish only certain areas. They select areas for highest potential roe yield such as red sea urchin feeding front aggregations (“*feed lines*”).

Kelp forest expansion would contribute increased amounts of organic material (food) cycling through nearshore ecosystems with an attendant “*trophic cascade*” (Sala *et al.* 1998) for species groups benefiting from the increased food into the system. In Gwaii Haanas, reestablished sea otter populations would likely lead to kelp population increases with a related trophic cascade, but also decreased northern abalone, red sea urchin and intertidal clam populations. In the north and east Graham Island areas, there could also be decreases to the commercial Dungeness crab stocks by sea otters.

In summary, there are two possibilities for the return of breeding sea otters populations. Firstly, breeding populations of sea otters could reasonably be expected to reestablish in Gwaii Haanas naturally. Expanding populations, perhaps originally from northwest Vancouver Island where they were reintroduced, could have been the source of free-ranging males into the Haida Gwaii area over the last 30 years. Sea otters are physiologically capable of swimming from the mainland coast directly

across Hecate Strait (from the Goose Island group into which they are now known to have expanded from the south) or across Dixon Entrance from southeast Alaska. Reestablished sea otters populations in Gwaii Haanas would be actively protected by Parks Canada as part of its ecosystem restoration mandate described below. We should, therefore, anticipate eventual expansion throughout Haida Gwaii as, elsewhere in British Columbia and Alaska, once reintroduced to areas from which they were extirpated, populations can expand at a rate exceeding 18% annually (Watson and Smith 1996; Woodby *et al.* 2000). Secondly, sea otters could be repatriated to Haida Gwaii or Gwaii Haanas by humans. This introduction would likely be accompanied by a vigorous population expansion to the whole archipelago. There is precedent in British Columbia with the successful introduction of 89 Alaskan (Aleutian Islands) sea otters to Checleset Bay on the northeast coast of Vancouver Island by the province of British Columbia and DFO between 1969 to 1972 (Watson *et al.* 1997). This stimulated a Haida Gwaii NGO of the day (Islands Protection Society) to promote

an introduction into Haida Gwaii (Anonymous 1976). In 1987 the province of British Columbia formally proposed to DFO an introduction of Alaskan stock to Haida Gwaii (preferred sites of Sgaang Gwaii and Hippa Island; alternate sites of Englefield Bay and Skincuttle Inlet). There was a public meeting in Masset in January, 1988 at which both opposition and support was expressed (M. Hearne, Masset, *personal communication*). The introduction was not done.

Parks Canada policy does allow for active marine ecosystem restoration (Parks Canada 1994). In sub-section 3.1.4 of the policy's "Ecosystem Management" section, restoration of extirpated species is supported in principle provided that "...research has shown that reintroduction is likely to succeed and that its probable effects are acceptable within the conservation area and the surrounding region." In either case of natural or human-influenced return of sea otters, it would be imperative to consult all stakeholders to enable an understanding of anticipated ecosystem and shellfishery outcomes.

Table 31. Published sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*) sightings reported from the Haida Gwaii region; all are from the southern Gwaii Haanas area.

Date	Location	Notes	Reference
July 25, 1972	Cape St. James, 51° 55'N, 131° 00'W adjacent to the sea lion rookery	Reported by a sea lion researcher – a 35 mm slide was taken and put on file with the RBCM ¹	Edie (1973)
August 30, 1976	Flamingo Inlet, 52° 12'N, 131° 20'40"W opposite Sperm Bay	Reported by scientists on a botanical and anthropological expedition – no photograph taken	Taylor and Gough (1977)
July 11, 2001	SGaang Gwaii (Anthony Island), 52° 04'58"N, 131° 13' 49"W beside a sea lion haulout on an islet south of the main island	Reported by Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Parks Canada warden staff while on a sea lion survey – photographs taken	Raum-Suryan <i>et al.</i> (<i>in preparation</i>) - Digital photos on file at Gwaii Haanas (Parks Canada) office

¹ a copy of the original slide taken by A.G. Edie was provided courtesy of M. McNall, Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) and is on file at Gwaii Haanas office

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Conservation is a positive experience of skill and insight, not merely a negative exercise of abstinence and caution” (Aldo Leopold, from Callicott 1992)

“But if I had to name the single most frightening and dangerous threat to the health of the oceans, the one that stands alone yet is at the base of all others is ignorance: lack of understanding, failure to relate our destiny to that of the sea, or to make the connection between the health of coral reefs and our own health, between the fate of the great whales and the future of humankind.” (Earle 1995)

“The long-term survival of most species and ecosystems also requires large and interacting populations to ensure diverse genetics, health and reproductive success, and large areas to provide habitats and nourishment. This further supports the need for partnerships to protect and manage biodiversity.” (Industry Canada - IC 2000)

The wisdom of Aldo Leopold resonates with us, but ignorance of regional marine biodiversity, biogeography and ecosystem function necessitates the precautionary approach. In the long term, however, using skill and insight are the operational ideals. As E.O. Wilson has said: *“There is an implicit principle of human behavior important to conservation: the better an ecosystem is known, the less likely it will be destroyed.”*

Gwaii Haanas is a great opportunity for Canadian innovation in marine area conservation. This report will have succeeded if readers find it facilitates discussion of technical issues during public consultation towards establishing Gwaii Haanas marine area under a consultative, knowledge- and ecosystem-based partnership.

Invertebrates are fundamental to local marine ecosystem structure and function, yet we know so little about them. Invertebrates are important culturally and economically. Finally, invertebrates have intrinsic value and the ethical right to coexist with us. Appreciating the breadth of invertebrates' importance and our moral obligations to them is progress. But, further progress can only be made through new thinking about applying ecosystem-based science to marine area conservation, better ways to involve the public, new attitudes about interagency - stakeholder consultation and full exploitation of computer-based technologies such as GIS.

We recommend the following:

- **document traditional Haida knowledge and usage of marine invertebrates**

Considering that marine invertebrates were likely important to the survival of indigenous people for ≈10,000 years in the Haida Gwaii region, we have only a small published knowledge-base. Much more documentation of Haida oral history, traditional knowledge and archaeology is required. Some has been published, but we expect that much knowledge has already been lost. This issue is important in its own right as well as in view of the Canada-Haida cooperative management partnership currently underpinning Gwaii Haanas' land management.

The passing of Elders, who had relatively traditional rearing, represent particularly significant losses of traditional knowledge if their stories are not recorded. Some unexamined audio-tapes of deceased Elders do exist. These must be fully evaluated along with interviews with living Elders. Currently, Gwaii Haanas' is working with the Skidegate Haida Language Authority for GIS mapping of traditional knowledge (names, songs, stories) associated with

locations in southern Haida Gwaii. Also, an intensive archaeological study of pre-contact Haida diets from coastal habitation sites has begun that likely will reveal much more on historic marine invertebrate usage (D. Fedje, Parks Canada, *personal communication*).

There is an emerging discussion on uses of traditional information along with western science information within an overarching approach to conservation (Mauro and Hardison 2000). Such an approach should have a role in managing spatial marine conservation in Gwaii Haanas. A way to give respect to this process would be to use indigenous knowledge (and other local experiential knowledge) to make hypotheses that could be scientifically tested and then applied in an adaptive conservation management regime (Sloan 2002). Further, traditional knowledge systems themselves may already possess analogies to the adaptive management approach (Berkes *et al.* 2000).

- **improve regional physical and biological oceanographic knowledge**

Productivity studies of plankton and currents, especially in the nearshore, are crucial. We need to understand the connectivity (energy, nutrients, larvae) between different areas of Haida Gwaii and between inshore and offshore. Currently we have no notion of appropriate scale and linkages for effective marine area conservation, as determined by invertebrate larval source-sink dynamics in the Haida Gwaii region. Where planktonic larvae go and how they survive is key information for the scale of eventual zoning such as location of fishing sites, refugium size and distances between refugia. We also need to identify those species with larvae residing only a short time in the plankton as well as those species with only benthic larvae or no larvae. Oceanography, particularly at

smaller than conventional spatial scales, has a core role in understanding recruitment processes leading to spatial patterns in adult populations (Bradbury and Snelgrove 2001). Seasonal plankton phenomena and upwelling events influence local invertebrate well-being in ways we do not understand. This whole topic area is a missing building block for knowing the roles of invertebrates in local marine ecosystems.

- **chart the west coast of Gwaii Haanas**

The west side of Gwaii Haanas north of Nagas Point to Tasu Sound being largely unsurveyed (for depth, substrate type, bottom topography) is not in keeping with the need for long-term, knowledge-based conservation. The only charted area within this coastline is Gowgaia Bay. The west side of Gwaii Haanas is the largest stretch of British Columbia coastline that remains uncharted.

Charting should be done through interagency cooperation led by the Canadian Hydrographic Service (DFO). Without this, we lack core data on the mosaic of habitats (determined by depth, bottom relief and substrate) that would underpin an understanding of benthic invertebrate-habitat relationships and ecosystem function for most of the west coast of Gwaii Haanas.

- **work up Haida Gwaii material in key Canadian museum collections**

Considering just deep-sea benthic invertebrate species, Poore and Wilson (1993) estimated that the ratio of known to total faunas might be as high as 1:20 – which forms part of their world-wide estimate of ≈ 5 million species. This is bracketed by previous estimates of ≈ 10 million (Grassle and Maciolek 1992) to $\approx 500,000$ species (May 1992). That the

experts should have such wide-ranging estimates reveals the depth of our ignorance! Clearly, there are many more marine invertebrate species out there than are in databases, and the Gwaii Haanas region is no exception.

Possible initiatives are firstly to examine the unsorted/unidentified material as a low-cost way to expand our species biodiversity inventory and secondly to have all the identified material checked by specialists group-by-group. Likely most collections are in museums, but some are maintained by individual specialists and some are in marine stations and universities. Checking identifications is a long-term proposition given the small number (>120) of specialists world-wide with direct interests in Canadian marine life (Austin *et al.* 1997). Moreover, this does not include the description of new taxa found during the checking process. Clearly, support is needed for training both taxonomists and parataxonomists and for the time consuming identification and description processes. Such a systematic assessment must be an international effort for specialists to access the collections.

- **collect in poorly represented habitat types to fill egregious database gaps**

In keeping with the reality that so little has been done in this region, many large gaps in invertebrate species biodiversity knowledge exist. These should be addressed because knowledge about all habitats and ecosystem types will be needed for long-term, ecosystem-based management. A few examples of underrepresented areas in our basic invertebrate biodiversity knowledge are: estuaries (see below), deep-water, rock-dwelling corals and other species not easily sampled by dredges or grabs, the meiofauna (intertidal and subtidal), rocky bottom/kelp forest benthos, highly exposed intertidal

shores and continental shelf/slope sediments.

- **focus on invertebrates of estuaries as critical land-sea linkage habitats**

The protected and relatively undisturbed uplands of Gwaii Haanas are a key regional attribute that will enable long-term studies of land-sea interactions on the scale of small coastal watersheds. Estuaries are the spaces where the transition area between terrestrial to marine species biodiversity is the most marked and the most amenable to mapping. Gwaii Haanas estuaries are, however, not well enough understood ecosystems, although they are critical to high-profile salmonid and wildlife (e.g., black bear [*Ursus americanus carlottae*] and shore bird) populations. A vegetation-based classification is currently underway (complimentary to provincial guidelines – Howes *et al.* 1999) and this should be matched by studies of invertebrates associated with the plant communities. A start has been made in that intertidal invertebrates of some estuaries was assessed in 1992 with respect to elevation (Harper *et al.* 1994). Further, the estuarine intertidal is a useful candidate areas towards reconciling the terrestrial-marine conventions for basic elevation data and vertical datum reference levels.

- **start mapping the marine biodiversity of Gwaii Haanas**

Mapping can greatly increase the utility of biodiversity information. Key to spatial management of Gwaii Haanas will be mapping patterns of invertebrate species and communities according to benthic habitats. Invertebrates constitute key components of food webs as they account for ~90% of the marine animal species. Ideally, we will eventually understand the factors causing those mapped patterns. Future marine invertebrate biodiversity

work in this region should, therefore, connect invertebrate species to definable places, habitats and associations. For example, there may be an opportunity to link with the forthcoming multi-agency (DFO, NRCan, National Defense)/industry/academia Seabed Resource Mapping Program (SeaMap) to map Canada's submerged features (T. Tomascik, Parks Canada, *personal communication*). Marine surveillance technologies are developing rapidly and marine conservation areas could benefit.

- **monitor the marine area using Parks Canada's Warden Service**

Gwaii Haanas should be a reference site for regional marine environment/ecosystem well-being. Wardens spend more time travelling in this isolated region than any other technical agency staff. The Warden Service, with science direction and subsequent evaluation by a multi-agency (Parks Canada, DFO, EC, NRCan) group, could implement marine monitoring. This could be a core science task for the Warden Service and embedded within Gwaii Haanas' long-term operating budgets. At a minimum, wardens would cover the proposed Gwaii Haanas marine conservation area within the whole Haida Gwaii region. The data would be shared through the World Wide Web.

- **commit to long-term ecosystem-based Hecate Strait studies**

A good opportunity is at hand for Gwaii Haanas to help coalesce different interests in the Hecate Strait towards knowledge-based regional marine conservation. Firstly, there is the on-going (since 1982) DFO commitment to multi-species groundfish research (Perry *et al.* 1994); secondly, the sponge bioherm work (Conway *et al.* 2001); thirdly, the oceanographic knowledge (Crawford 2000); fourthly, the geology

research of the Queen Charlotte Basin (Woodsworth 1991); and fifthly, benthic invertebrate studies (e.g., Bernard 1979; Burd and Brinkhurst 1987).

Further, Hecate Strait's productive waters will become topical if the oil and gas exploration moratoria are lifted. This would create a pressing need for an altogether better Hecate Strait marine environmental baseline inventory and stimulate more science on the Strait's ecosystem structure and function. Gwaii Haanas should be among the cooperating stakeholders within this key regional marine ecosystem issue.

- **support declaration of the sponge bioherms as DFO Marine Protected Areas**

The sponge bioherm areas of Hecate Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound are an ideal candidate group for area-specific declaration as Marine Protected Areas under DFO's *Oceans Act* mandate. Sufficient science has been published to characterize these unique marine invertebrate-structured areas. In keeping with Parks Canada's broader regional view of marine conservation, we should support declaration of the bioherms' protected status by DFO before further bottom-trawling damage occurs.

- **use shellfish species to help address spatial scale within Gwaii Haanas**

Among the invertebrates, edible species (traditional Haida foods, commercial and recreational) naturally receive more human interest than other marine invertebrates. Therefore, we should wisely use this interest and what we know about these species' life histories (particularly those with spatially explicit adult populations), to initiate discussions on scale and connectedness within Gwaii Haanas. For

example, such discussions concerning red sea urchin, geoduck or northern abalone would help delineate zoning networks of connected no-take zones within Gwaii Haanas' future multiple-use matrix. The scale of these spaces should be determined by our knowledge of their connections through larval replenishment processes and the need for having stock available for our commitment to commercial fishing. In other words, setting aside source populations both as examples of local ecosystems and as sources of recruits for sustainable nearby fisheries. However, we should remember that the less well known, non-edible species also receive protection.

- **understand the socioeconomics of Haida Gwaii shellfisheries**

Knowing who pays for and who benefits from marine conservation is essential. Understanding the impacts to communities of marine area conservation is a core component of public consultation (NRC 2001). Our shellfishery overview requires a complimentary study of the social and economic importance of shellfisheries at the individual community, regional and provincial scales. We must listen carefully to the fisheries sector (fishers, processors, associations). Jentoft (1998) emphasizes that social science is usually absent from fisheries management decision-making. Further, agency commitments to public consultation in marine conservation compel us to look deeply into the human consequences of protecting marine spaces. Therefore, Jentoft's two major roles of social science in fisheries; (1) design of management institutions, and (2) provision of feedback to the management process - are important to consider. For example, the impacts to the industry of future marine zoning in Gwaii Haanas, including no-take areas, must be understood if it will be accepted within the public consultation process. Other issues include the ripple

effects of sea otter protection within Gwaii Haanas to all regional Haida Gwaii shellfisheries.

- **acquire fishers' experiential knowledge of invertebrates**

Working with fishers to learn from their experiences with invertebrates is a point of engagement for relationship-building, besides an important source of technical information. In the long-term, the fisheries sector must be engaged as a key partner in Gwaii Haanas' future. As an example of their knowledge, finfish long-liners know the locations of deep-water coral groves on current-swept, rocky continental slope areas along the west side of Gwaii Haanas. Fishers were a key information source for inventory of Nova Scotia's deep-water coral groves (Breeze *et al.* 1997). Recognizing the fisheries sector as a participant in the future of Gwaii Haanas is imperative. But, we will need to build trust that the outcomes of their knowledge-sharing will not feed-back negatively on the fisheries economy.

- **federal agencies must cooperate more for marine conservation science progress**

"... effective application of ecological integrity principles will require collaboration and partnerships among federal science-based departments and agencies, and between the government and its non-federal partners."
(Industry Canada - IC 2000)

A reality-check is warranted because of the size and complexity of the challenge. To begin understanding regional marine ecosystems, all the key federal agencies (Parks Canada, DFO, EC, NRCan) must cooperate more closely than ever and partner with other entities (NGOs, First Nations, universities, fishery sector, coastal communities). Core to such cooperation is DFO - the agency with the most capacity

and regional marine science history. The *Oceans Act's* preamble contains a clear DFO commitment to marine ecosystems, as follows:

- *"Canada promotes the understanding of oceans, ocean processes, marine resources and marine ecosystems to foster the sustainable development of the oceans and their resources;"* and
- *"Canada holds that conservation, based on an ecosystem approach, is of fundamental importance to maintaining biological diversity and productivity in the marine environment."*

Accordingly, DFO should, in addressing its *Oceans Act* mandate, return part of its science thrust to its roots in basic ecological and biodiversity research. That means building upon overlooked traditions of the Pacific Biological Station's basic research in the Haida Gwaii region (e.g., C.M. Fraser in the 1930s and D.B. Quayle and F.R. Bernard in the 1950s to 1970s) and integrating that ethic with the capacity of the Institute of Ocean Sciences, Sidney (e.g., Thomson 1989; Crawford 2000). An enlightened research commitment, beyond stock assessment into fundamental issues of marine biodiversity and ecosystem structure and function, is needed.

Fishing is central to the long-term future of Gwaii Haanas. To enable ecosystem-based management of human activities, there must be access to the full information base for the management partnership. This means access to both fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data with attendant confidentiality to protect the interests of individual fishers and maintain trust among the partners. An example is finding the balance between serving the public good with access to information on continental shelf bottom trawl tracks and serving the industry good by protecting appropriate portions of such data. All information

sources are relevant and all should be shared. The strategic step of partners' consensus on information policy would solidify future working relationships.

- **increase public awareness and understanding of marine invertebrates and associated habitats**

Awareness and understanding are key to fostering stewardship and support for marine conservation. Agencies such as DFO and Parks Canada must continue to work with NGOs that promote marine conservation. Also, government agencies mounting their own initiatives should ensure that these complement, not overshadow, NGO efforts.

Both NGOs and government organizations should collaborate in working with the media to promote awareness and understanding through magazines such as *Canadian Geographic*, *Beautiful British Columbia*, television documentary programs such as *Discovery Channel*, *Knowledge Network*, newspapers and even stamps (e.g., the *Canada Post* "Canadian corals" stamp to be issued in 2002).

The NGOs played a key role in the establishment of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve / Haida Heritage Site. Particularly in a remote region such as Haida Gwaii, NGO support must be nurtured and acknowledged. The remoteness of Haida Gwaii limits the number of people who can directly experience its marine ecosystems. However, most of the same species and habitats occur in more accessible regions of southern British Columbia. Experiential programs in the field (e.g., DFO Shorekeepers, Hecate Strait Streamkeepers, Laskeek Bay Conservation Society, Haida Gwaii Marine Resources Group Association, Georgia Strait Alliance Straitkeepers), entities explicitly promoting marine

conservation (e.g., World Wildlife Fund-Canada Marine Program, Living Oceans Society, Sierra Club, David Suzuki Foundation, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society), and coastal facilities (e.g., Bamfield Marine Station, Marine Ecology Station, Vancouver Aquarium) foster understanding and participation in marine conservation coast-wide.

- **increase science cooperation with Naikoon Provincial Park**

Gwaii Haanas represents the rocky shores of Haida Gwaii well, but not the sandy shores typical of Naikoon Provincial Park within the Queen Charlotte Lowlands (the Argonaut Plain) in the archipelago's northeast corner (Figure 1). Although the province of British Columbia has had an important role in the establishment of Gwaii Haanas (e.g., the *South Moresby Agreement* [1988] and the transfer of jurisdiction of the proposed marine area's seabed [2001]), Parks Canada has been little involved with Naikoon. This is not in keeping with the spirit of Parks Canada's marine policy of regional concern outside park boundaries and given the inherent ecosystem value, and invertebrate populations, of Naikoon's incomparable sandy beaches.

Naikoon Provincial Park was established in 1973 and is managed by British Columbia Parks (under the *British Columbia Park Act*) within the British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. The park protects the relatively level, boggy coastal forests on glacial deposits and marine-derived sand dune systems. Naikoon has ≈ 724 km² of land and ≈ 108 km of mostly sandy shoreline comprising ≈ 2.16 km² of park "foreshore" – an intertidal band whose width is ≈ 200 m seaward of the high tide line. Naikoon has no subtidal marine area, i.e., no sea space. With the exception of two rocky promontories (Yakan Point and Tow

Hill), the shoreline consists almost entirely of sand beaches exposed to high wave energy. There is some cobble-boulder shoreline near Tlell in the park's southeastern corner.

Naikoon's sand beaches are Pacific Canada's largest and most dramatic. North and South Beaches represent ≈ 21 km and ≈ 12 km respectively of continuous sand beaches (≈ 1 km wide intertidal zone) facing northward into McIntyre Bay, Dixon Entrance. The sands come from offshore and their net onshore movement is speculated to be due to recent uplift of the offshore platform (Harper 1980). East Beach, facing eastward into northern Hecate Strait, extends south from Rose Point as a continuous sandy shore for ≈ 75 km before merging into the cobble-boulder shoreline near Tlell. The intertidal of East Beach is narrower (< 0.5 km) and tends to have more cobble in the lower intertidal than South and North Beaches. For comparison, Long Beach, Wickaninnish Bay within the Long Beach unit of Pacific Rim National Park is ≈ 11.4 km long and the unit's other major sand beach (in Florencia Bay) is ≈ 6.4 km long. North Beach and Naikoon's offshore sandy areas are the centre of Haida Gwaii's razor clam and Dungeness crab fisheries.

Naikoon has a year-round staff of one and one seasonal (four-month) ranger. Gwaii Haanas has ≈ 40 year-round staff. Naikoon is less funded than Gwaii Haanas and it relies on remote technical services, such as GIS, from an off-island British Columbia Parks regional office (in Smithers). Naikoon management performs a science permitting process particularly aimed at the park's two Ecological Reserves (Tow Hill and Rose Spit), but the park has no sustained internal science process in support of management. Ecological Reserves are separately managed by British Columbia Parks under the *Ecological*

Reserves Act. Given the complementation of Gwaii Haanas' rocky shores and Naikoon's sandy shores within Haida Gwaii, there should be more regional ecosystem-based, technical cooperation between these coastal parks.

EPILOGUE

Clark (1993) called current conservation professionals: “... *the last generation that can prevent the extinction of large numbers of species and the disruption of large scale ecosystem processes.*” In other words, this is the time to act. It is acknowledged world-wide, however, that marine conservation lags behind terrestrial conservation technically, intellectually and politically (NRC 2001).

The Gwaii Haanas marine area is being considered during the most exciting and dynamic era in marine conservation history. Tremendous advances in computer-based tools for marine map and database processing are on-going. Fundamental technical and political progress is being made in the United States on conserving marine spaces (NRC 2001). Canadian agencies (EC – Zurbrigg 1996; interagency – Anonymous 1998; DFO – Jamieson and Levings 2001) and environmental NGOs (Day and Roff 2000; Wallace and Boyd 2000) are also embracing habitat- and ecosystem-based ideas for conserving marine spaces. As well, there are many recent, science-based books for the lay public underscoring that fundamental change is needed in human-ocean relations based upon fisheries’ spectacular failures and negative ecosystem effects (Earl 1995; Berrill 1997; Safina 1997; Harris 1999; Dobbs 2000; Glavin 2000; Woodward 2000; Helvarg 2001).

Invertebrates are vital to assembling the information tools for future marine conservation. However, science moves too slowly for the critical near-term decision-making we need. We need the wisdom of a precautionary approach to offset uncertainties and the flexibility of adaptive management to chart our course. We need vision to fulfil Gwaii Haanas’ promise through new partnerships and forthcoming public consultation. Finally, we need to be humble but bold in confronting our ignorance as we prepare Gwaii Haanas for unborn generations to use, enjoy and cherish.

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