







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 deepwater, or offshore, bioregions and five reef-associated, or inshore, bioregions.



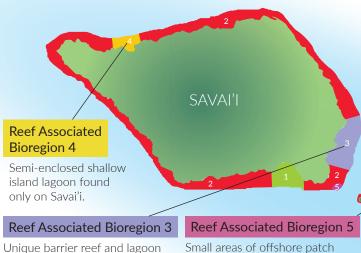
Networks of highly protected areas within Samoa's EEZ will be an important outcome of the marine spatial planning process, as will the designation of other ocean zones that meet social, economic and cultural objectives.



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

Reef-associated bioregions of Samoa

complex found only on Savai'i.



Small areas of offshore patch reefs on both Savai'i and Upolu.

Relatively sheltered, reef edge further from shore, creating a barrier reef and shallow coastal lagoon. Includes associated shelf slopes, diffuse fringing reefs and intra-lagoon patch reefs.

Reef Associated Bioregion 1

Reef Associated Bioregion 2

Relatively exposed, reef edge further from shore, creating a barrier reef and shallow coastal lagoon. Includes associated shelf slopes, diffuse fringing reefs and intra-lagoon patch reefs.