

Towards an inter-agency
Plan of Action
for achieving the
trade-related targets of
Sustainable Development Goal 14



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



What?

GLOBAL POLICY CONTEXT

Oceans and seas are not only a major source of food, they have enormous cultural significance and offer fundamental recreational and economic benefits to humanity. The resources contained in oceans and seas hold great potential for boosting economic growth, creating employment and fostering innovation. The Oceans economy, also called Blue economy or Blue growth, is increasingly recognized as indispensable for addressing challenges from food security and climate change to the provision of energy, natural resources and improved well-being. Major sectors of the Oceans economy with international trade potential include fisheries, aquaculture, seafood processing, biotechnology, renewable energy, marine transport, mining and oil production, port infrastructure and services, and coastal and maritime tourism.

BENEFITS FROM OCEANS AND SEAS

Fisheries and aquaculture provide food, jobs and economic benefits for millions of people across the world. Global fish production was estimated at 171 million tons in 2016, supplying around 20.3 kg/capita per year and 17 per cent of global animal proteins and essential micronutrients. Upstream and downstream activities along the fish and seafood value chain create significant employment and economic benefits to countries and their local coastal communities. Indeed, roughly 59.6 million people were employed in fisheries and aquaculture in 2016 and fish and seafood value chains generated some 200 million direct and indirect employment opportunities.

- Global fish production: 171 million tons in 2016
- People employed in fisheries and aquaculture: 59.6 million in 2016
- Direct and indirect employment opportunities along the value chain: 200 million
- Women represent about half of the people employed along the fish and seafood value chain

FISHERIES AS A SECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Fish and seafood are some of the most traded food commodities. In 2017, some 35 to 38 per cent of global fish and seafood production was traded internationally generating US\$152 billion. Over 50 per cent of this trade originates in developing countries where net trade income (exports minus imports) was valued at \$37 billion in 2016.

This figure is greater than the net income of most other agricultural commodities combined. In Pacific Small Island Development States (SIDS), fish can constitute between 30 and 80 per cent of exports, which is due in part to the large Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in the region and the value of fish species such as tuna. Likewise, the share of fish trade flows for some West African countries represents between 5 to 12 per cent of GDP.

- 35 to 38 percent of world fish production is traded internationally
- Value of global fish exports was \$152 billion in 2017
- 59 percent of fish trade originates in developing countries
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Why the inter-agency Plan of Action?

THE PROBLEM

The rapid and unsustainable growth in exploiting living aquatic resources during recent decades has led to overfishing and the degradation of fish stocks, habitats, ecosystems and biodiversity. Currently, about one-third of global fish stocks are at biologically unsustainable levels, causing an economic loss estimated at 83 billion per year. In addition, over \$6 billion per year is lost due to diseases in aquaculture (World Bank, 2017).

There is a serious risk that climate change will have a severe effect on fishing and fish farming communities on a global scale because of regional ecosystem damage and the increased number of people at risk, especially in coastal and low-lying areas and atolls. This is likely to cause loss of livelihoods, displacement and migration of human populations due to floods, storms or changes in fisheries distributions.

**Overfishing and
unsustainable
fisheries
management**

**\$83 billion loss for fisheries per year, \$ 6 billion
loss from diseases in aquaculture per year**

**Climate change
impacts**

**Floods, storms, ocean acidification, sea level rise,
changes in fisheries distribution due to ocean
warming and deoxygenation, damage to coastal
infrastructure, fisheries and ecosystems (erosion,
soil salinization, impact on agriculture)**

UNSUSTAINABLE RESOURCE USE

Inadequately regulated coastal development, pollution, the overexploitation of fisheries, and the uncontrolled growth of tourism beyond the carrying capacity of sensitive habitats can badly damage or degrade coastal and marine ecosystems.

Unsustainable resource use has been a result of weaknesses in governance, inappropriate policies, a focus on short-term economic gain over long-term planning, limited institutional capacity to manage population growth and movement along the coast, the prevalence of corruption, and a reluctance among some governments to consider co-management arrangements with local communities and user groups. However, a very important driver of marine degradation may be inadequate public awareness of the benefits that healthy and productive coastal ecosystems provide, as well as opportunities to benefit from them sustainably.



THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14 ON OCEANS OFFER THE LAST OPPORTUNITY



A new opportunity has arisen with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015. This Agenda calls on countries to express their priorities and commitments, to formulate strategies and plans and adopt policies, programmes and partnerships to achieve their national goals and targets.

For the first time, a Global Goal on Oceans and Seas has been adopted. Sustainable Development Goal 14 is exclusively dedicated to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14 TRADE-RELATED TARGETS:

target 14.4

By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices, 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.

target 14.6

By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) 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.

target 14.7

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.

target 14.B

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

There are four economy and trade-related targets in Sustainable Development Goal 14, including three means of implementation. They aim to:

- restore fish stocks
- eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and harmful fisheries practices
- increase economic benefits for Small Island Development States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) from the sustainable use of marine resources
- improve market access and economic benefits for small scale artisanal fisheries

Aspirational aims and targets have been set and sought in the past, but better coordination between countries and more integrated approaches, initiatives and interventions are necessary to achieve these goals. Agenda 2030 for sustainable development is possibly the last opportunity to address the obstacles and root causes of unsustainable practices in fisheries and aquaculture through transformational changes that are delivered in a comprehensive and integrated way.



Why invest in the inter-agency Plan of Action?

UNCTAD, FAO AND UN ENVIRONMENT MADE A VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14

The agencies propose this inter-agency Plan of Action (POA) which has been designed to accelerate the achievement of the trade-related targets of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in a coordinated manner.

Drawing on the complementary mandates of the three agencies, the Plan of Action proposes a strategy and key actions using innovative approaches and tools around the oceans/blue economy



In particular, the Plan of Action aims to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in meeting the trade-related aspects of Sustainable Development Goal 14, with a focus on SIDS and LDCs.

Envisioned goal and outcomes

THE GOAL OF THE INTER-AGENCY PLAN OF ACTION:

ACCELERATE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF TRADE-RELATED TARGETS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14 THROUGH IMPROVED TRADE AND TRADE-RELATED POLICIES THAT SAFEGUARD FOOD SECURITY AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF OCEANS, LIVING MARINE RESOURCES AND LIVELIHOODS.

Envisaged outcomes:

Activities:

Outcome 1:
Promoting multilateral oceans and trade-related reforms through dialogue, cooperation and consensus building

- Annual Oceans Forum,
- Policy briefs,
- Technical advice on fish subsidies notifications and seafood Non-Tariff-Measures (NTM) mapping

Outcome 2:
Strengthening national and regional capacities on policy frameworks for sustainable seafood trade and the development of other oceans based sectors

- Blue economy reviews,
- Capacity building to support national fisheries policy reform,
- Fishery improvement programmes and a methodology to map trade in fisheries services

Outcome 3:
Enhancing awareness, knowledge and capacity to implement effective governance & sustainable seafood trade and other oceans based sectors

- best practices compilation for sustainable seafood trade,
- best practices training for small scale fisheries,
- regional capacity building workshops, communication campaign & resources dissemination

Timeline short-medium term: 2020-2025
Final Implementation: 2025-2030

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE
REFER TO:**

UNCTAD

<https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-and-Environment/Oceans-Economy-Trade-Strategies.aspx>

FAO

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/16045/en>

UN ENVIRONMENT

<https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/green-economy/what-we-do/environment-and-trade-hub/fisheries-subsidies>

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