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Sommario/riassunto	The conservation of marine benthic biodiversity is a recognised goal of a number of national and international programs such as the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (CBD). In order to attain this goal, information is needed about the distribution of life in the ocean so that spatial conservation measures such as marine protected areas (MPAs) can be designed to maximise protection within boundaries of acceptable dimensions. Ideally, a map would be produced that showed the distribution of benthic biodiversity to enable the efficient design of MPAs. The dilemma is that such maps do no