



achieving results

abrolhos seascape brazil



Over the last decade, CI's Marine Program in Brazil has focused on the design and implementation of a network of multiple-use and no-take marine protected areas (MPAs) in the Abrolhos Region, the richest South Atlantic marine realm.

By establishing a strong field model in this vast 95,000 square-kilometer area (37,000 square miles), we are producing solid knowledge and capacity for marine conservation, which can be replicated in other parts of the Atlantic and inform marine conservation globally. During this time, the conservation map of the Abrolhos area has changed dramatically. When CI's Marine Program began, Abrolhos National Park was the only MPA in the region. Currently, the area protected and co-managed with local communities is nearly four times larger, directly benefitting people.

CI's Marine Management Areas Science (MMAS) Program has produced pioneering scientific knowledge to inform Abrolhos' management. Regional-scale habitat mapping using cutting-edge oceanographic technology led to the discovery of a large new reef area, at least two times larger than previously known. A decade-long database on the effects and effectiveness of Abrolhos MPAs demonstrates their importance for biodiversity conservation and sustainable fisheries management. Scientific data has been coupled with socio-economic and cultural information to produce

a holistic management plan for the entire region, targeting the maintenance of ecosystem services. By transforming scientific information into conservation actions and results, three marine extractive reserves totaling 2,900 square kilometers (1,120 square miles) were created in Abrolhos.

Abrolhos MPAs are proving successful. Fish populations are stable inside multiple-use reserves while they continue to decrease outside of these reserves. This clearly demonstrates improved food security for over 15,000 people relying on the MPAs. Also, coral reef species richness and abundance have increased not only inside MPAs, but also close to their borders, demonstrating the positive spill-over effects of conservation.

Devising adaptation strategies to climate change is a core conservation challenge, and Abrolhos will play a crucial role as a long-term and successful field model for such work. Research on coral bleaching, disease and susceptibility inform the identification of areas that must be protected to make the system more resilient to climate change. At the same time,

scientific knowledge of calcareous algae banks is clarifying the role of these marine habitats in reducing CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere.

The marine extractive reserves are strong instruments for securing traditional territories and ways of life. By relying on both traditional and scientific knowledge to inform the management of Abrolhos, local cultural practices that contribute to the maintenance of healthy natural ecosystems are recognized for their contribution to the provision of ecosystem services. In addition, the cultural value is amplified by implementing appropriate tourism development strategies, bringing tangible, direct economic benefits to local people.

Human well-being has been a key component of CI's program since its inception. Many ecosystem services are provided by the ocean, and by using appropriate conservation strategies we are working to conserve them for the benefit of people.



demonstrating how **healthy ecosystems benefit human well-being** in the Abrolhos Seascape

human well-being

- 20,000 fisheries jobs
- 80,000 tourism jobs
- improved governance



ecosystem services

- carbon stored
- food through fisheries
- coastal protection



healthy ecosystems

- 1,130,000 ha (almost 2.8 million acres) conserved
- highest species diversity in the South Atlantic