

# Study regarding the establishment of a Marine Protected Area around the Magdalen Islands

2012/14



## Welcome

Parks Canada and the MDDEFP (Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec) are working in partnership with a multidisciplinary team from the *Université du Québec à Rimouski* (UQAR) to assess the possibility of establishing a marine protected area (MPA) around the Îles de la Madeleine (Magdalen Islands). This study will take into account the views of local communities by including local ecological knowledge and calling on experts from the community. Here are some of the highlights.

## All aboard!

## Newsletter

## Issue 1

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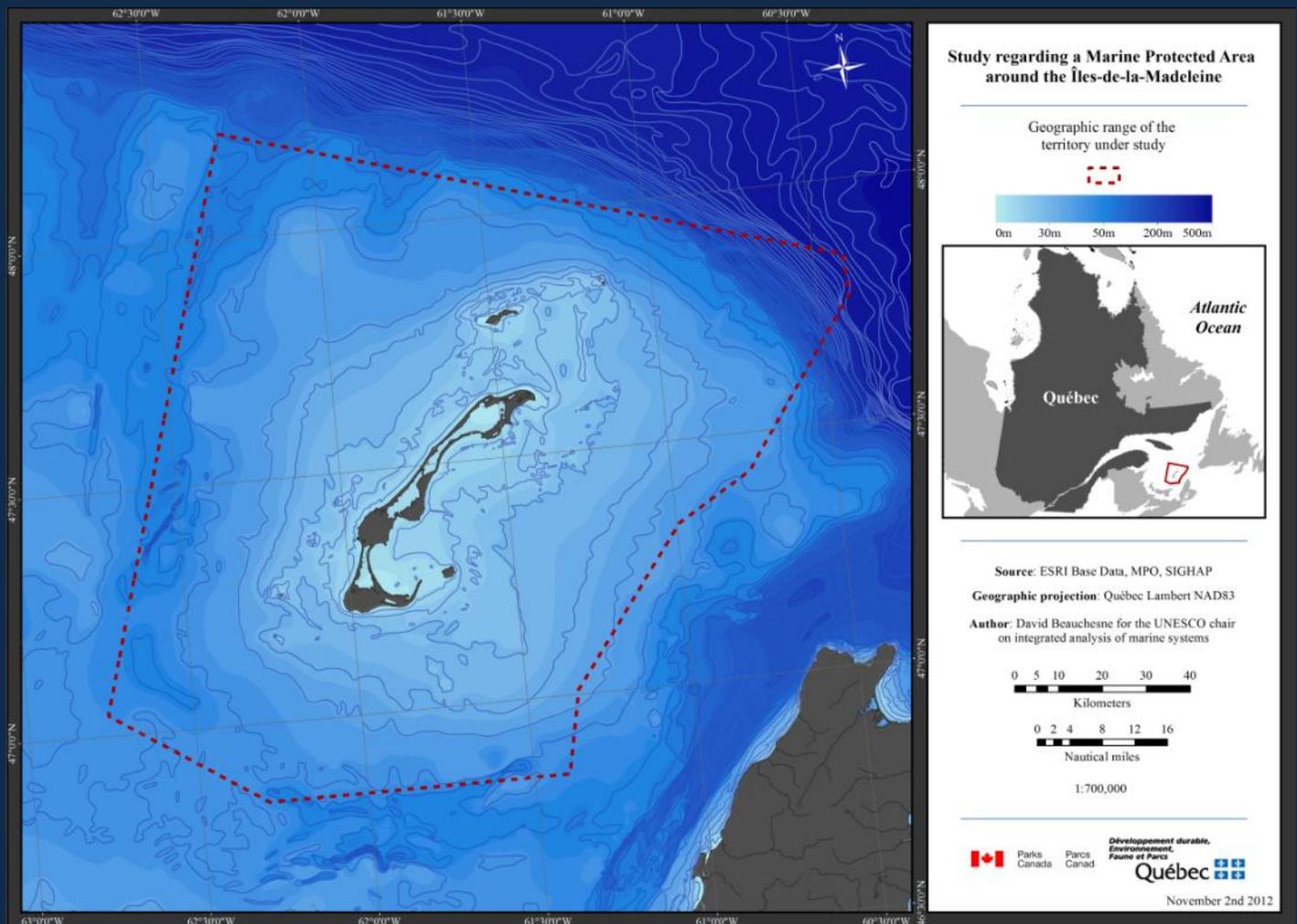
# Study regarding the establishment of a Marine Protected Area around the Magdalen Islands

The marine area adjacent to the Magdalen Islands is being studied with a view to assess the possibility of establishing a marine protected area (MPA). Researchers from UQAR and the *Centre de recherche sur les milieux insulaires et maritimes* (CERMIM) will be working over the next few months to develop an overview of the marine elements of the area and elaborate scenarios for the protection and heritage presentation of this marine environment and the activities which occur there. The cooperation of a number of departments and community organizations, which are contributing their expertise and providing data, is essential to the success of this project. More specifically, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide ecological, socio-economic and cultural overviews of the study area (map below).
- Identify the opportunities and constraints associated with the establishment of an MPA around the Magdalen Islands.
- Take into consideration the viewpoints of users and community stakeholders.
- Develop and compare various feasibility scenarios, taking into account all of the associated issues and conservation objectives and the potential positive and negative impacts.

The study will take two years to complete. The findings, expected in the spring of 2014, will help governments to determine if an MPA proposal is feasible and if so, under what conditions.

The study area lies within the Quebec portion of the Magdalen Shelf. The study will determine areas of interest for the conservation of biodiversity and the presentation of the area's natural, social and cultural heritage.



# Study Consultative Committee

A Consultative Committee made up of representatives of community organizations was set up at the beginning of the process in order to contribute to the study as it progresses. The Committee's mandate is to ensure that the study findings accurately reflect the knowledge, concerns and interests of the islanders. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation will participate as observers. The Committee will meet at least four times over the course of the study.

## Members of the Consultative Committee:

### Municipal

- Municipality of Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- Municipality of Grosse-Île
- Agglomeration council of Îles-de-la-Madeleine

### Fishing and mariculture

- Association des pêcheurs propriétaires des Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- Regroupement des pêcheurs professionnels des Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- Regroupement des pétoncliers et palangriers uniques madelinots

- Îles-de-la-Madeleine Mariculture

### Natural heritage and environment

- Magdalen Islands ZIP Committee

### Cultural Heritage

- Îles-de-la-Madeleine Museum Network

### Education and awareness

- Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles - Magdalen Islands campus

### Economic

- Magdalen Islands Chamber of Commerce

### Tourism promotion and recreational tourism

- Tourisme Îles-de-la-Madeleine



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## What is a marine protected area?

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines a marine protected area (MPA) as:

*“A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.”*

MPAs are development tools that adapt to the realities of the affected coastal communities, using cooperative mechanisms involving the various users of the area. The establishment of an MPA is generally accompanied by measures aimed at fostering research, education and enjoyment, as well as sustainable resource use.

In Canada and Quebec, there are several different types of MPAs. While some are fully protected, most authorize multiple uses.

For more information:

[IUCN](#)

## Achievements

The UQAR research team is gathering the data required to develop an overview of the natural marine environment and the activities practiced in the marine area from federal and provincial departments and local organizations.

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At the same time, UQAR is surveying various groups and local residents in order to identify and take into consideration the concerns and expectations of the community regarding the conservation, management and heritage presentation of the marine area.

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A number of information sessions have already been held with various community organizations (environmental, educational, fisheries, etc.) to clearly explain the study's objectives. Other information sessions will take place as needed. If you would like more information, do not hesitate to ask us!



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## Upcoming activities

We are currently preparing a information exchange workshop involving local stakeholders. The objective will be to share the knowledge gathered by the UQAR science team and validate it based on the expertise of Magdalen Island stakeholders. This exchange will allow us to improve the study area overviews and better define the objectives that will guide the development of possible scenarios.

A number of public information sessions will be organized in your area targeting key areas of interest (fishing, tourism, ecological and economic, etc.). You will be informed in a timely fashion of the detailed presentation programme.

Over the course of the study, information will be provided through various means, including electronic newsletters, articles and publications in local media, and a new, revamped Web site.



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## Have your say!

In order to better assess the relevance of this project for your community, we encourage you to:

- tell us about your initiatives and ideas related to the protection and heritage presentation of the marine environment;
- request a meeting to discuss the study.

Contact or meet with the study coordinators:

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