

Marae Moana — Cook Islands' Whole-EEZ Marine Park Amid Deep-Sea Mining Tensions

PES & Nature-Based Solutions · Good practice · Cook Islands

Quality score: 13/100

Evidence strength: Cautionary / limited

Summary

The Marae Moana Act 2017 made the Cook Islands' 1.9-million-km² EEZ a marine park, 16% under strict no-take protection — but since 2022 the government has licensed deep-sea mineral exploration inside it, drawing sustained conservation and public opposition.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Carbon — sequestration / storage, evidenced	0/3
Biodiversity — conservation / improvement, evidenced	1/3
Water & soil — retention, infiltration, erosion control	0/3
Fire resilience — risk reduction, evidenced	0/3
Governance, certification & transferability	1/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[Cook Islands Government \(Marae Moana Coordination Office / National Environment Service\)](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[Marae Moana official site](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[Mongabay — seafloor mining controversy](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[IUCN — Marae Moana background](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

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