

Scientific consensus on MPA characteristics

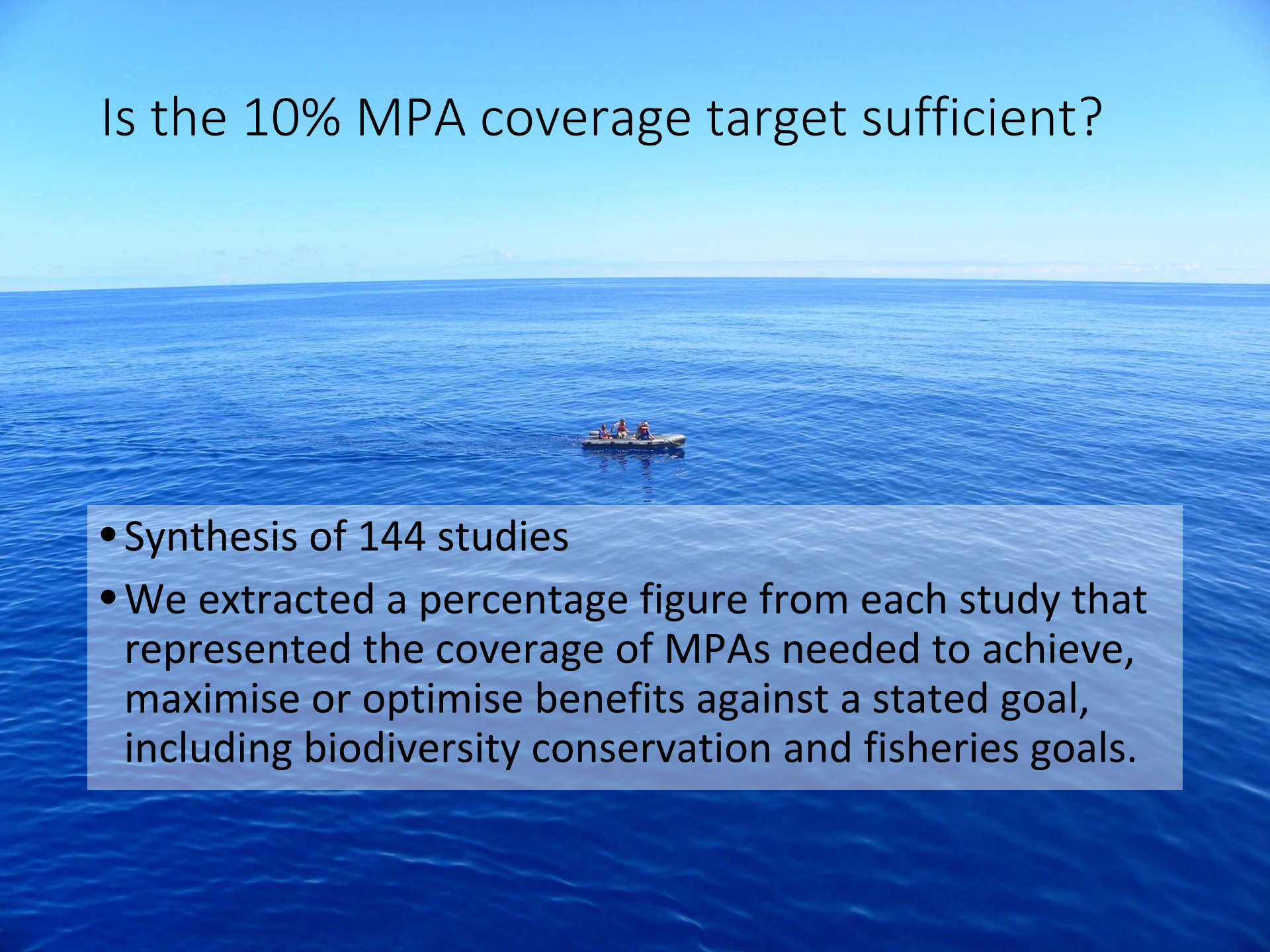
Key findings:

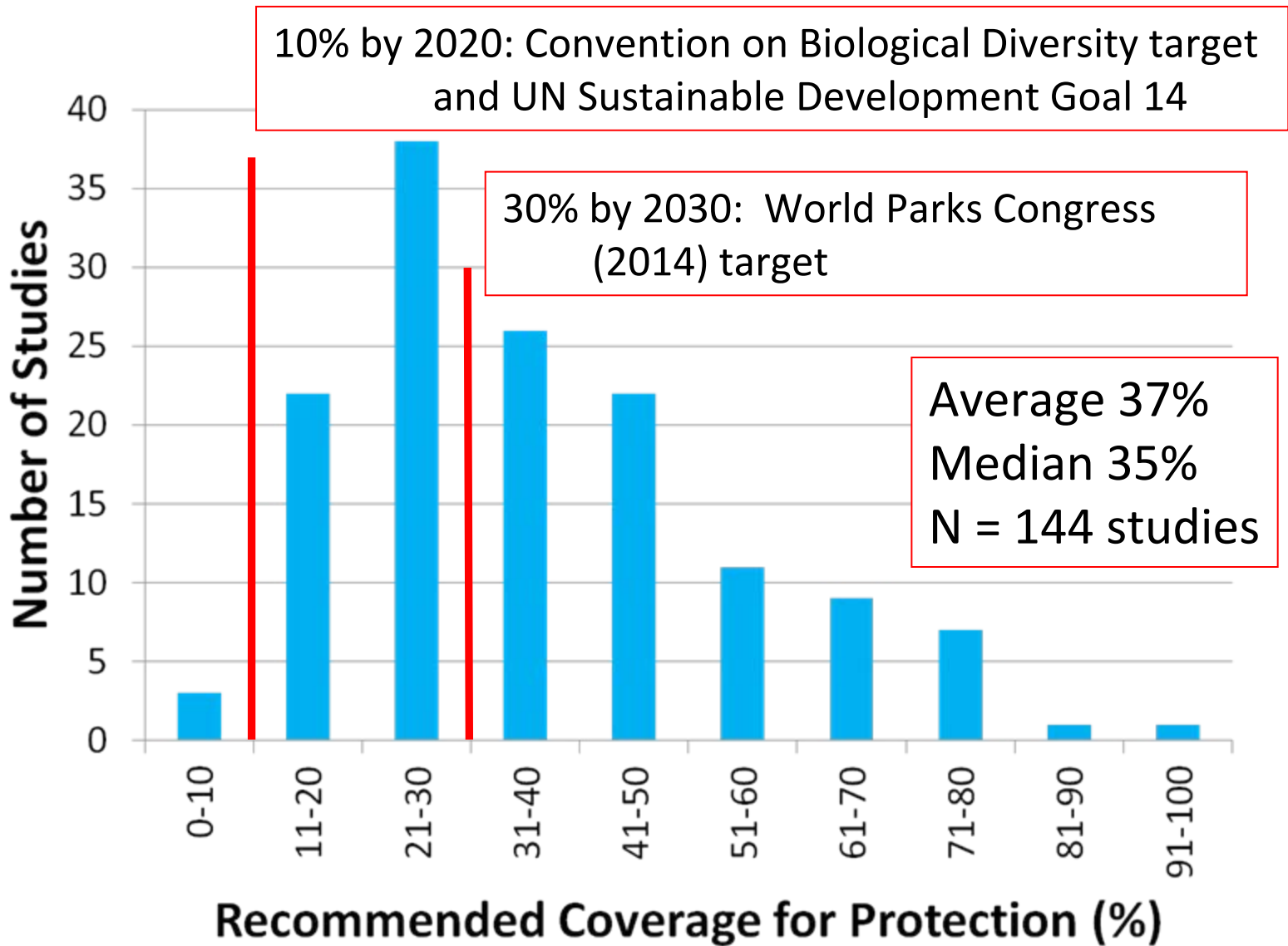
- Marine protected areas work best when they are fully protected from exploitation and other sources of harm.
- They do not work well when they receive only light protection, as is common practice today.
- Therefore, in meeting the 10% MPA target, countries should seek to maximise the inclusion of fully or strongly protected MPAs (IUCN categories, I and II), including fully protected zones within large, multiple use MPAs.

MPAs often fail for lack of finance, management, poor design etc. But many today are failing because of lack of ambition, based on the incorrect assumption that degraded ecosystems are actually in good shape (shifting baseline syndrome). The protection given must be sufficient to facilitate recovery.



Is the 10% MPA coverage target sufficient?

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- A wide-angle photograph of a vast, deep blue ocean under a clear sky. In the center, a small boat with three people is visible, creating a small wake. The horizon is visible in the distance.
- Synthesis of 144 studies
 - We extracted a percentage figure from each study that represented the coverage of MPAs needed to achieve, maximise or optimise benefits against a stated goal, including biodiversity conservation and fisheries goals.



O'Leary, Roberts et al. (2016) **Effective coverage targets for ocean protection** *Conservation Letters*

- Scientific evidence indicates that many of the desired benefits of MPAs will only be secured by MPA coverages in the region of several tens of percent of the oceans.
- The SDG 14 MPA target says countries should establish “at least 10% MPAs by 2020”.
- 10% is an important waypoint rather than the endpoint for ocean protection.