

Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



What is Goal 14?

The oceans contain 96% of the world's water and cover as much as 71% of the surface of our planet, and yet little is known about marine resources, ecosystems, genes and species. Regional or local fisheries agreements may attempt to sustainably manage commercial fishing for particular species at certain times of year or locations. Yet species are overfished in most of the world's oceans especially by illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including factory fishing operations, certain subsidies and methods of fishing with high levels of by-catch. Other dangers to the health of the world's oceans are marine pollution from land-based activities and ocean acidification.

Goal 14 strives to balance human activities in coastal areas and on board ships with prevention of harm to the marine environment, particularly in light of the need for more scientific research and knowledge. This goal is quite ambitious in its nature as it requires local, regional, national and international coordination and cooperation to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems and increase the resilience of coastal zones, as well as to restore fish stocks and ensure marine biodiversity. Goal 14 also attempts to reduce marine debris and nutrient pollution that negatively affects the health of living marine resources and will affect future generations to come.

What are the Targets?

- 1
- By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution
- 2

- By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans
- **3**
- Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels
- **4**
- By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics
- **5**
- By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information
- **6**
- By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation
- **7**
- By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

Means of Implementation

- **a**

Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries

- **b**

Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

- **c**

Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want



Is this Possible?

Goal 14 is an ambitious goal that requires coordination on every level and compliance with legal regimes like the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), regional fisheries agreements, a variety of international treaties governing human activities in, on and near the ocean, and voluntary guidelines. Best practices will need to be used in the shipping and extractive industries. States must begin implementing steps and sharing technology to help protect marine resources, deepen scientific knowledge of the oceans, and ensure sustainable fisheries to feed the world's populations. Protecting artisanal fisheries and aiding Small Island Developing States to develop sustainable fisheries management and sustainable tourism will contribute to ending poverty and finding decent work for all.

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