Communicating about the Importance of MPAs in the Blue Economy

SusGren
Sustainable Grenadines Inc.

german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Implemented by
giz

MPA connect

NOAA CORAL REEF CONSERVATION PROGRAM

GCFI
Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, Inc.



MPAs Are More Than Conservation Boundaries

Well-managed MPAs help protect the natural blue economy assets that island economies depend on.

Fisheries & food security

Healthy habitats support marine life and help sustain fisheries over the long term.

Tourism & destination value

Reefs, clear water and wildlife underpin diving, snorkeling and nature-based experiences.

Coastal resilience

Mangroves, reefs and seagrass can reduce exposure to some coastal hazards and support ecosystem resilience.

Local livelihoods

MPAs can create space for guiding, boat services, crafts, restoration and other community enterprises.

Stewardship & identity

Community participation connects conservation with local knowledge, culture and pride.

Communication goal: Always make the link between ecological health and everyday economic value visible to ensure buy-in .

Make the Blue Economy Connection Visible

Lead with what matters to the audience, then connect it to evidence and MPA outcomes.

Fishers	Healthy habitats • future catches • local knowledge
Tourism businesses	Visitor experience • destination reputation • reef-friendly practices
Communities	Livelihoods • cultural identity • participation and fair benefits
Government & funders	Resilience • jobs • sustainable investment • accountability

A Shared Voice: Grenadines Network of MPAs + MPAConnect

Regional collaboration can help MPA teams communicate consistently while keeping local voices at the centre.

Align key messages

Agree on a few shared messages about ecosystem health, livelihoods, sustainable tourism and community benefits.

Share what works

Exchange stories, visuals, outreach materials and practical lessons between MPA teams and peers.

Build trusted voices

Support MPA managers, fishers, youth, tourism operators and community leaders to speak with confidence.

COMMUNICATE RESULTS

- What changed in the ecosystem or management?
- Who participated or benefited and how do we know?
- What challenges remain, and what support is needed?

A Blue Economy that Values Nature

FROM AWARENESS TO INFLUENCE

A Practical Communication Plan for every MPA

1 **Choose**

One priority audience

2 **Message**

One memorable, evidence-based point

3 **Tell**

A human story with a strong visual

4 **Invite**

One clear action or decision

5 **Track**

Reach, engagement, partnerships and influence

Ask: Who needs to understand the value of our MPA and what do we want them to do?

Your MPA and the Blue Economy

1. How would you explain the blue economy, and why should your MPA be considered an important player in its development?

2. What economic, social, and environmental benefits does your MPA provide to local communities and the wider economy?

3. How can your MPA generate sustainable financing through activities such as ecotourism, visitor fees, partnerships, or other blue economy initiatives without compromising conservation objectives?

4. If the government were planning a major coastal development or tourism investment near your MPA, how would you ensure that the MPA's interests and conservation priorities were considered in the decision-making process?

5. Which government agencies, private-sector businesses, community organizations, and regional partners should your MPA work with to become a stronger contributor to the blue economy?

6. If a journalist asked you to provide evidence that your MPA benefits people as well as marine ecosystems, what examples, data, or success stories would you share?

7. How would you respond to a tourism investor who argues that conservation restrictions limit economic growth and opportunities for investment?

8. If you had the opportunity to present one priority to a national minister or regional decision-maker, what would you ask for to strengthen your MPA's role in the blue economy, and why?