

**Jones, P. J. S., & De Santo, E. M. (2016). Is the race for remote, very large marine protected areas (VLMPs) taking us down the wrong track? *Marine Policy*, 73, 231-234. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2016.08.015>**

**Abstract:** This viewpoint article argues that relatively recent increases in the designation of remote, very large marine protected areas (VLMPAs) around the world threaten to undermine the very purpose and objectives of the Aichi biodiversity targets they are aiming to address. Questions are raised about the effectiveness, representativeness, and potential for connectivity of these remote VLMPAs as well as whether they are equitably managed. In addition, it is argued that the push for such designations in countries' overseas territories deflects attention and effort from the challenge of designating and effectively managing MPAs closer to home. In the run-up to the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress and Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), it is important for countries to recognize that remote VLMPAs are but one type of MPA, requiring significant investment in monitoring and enforcement in order to effectively achieve conservation objectives, and that achieving the Aichi MPA coverage target largely through such designations will undermine the aims of this target. To better meet the MPA network criteria as set out by the CBD, a range of types of MPAs must be implemented, including smaller MPAs in more intensely used 'metropolitan seas', and social justice considerations must be better integrated in conservation planning. It is important that the race towards remote VLMPAs does not divert attention, resources and political will away from the other types of MPA that are necessary for effectively fulfilling marine conservation targets.