

## Glossary

## Appendix D

Abiotic:	A non-living component of the environment.	Continental shelf:	A broad expanse of ocean bottom, associated with the submerged edge of continental plates, that slopes gently seaward (usually 100 to 200 m) from the shoreline to the shelf slope break.
Ahermatypic:	Non-reef-building organism or species.	Convergence zones:	The line where two oceanic water masses meet, resulting in the sinking of the denser one.
Aquaculture:	The farming of marine and freshwater organisms.	Coriolis effect:	The deflection of air or water bodies, relative to the solid earth beneath, as a result of the earth's eastward rotation; the deflection is to the right in the Northern Hemisphere and to the left in the Southern Hemisphere.
Aquatic:	Growing or living in or frequenting freshwater.	Cornerstone conservation sites:	Geographic locations where conservation is not only necessary, but also likely to succeed; these sites can serve as examples for other conservation efforts in the region.
Arboreal:	Inhabiting trees.	Demersal:	A habitat or organism found on or near water bottoms; Benthic.
Artisanal fishery:	Local subsistence fishery for subsistence or sale, usually involving small boats and low levels of technology, as opposed to large scale commercial fisheries.	Density:	Grams of seawater per milliliter of fluid; factors that affect density include salinity (high=denser) and temperature (cold=denser). Also, the number of organisms per area or volume unit (indicator of abundance).
Banks:	A broad shallow water region, usually sandy, surrounded by deep water; associated with high levels of productivity.	Detritus:	Dead organic matter; when broken up by decomposers, detritus provides energy to many coastal ecosystems.
Bathymetry:	Pertaining to the depth and relief of water basins.	Echinoderms:	Organisms in Phylum Echinodermata; invertebrates with radial symmetry and a water vascular system (e.g. starfish, sea cucumber, sea urchins, etc.).
Benthic:	Defining a habitat or organism found on the water bottom; demersal.	Ecosystem:	A community or communities of plant and animal species, as well as all of the abiotic components of the environment.
Bight	Wide bay formed by a curve in a shoreline.	Endemism:	An organism or group of organisms restricted to a specific location.
Biodiversity:	The number of species in an area or biological collection.	Endotherm:	An organism that can regulate its own internal temperature.
Biogeography:	The distribution of one or more species that is defined by abiotic factors (temperature, salinity, surface currents, etc.).	El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO):	Irregular cyclical condition in which warm surface water moves into the eastern Pacific, collapsing upwelling and increasing surface-water temperatures and precipitation along the west coast of North and South America.
Biological productivity:	A general term describing the total amount of life that an area supports; high biological productivity usually refers to a nutrient-rich habitat that supports large levels of primary producers. These serve as food for abundant grazers who are themselves food for predators.	Estuarine:	Coastal areas where freshwater enters the ocean in coastal wetlands, bays, and lagoons; areas of variable salinity at the ocean margin.
Biota:	The living components of the environment.		
Carbonate geology:	Rocks made from calcium carbonate or limestone. This rock is usually formed from marine sediments and coastal shallow water processes in tropical areas.		
Coastal biogeographic provinces:	The distribution of marine species in shallow water along the coastlines of islands and continents as defined by abiotic factors (sea surface temperature, salinity, and major ocean currents).		
Coastal morphology:	The form and configuration of the coast.		

Eurythermic:	An organism tolerant of a wide temperature range.	Nutrication:	The process in which excess nutrients are added to an aquatic system. These nutrients stimulate algal blooms, the depletion of dissolved oxygen, and occasionally lead to fish kills in shallow bays. Synonymous with "eutrophication."
Eutro- pfication:	The process in which excess nutrients added to system lead to algal blooms, depletion of dissolved oxygen, and often, fish kills.	Oceanic:	Associated with marine environments seaward of the shelf slope-break.
Faunal composition:	The entire animal population living in an area.	Oligotrophic:	Nutrient poor.
Geographic Information Systems (GIS):	An organized collection of computer hardware, software, geographic data, and personnel designed to efficiently capture, store, update, manipulate, analyze, and display all forms of geographically referenced information.	Otarids:	Sea lions and fur seals (also called "eared" or "walking" seals).
Guano:	The accumulated excrement of seabirds; collected for use as fertilizer.	Phyto- plankton:	The photosynthesizing organisms residing in the Plankton.
Gyre:	Large cyclonic currents that generally move water in a large circle from the tropics to the polar seas. Gyres can also vary in scale to include smaller circulating "rings" of water.	Phylum/ phyla:	The second broadest classification of life on earth. Phylum is the next level of classification after the five kingdoms (animals, plants, fungi, protozoa, and bacteria).
Hermatypic:	Reef-building organisms or species.	Pinniped:	Members of Order Pinnipedia; marine mammals with paddle-shaped flippers (e.g.: seals, eared seals, and the walrus).
Invertebrates:	Animals lacking a backbone.	Plankton:	Organisms residing in the water column and incapable of moving against water currents.
Isopleth:	A line on a map connecting points at which a given variable has a specified constant value.	Primary producers:	An organism capable of using the energy derived from light or a chemical substance in order to manufacture energy-rich organic compounds.
Isopods:	Small, dorsoventrally flattened crustaceans (e.g. sea louse).	Propagule:	A reproductive phase that allows dispersal by water currents (e.g.: seed pods, etc.).
Keystone populations:	Populations of organisms that are vital for the maintenance of the structure of a community.	Protozoa:	Members of Kingdom Protista bearing animal-like characteristics.
Larval dispersal:	The immature life-phase of marine organisms spent suspended in the water column for a certain period of time during which they are transported some distance from their birth site.	Stochastic:	Involving chance or probability.
Macro-scale:	Large-scale events or processes; measured in thousands of kilometers.	Terrestrial:	Relating to the land.
Marine:	Relating to saltwater.	Thermocline:	The boundary of two water masses whose density differs due to temperature.
Meso-scale:	Medium-scale events or processes; measured in tens or hundreds of kilometers for climatic and oceanographic processes.	Tidal wetlands:	A coastal area that experiences periodic inundation as a result of daily tides.
Micro-scale:	Small-scale events or processes; measured in kilometers for climatic and oceanographic processes.	Trophic:	A level in a food chain containing organisms of identical feeding habits with respect to the chain (e.g. herbivores).
Neritic:	Marine environments landward of the shelf slope-break.	Upwelling:	The transport of deeper, nutrient-rich waters to the surface by wind or surface circulation patterns that results in increases in surface productivity. Upwelling areas are often important fishing areas.
		Viscosity:	The property of resistance to flow in a fluid.