

MARINE BIOREGIONS OF SAMOA

What are bioregions?

Bioregions are spatial units of the marine environment that host similar biota, and can serve to provide spatially explicit surrogates of biodiversity for marine conservation and management.



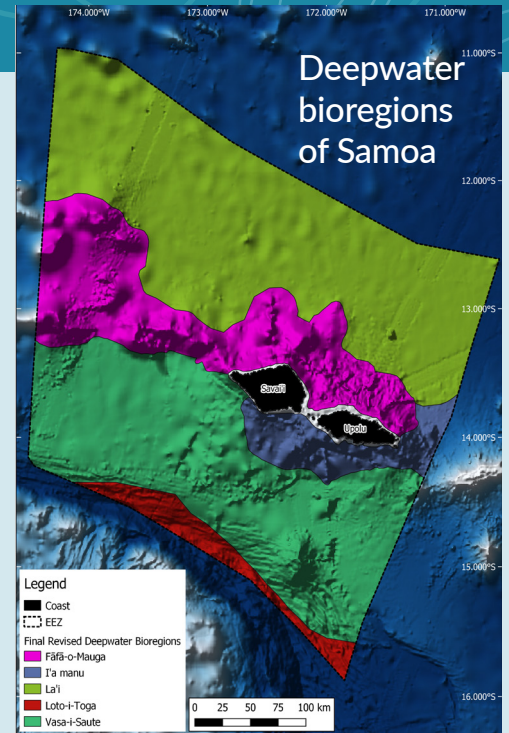
Understanding of the marine space is very important when it comes to decision-making. One way to organise Samoa's Exclusive Economic Zone is to categorise the marine space into areas with similar biota (plant and animal life found within specific regions). This knowledge can then be used for identifying and prioritising areas for marine conservation and management.



A national-scale Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) is mandated under the Samoa Ocean Strategy 2020 – 2030. MSP is a practical way of balancing the demands of human activities with the need to maintain the health of the ecosystems on which those activities depend. The bioregionalisation process in Samoa identified five deep-water, or offshore, bioregions and five reef-associated, or inshore, bioregions.



Networks of highly protected areas within Samoa's EEZ will be an important outcome of the marine spatial planning process, as will the designation of other ocean zones that meet social, economic and cultural objectives.



The five deepwater bioregions were designated based largely on geomorphology and climate, and were given local names.

Reef-associated bioregions of Samoa

