

# Elliott A. Norse

Marine Conservation Institute, 2122 112th Ave NE, Suite B-300, Bellevue WA 98004 USA

**Phone:** 1 425 968 0449 **E-mail:** [elliott.norse@marine-conservation.org](mailto:elliott.norse@marine-conservation.org)

**Web:** [www.marine-conservation.org](http://www.marine-conservation.org)

## POSITIONS

President, Marine Conservation Institute, Bellevue WA (1996-present)

Chief Scientist, Ocean Conservancy, Washington DC & Redmond WA (1989-96)

Senior Ecologist, The Wilderness Society, Seattle WA & Washington DC (1987-89)

Public Policy Director, Ecological Society of America, Washington DC (1983-87)

Director of Science and Policy, Ocean Conservancy, Washington DC (1981-82)

Staff Ecologist, White House Council on Environmental Quality, Washington DC (1979-81)

Marine Biologist, US Environmental Protection Agency, Washington DC (1978-79)

## NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Co-led effort that secured designation of 2 Central Pacific marine national monuments (2009)

Under Elliott's leadership, MCBI, in partnership with Environmental Defense Fund, worked to identify, nominate and advocate full protection for two sites protected by President Bush in January 2009: Pacific Remote Islands and Rose Atoll Marine National Monuments. These colossal areas include some of the most pristine tropical island and coral reef ecosystems in the world. MCBI rallied support for the President's action by working behind the scenes and by securing almost 200 scientists' signatures on a letter to the President.

Persuaded President Bush to designate Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument (2006)

Elliott devised and helped to carry out the political strategy that led President Bush to designate Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. At nearly 140,000 square miles (larger than Germany or New Mexico), it became the largest marine protected area in the world. This Monument is home to an incredible diversity of coral reef species, millions of seabirds and the highly endangered Hawaiian monk seal.

Co-authored the world's most-cited paper on ocean zoning/marine spatial planning (2006)

Elliott co-organized the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis interdisciplinary working group on ocean zoning of natural and social scientists that published paper in *Science* that diagnosed gaps and overlaps in government authority as the reason why comprehensive ecosystem-based ocean zoning is needed.

Was lead editor and author of *Marine Conservation Biology*, the first textbook in our field (2005)

With co-editor Larry Crowder, Elliott published *Marine Conservation Biology: The Science of Maintaining the Sea's Biodiversity*, the first textbook in this new field, whose major focus is conserving marine species and ecosystem, and ensuring their sustainability. Elliott assembled leading experts to write the 25 chapters, writing two of them himself, on pelagic protected areas and marine spatial management via ocean zoning. The book is used in upper-level and graduate classes in marine conservation around the world.

Authored and organized release of *Deep-sea Corals* statement signed by 1,452 scientists (2005)

In an effort to curtail bottom trawling by making corals and sponges the "poster children" of deep-sea conservation, Elliott wrote the *Scientists' Statement on Protecting the World's Deep-sea Coral and*

*Sponge Ecosystems*, which was signed by 1,452 scientists from 69 countries. It signifies unprecedented concern by experts in marine sciences and conservation biology, including some the world's foremost biologists. MCBI submitted the statement to the United Nations General Assembly to support protection of structurally complex ecosystems in international waters.

Secured protection for white abalone, the first marine invertebrate listed as Endangered in USA (2001)  
Elliott led the effort proposing the listing of California's white abalone as endangered, which the National Marine Fisheries Service did. It was the first marine invertebrate ever listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Catalyzed President Clinton's Executive Order 13158 on Marine Protected Areas (2000)  
Elliott organized and led a workshop of natural and social scientists on marine protected areas (MPAs)—particularly fully protected marine reserves—as a way to maintain biodiversity. He wrote a letter that was signed by participating scientists, calling on President Clinton to establish a national system of marine protected areas. With behind-the-scenes drafting help from MCBI, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13158, calling for a national system of MPAs and establishing the national MPA Center and the MPA Federal Advisory Committee. The national system of 225 MPAs became a reality in 2009.

Authored and organized release of *Troubled Waters* statement signed by 1,605 scientists (1998)  
Elliott wrote a statement called *Troubled Waters: A Call for Action*, which was signed by 1,605 conservation biologists and marine scientists from 70 countries. *Troubled Waters* states that the sea is vital to humankind, that it is in serious trouble and that governments and individuals must take five key steps to protect it. This unprecedented statement of worldwide scientific concern about the ocean got major news coverage in nations including the USA, Canada, UK, France, Russia, India, China and Australia.

Organized first and second *Symposia on Marine Conservation Biology* (1997 & 2001)  
To breathe life into the new science he envisioned, Elliott organized the first *Symposium on Marine Conservation Biology* in Victoria BC in 1997. The Symposium's astounding turnout of 1,051 scientists from many disciplines and 30 nations gathered to ways to protect and recover the sea's biodiversity, the first time this topic was the sole focus of a major international scientific meeting. It was so successful that Elliott and Lance Morgan organized and held the *Second Symposium on Marine Conservation Biology* in San Francisco CA in 2001.

Organized the first scientific workshop documenting global impacts of bottom trawling (1996)  
Elliott and Les Watling organized the first scientific workshop on effects of bottom trawling on the world's marine ecosystems, with scientists from five nations, which led in 1998 to the publication of a cover article in the journal *Conservation Biology* with Les Watling called "Disturbance of the seabed by mobile fishing gear: A comparison with forest clearcutting." It is the world's most-cited scientific paper on bottom trawling impacts.

Founded Marine Conservation Biology Institute (1996)  
Seeing the need for a bolder, scientifically stronger nonprofit organization that could better safeguard the oceans' web of life, Elliott founded Marine Conservation Biology Institute (MCBI) to advance the science of marine conservation biology and to secure protection for ocean ecosystems. Since then, MCBI has become the world's most influential marine conservation organization.

Published *Global Marine Biological Diversity*, landmark book in marine conservation (1993)

To shape ocean protection as part of the new Convention on Biological Diversity, Elliott was the editor and lead author of what became the definitive book in marine conservation, *Global Marine Biological Diversity: A Strategy for Building Conservation into Decision Making*. In it he warned that the oceans are in trouble and envisioned the need for a new multidisciplinary science of marine conservation biology. It is now the world's most-cited book in marine conservation.

Imported marine spatial planning to the USA (1992-2009)

In 1992, Elliott began learning about ecosystem-based marine spatial planning (MSP) and ocean zoning when visiting Australia's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. He has published and addressed key audiences in speaking venues on MSP with increasing frequency since 1993. He persuaded the Pew Oceans Commission to call for comprehensive ocean zoning, and co-organized the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis study on ocean zoning which led to the *Science* paper "Resolving mismatches in U.S. ocean governance" by Crowder et al. (2006) (Elliott is one of the als), the most-cited US paper on marine spatial management. Since President Obama's recent proclamation on national ocean policy, Elliott has been working behind the scenes to catalyze the transformation in US ocean governance, from sectoral to comprehensive ecosystem-based spatial management.

Wrote two books that helped transform US national forest policy in the 1980s and '90s

In 1986, Elliott was the lead author of *Conserving Biological Diversity in Our National Forests*, which was the first book about conservation with biological diversity in the title and the origin of the 3-level definition of biological diversity widely used today. In 1990, Elliott wrote *Ancient Forests of the Pacific Northwest*, which was used by the Clinton Administration as justification for the Northwest Forest Plan that saved spotted owls and their old-growth forest ecosystems.

Helped Michael Soulé found the Society for Conservation Biology (1986)

As Public Policy Director of the Ecological Society of America, Elliott met with Michael, Ted LaRoe, Tom Lovejoy and Bill Conway to strategize about the structure and functioning of a new scientific professional society dedicated to protecting life on Earth. The Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) is a global organization dedicated to advancing the science and practice of conserving the Earth's biological diversity, with more than 12,000 members in over 140 countries. Elliott became one of its 16 Founding Life Members, and later was elected President of SCB's Marine Section.

Persuaded President Carter to designate four National Marine Sanctuaries (1980-81)

As Staff Ecologist at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, Elliott was instrumental in securing the designation of four National Marine Sanctuaries: Gray's Reef off Georgia, Looe Key off Florida, and Channel Islands and Gulf of the Farallones off California. His efforts tripled the number of National Marine Sanctuaries, and kept oil drilling out of these special marine habitats.

Defined the concept of biological diversity (1980 *Council on Environmental Quality Annual Report*)

Elliott and co-author Roger McManus were the first to define the concept of biological diversity and explore its importance in the "Biological Diversity" chapter of *Environmental Quality 1980: The Eleventh Annual Report of the Council on Environmental Quality*. In it they developed most of the reasoning for maintaining biological diversity that is used today. Their concept supplanted less comprehensive utilitarian and endangered species concepts, and has fundamentally changed conservation around the world.

## HONORS

Seattle Aquarium Medal (2012)

Brooklyn College Distinguished Alumnus of the Year (2008)  
NOAA Fisheries' Nancy Foster Award for Habitat Conservation (2006)  
Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation (1997)  
Evergreen Award for Dedication to Quality of Life in Washington State (1996)

## EDUCATION

Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Iowa, Department of Zoology (1975-78)  
Ph.D., University of Southern California, Department of Biological Sciences (1969-75)  
B.S., Brooklyn College, Biology Department (1965-69). Honors in biology, geology & music

## SELECTED SCIENTIFIC AND POLICY PRESENTATIONS (over 300, including)

UNESCO, Woods Hole Oceanographic Inst., Yale U., Cornell U., Rutgers U., U. of Virginia, Duke U. Marine Lab., U. of Texas Marine Science Center, Gwaii Haanas National Park, U. of Washington, Scripps Inst. of Oceanography, US Commission on Ocean Policy; House Oceans Caucus, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, IUCN IVth World Parks Congress, International Marine Conservation Congress

## PUBLICATIONS

Norse, E.A., S. Brooke, WWL Cheung, M.R. Clark, I. Ekeland, R Froese, K.M. Gjerde, R.L. Haedrich, S.S. Heppell, T. Morato, L.E. Morgan, D. Pauly, R. Sumaila & R. Watson (2012). Sustainability of deep-sea fisheries. *Marine Policy* 36(2):307-320

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Norse, E.A., L.B. Crowder, K. Gjerde, D. Hyrenbach, C.M. Roberts, C. Safina & M.E. Soulé (2005). Place-based ecosystem management in the open ocean. Pp. 302-327 in E.A. Norse & L.B. Crowder, eds. (2005). *Marine Conservation Biology: The Science of Maintaining the Sea's Biodiversity*. Island Press, Washington DC

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