



COMMON OCEANS

PRESERVING THE WORLD'S LAST GLOBAL COMMONS

GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE AREAS BEYOND
NATIONAL JURISDICTION (ABNJ)

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL




GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET



THE WORLD BANK



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Oceans, seas and coastal areas provide a vital source of nutritious food, employment, recreation, trade and socio-economic benefits for millions of people around the world as well as other goods and services that are vital for the very existence of life on earth. Capture fisheries and aquaculture provide about 4.3 billion people with about 15 percent of their average per capita intake of animal protein and contribute, either directly or indirectly, over 200 million jobs globally. All in all, over one in ten people depend on fisheries for their livelihoods and well-being. Travel and tourism, ports and associated infrastructures, mining activities and energy production also use oceans and seas to create jobs and economic and social opportunities.

Yet, growing threats – from marine pollution and overfishing to ocean acidification, illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing and habitat destruction – are all compromising the ability of the oceans to continue providing vital ecosystem services and essential resources.

Oceans are the life support system of Earth, producing half of the oxygen that we breathe, cycling over 93 percent of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and storing over half of all naturally sequestered carbon, and absorbing 80 percent of the heat added to the global system in the last 200 years.

What are Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)

The marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) are those areas of ocean for which no one nation has the specific or sole responsibility for management. They make up 40 percent of the surface of our planet, comprising 64 percent of the surface of the oceans and nearly 95 percent of its volume.

Often considered the world's last global commons, the complex ecosystems in the ABNJ include the water columns and seabed of the high seas and are at vast distances from coasts, making the sustainable management of the fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in those areas extremely difficult and challenging.

These ecosystems are subject to negative impacts from all sectors and human activities – from shipping to marine pollution to deep-sea fishing and mining – all compounded by a lack of

comprehensive legal instruments and coherent governance. One of the biggest threats is overfishing. Without urgent action, the currently unsustainable management of many ABNJ fisheries, and the ineffective protection of related ecosystems, will have devastating results on the marine biodiversity, on the socio-economic well-being and food security of the millions of people directly dependent on those fisheries.

Seeking to generating change in ABNJ management, the *Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Program*, has been approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) under the lead of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and in close collaboration with two other GEF agencies, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Bank, as well as other partners.

ABNJ PROGRAM – PROTECTING VULNERABLE DEEP-SEA ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES

Focusing on tuna and deep-sea fisheries, in parallel with the conservation of biodiversity, the ABNJ Program aims to promote efficient and sustainable management of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ and to get on track with the global targets agreed in international fora.

The five-year ABNJ Program is an innovative and comprehensive initiative comprised of four projects which bring together governments, regional management bodies, relevant private sectors and industries to work towards ensuring the sustainable use and conservation of the ABNJ biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The Program concentrates on short-term milestones as part of a long-term plan to establish the strong networks, best management practices and facilitated information sharing needed to make a transformational impact towards responsible and sustainable use of ABNJ resources.

Who will benefit from the ABNJ Program?

The ABNJ fisheries contribute significantly to employment, nutrition and trade. Although the benefits vary greatly among areas, it is well-known that millions of families in both developing and developed countries depend on jobs in fishing as well as in associated activities – from boat construction and manufacturing of gears to pre- and post-harvesting of seafood.

The ABNJ Program is intended to help ensure their food security and livelihoods through the long-term management and sustainability of ABNJ fisheries and the ecosystems on which they depend. This means understanding and

taking into account the priorities and needs of more than 85 percent fishing countries, including developing coastal and island nations. At stake are 60 percent of the world's oceans and related marine resources valued at well over US\$10 billion annually. The Program can also help States better fulfill their obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, particularly regarding the conservation and management of living resources and ecosystems in the high seas. It will further promote the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and address global calls to reduce the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing presently undermining efforts for promoting sustainable ecosystem-based practices.

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TUNA FISHERIES AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE ABNJ (FAO)

This project will focus on three component areas:

- governance and Rights-Based Management (RBM)
- strengthening and harmonization of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS)
- reduction of ecosystem impact of tuna fishing, including bycatch and associated species

Certain aspects will focus on all Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), including Member countries, while other elements will concentrate on priority countries, regions and fisheries with a view towards capacity development.

This project will play a significant role in progressing from the use of fisheries management systems and fishing practices that do not fully take into account the status of existing stocks as well as the impacts on ecosystems, to the adoption of management systems based on clear and fair fishing rights within the framework of a rigorous ecosystem approach, thereby ensuring efficient and sustainable fishing over the years.

OBJECTIVE:

Achieve the sustainable and efficient tuna production and biodiversity conservation through an ecosystem approach

PARTNERS:

World Wide Fund for Nature, International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, Bird Life International, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (United States of America) and five tuna-Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs)¹

FINANCING:

US\$27 million in GEF grants leveraged by US\$180 million in co-financing

FAO estimates that tuna catches account for about eight percent of the total value of world fisheries and the ABNJ area as a whole over 10 percent.

¹ The five tuna RFMOs: Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) which is an intergovernmental organization established under Article XIV of the FAO constitution, Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) - see also www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/search/en





SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION OF DEEP-SEA LIVING RESOURCES AND ECOSYSTEMS IN THE ABNJ (FAO AND UNEP)

OBJECTIVE:

Enhance sustainability in the use of deep-sea living resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ through the systematic application of an ecosystem approach

PARTNERS:

Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, East African Seas Regional Coordination Unit partners, five RFMOs/ or organizations with the competence to manage deep-sea high seas fisheries² (SEAFO, GFCM, NAFO, NEAFC, CCLMAR) and emerging RFMOs: the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC)

FINANCING:

US\$8 million in GEF grants leveraged with US\$29 million in co-financing

Deep-sea fisheries in the high seas take place at great depths, usually below 200 meters, and occur in waters beyond national jurisdiction on continental slopes or isolated oceanic topographic structures such as seamounts, ridge systems and banks. These deep-sea fisheries comprise a valuable part of ABNJ – FAO estimates that the total global catch in 2006 of approximately 60 deep-sea species was around 250 000 tonnes worth more than US\$400 million and involved at least 27 flag states. From a biodiversity viewpoint, they are unique – the seamounts and the water column above them serve as habitats for many species of fish, marine mammals and benthic organisms. Yet, expansion of deep-seas fisheries from coastal waters under national jurisdiction into high seas areas and the potential negative impact on fish stocks, globally significant biodiversity and critical habitats, has become an issue of international concern.

This project will focus on four component areas:

- Improved policy and legal frameworks
- Reducing adverse impacts on VMEs and EBSAs
- Improved planning and adaptive management for ABNJ deep-sea fisheries
- Development and testing of a methodology for area-based planning (UNEP)

It will contribute to improving for deep-sea fisheries management and biodiversity conservation, including better protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) and Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), and assist in better area-based planning for deep-sea ecosystems.

² South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO), General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), Commission on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCLMAR)





OCEAN PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION - MODELS FOR INNOVATION AND REFORM (WORLD BANK)

OBJECTIVE:

Demonstrate fisheries management effectiveness in 5 priority seascapes

- Identity priority seascape hotspots
- Improve operational effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas and fisheries
- Mobilize consensus around governance issues

PARTNER:

Conservation International

FINANCING:

US\$10 million in GEF grants leveraged with US\$30m in co-financing

Recognizing that the ABNJ Program offers opportunities to generate positive economic, social and environmental outcomes, this project aims to catalyze a series of demonstrative, influential and transformational pilots. It adopts a coast-to-coast approach to ensure connectivity between coastal zones, exclusive economic zones (EEZ)³ and the ABNJ within which fish and bycatch species (including aquatic animal and seabird biodiversity) migrate and are captured.

This project will focus on three component areas:

- Development of transformational pilot projects and supporting activities for sustainable fisheries in priority seascapes that include both EEZs and ABNJ
- Oceans Innovation Challenge fund
- Monitoring and evaluation of pilots and Challenge Grants. Advocacy and lesson learning from project process

The Ocean Partnership will identify priority seascape hotspots, improve operational effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas and fisheries and mobilize consensus around governance issues. It will also sponsor the development, testing and implementation of various types of seascape protection leading to sustainable conservation, efficiency, conservation and less destructive exploitation through more effective management, particularly through clearly defined harvesting rights and enforceable claims to resource rents.

³ Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) refers to those areas over which a state has special rights over the exploration and use of marine resources, stretching from the seaward edge of the state's territorial sea to 200 nautical miles from its coast.



STRENGTHENING GLOBAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE ABNJ (FAO)

This project will focus on five main areas:

- Facilitating cross-sectoral policy dialogues
- Fostering communities of practice
- Establishing ocean fellowship program
- Public outreach network
- Creating an ABNJ portal

This project will strengthen and broaden overall multi-stakeholder dialogue and policy coordination in ABNJ by promoting the efficient sharing of practical knowledge and experiences for fisheries and ecosystems in the ABNJ by cultivating knowledge exchange and networking as well as facilitating meaningful dialogue and better coordination.

OBJECTIVE:

Promote effective global and regional coordination on ABNJ including the exchange of information

PARTNERS:

Global Ocean Forum

FINANCING:

US\$1 million in GEF grants leveraged with US\$4 million in co-financing

WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN THE ABNJ PROGRAM MAKE?

The global community – international organizations, civil society, RFMOs and others - has been working to tackle problems associated with ABNJ governance to ensure sustainability of fisheries and to protect biodiversity. And while there have been some accomplishments, many problems persist.

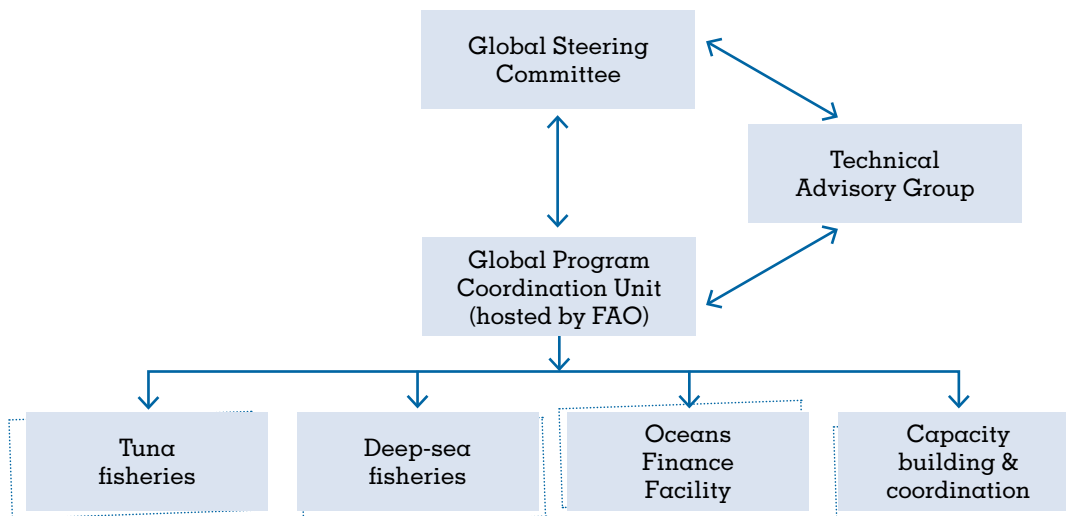
The ABNJ Program offers an opportunity to move further - and to move together - by leveraging resources, knowledge and experience from partners to bring about transformational changes. By providing leadership in making the sustainability of ABNJ a priority, ultimately, the Program will lead to improved global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ:

- moving towards the ecosystem approach and rights-based systems and away from the race to fish
- increasing our ability to protect fragile ecosystems
- fostering international and cross-sectoral coordination and sharing of information

By effectively managing fisheries and conservation of marine biodiversity in the high seas, the promise of sustaining the oceans and its benefits for future generations can be fulfilled.

Overall program structure – bringing it all together

FAO, serving as the Global Program Coordination Unit, will be supported by a Global Steering Committee comprised of representation from key partners and a Technical Advisory Group made of scientific and technical experts that work to ensure participation and full involvement of key partners from the policy, technical, and scientific communities as well as industry.





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