The Sustainable Development Goals Extended Report 2025

Inputs and information provided as of 30 April 2025

Note: This unedited 'Extended Report' includes all indicator storyline contents as provided by the SDG indicator custodian agencies as of 30 April 2025. For instances where the custodian agency has not submitted a storyline for an indicator, please see the custodian agency focal point information for further information. The 'Extended Report' aims to provide the public with additional information regarding the SDG indicators and is compiled by the Statistics Division (UNSD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Storylines presented in this document may slightly differ from figures cited in the SDG Report 2025 text due to the timing of the submission and the subsequent updates received upon finalizing the Report.

Contents

Target 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

Indicator 14.1.1 (a) Index of coastal eutrophication; and (b) plastic debris density

Custodian agency(ies): UNEP

Target 14.2 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

Indicator 14.2.1 Number of countries using ecosystem-based approaches to managing marine areas

Nations are moving beyond policy formulation and into implementation in Marine Spatial Planning

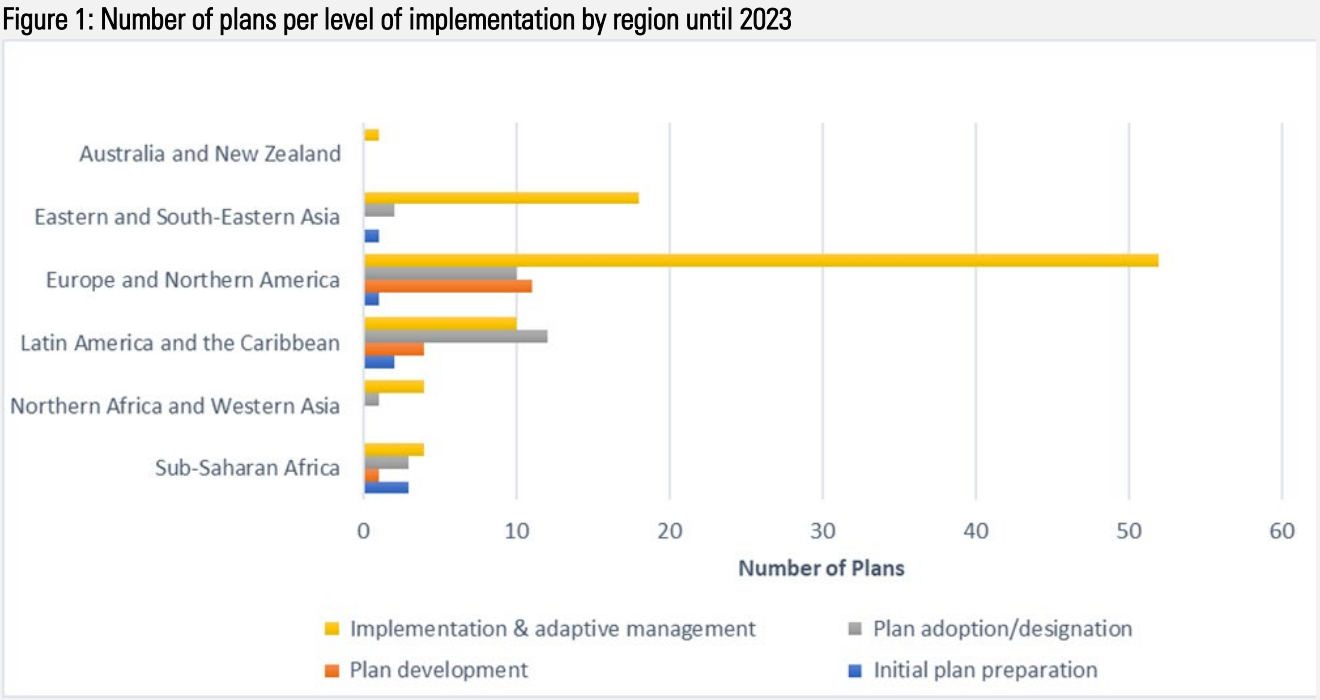
Sustainable ocean management is no longer a choice—it is a necessity. As marine ecosystems face increasing pressures from pollution, habitat destruction, and climate change, countries worldwide are advancing their efforts to implement ecosystem-based approaches to manage marine areas. Regular assessments, such as the *State of the Ocean Report*, published biennially, help track these efforts and provide insights into emerging trends and challenges in marine spatial planning.

SDG indicator 14.2.1, which tracks the number of countries adopting ecosystem-based management, provides a crucial insight into global progress. The latest data reveal encouraging trends: across all regions, nations are moving beyond policy formulation and into implementation (Figure 1). However, disparities remain. While Europe and North America have led in adaptive management, many nations in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean are still in the early stages of planning.

The adoption of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is instrumental in achieving SDG Target 14.2—the sustainable management and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems. By integrating terrestrial and marine policies, these approaches enhance resilience, reduce conflicts, and optimize the use of ocean space.

Despite progress, challenges persist. Data gaps, lack of institutional coordination, and limited financial resources hinder implementation, particularly in developing nations. Strengthening capacity-building efforts and fostering international collaboration remain essential.

Figure 1: Number of plans per level of implementation by region until 2023



The path forward is clear: achieving healthy and productive oceans requires strong policy commitment, cross-sectoral integration, and adaptive governance. By enhancing the implementation of ICZM and MSP, countries can secure long-term sustainability for marine ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

The State of the Ocean Report 2024: A Global Update on Marine Spatial Planning highlights a promising trend: 126 countries and territories are now engaged in MSP initiatives—a 20% increase from the previous year, with significant progress in Africa and Oceania. Despite this progress, only 45 countries have formally approved marine spatial plans, reflecting the need for further capacity-building and policy integration.

Across the globe, four pilot projects—in the Gulf of Guinea, the Southeast Pacific, the Western Mediterranean, and the Western Pacific—are demonstrating the power of regional cooperation, ecosystem-based management, and sustainable blue economy strategies to drive meaningful progress (Table 1).

These initiatives demonstrate that MSP is more than a policy—it is a pathway to resilient ocean governance. Therefore, the way forward requires accelerated implementation, stronger regional partnerships, and climate-smart planning.

Table 1: MSPglobal regional pilot project highlights (UNESCO-IOC)

Region	Countries Involved	Status	Key Outcomes
Gulf of Guinea	Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo	Ongoing (2023-2025)	Strengthened MSP processes and regional ocean governance
Southeast Pacific	Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Colombia, Panama	Completed (2018-2021)	Binational MSP recommendations and a transboundary roadmap
Western Mediterranean	Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia	Completed (2018-2021)	Roadmap for MSP and Sustainable Blue Economy
Western Pacific	China, Fiji, Thailand	Ongoing (2023-2025)	Strengthened MSP processes and regional ocean governance

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- Understanding the State of the Ocean: A Global Manual on Measuring SDG 14.1.1, SDG 14.2.1 and SDG 14.5.1 (UNEP, 2021): https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/35086
- Regional Seas Programme: https://www.unep.org/topics/ocean-seas-and-coasts/regional-seas-programme/regional-seas-programme
- Marine Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management Approaches to Support the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goal Targets 14.1 and 14.2 (UNEP, 2018): https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/26440
- State of the Ocean Report 2024 (IOC-UNESCO, 2024): https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000390054
- MSPglobal: https://www.mspglobal2030.org/

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Custodian agency(ies): UNEP

Target 14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels

Indicator 14.3.1 Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations

Ocean acidification – a global issue with local and regional effects and impacts

The ocean absorbs around one quarter of the annual emissions of anthropogenic CO2 to the atmosphere (2), thereby helping to buffer the impacts of climate change on the planet (3). The cost of this process to the ocean is high, as the CO2 reacts with seawater and changes the carbonate chemistry, resulting in a decrease of pH, referred to as ocean acidification. Ocean acidification is expected to affect organisms and ecosystem services, including food security, by reducing biodiversity, degrading habitats, and in association endangering fisheries and aquaculture. It is also expected to impact coastal protection, by weakening coral reefs, which shield the coastline and tourism operations that rely on intact and functioning marine ecosystems. Ocean acidification will continue to increase (IPCC 2021: high confidence)(3), with consequences for the global climate: As the acidity of the ocean increases, its capacity to absorb CO2 from the atmosphere decreases, impeding the ocean's role in moderating climate change(4).

Figure 1: Map illustrating surface ocean carbonate chemistry measurement locations received for SDG Indicator 14.3.1 reporting. Countries highlighted in light blue reported data in accordance with the SDG 14.3.1 Indicator methodology.

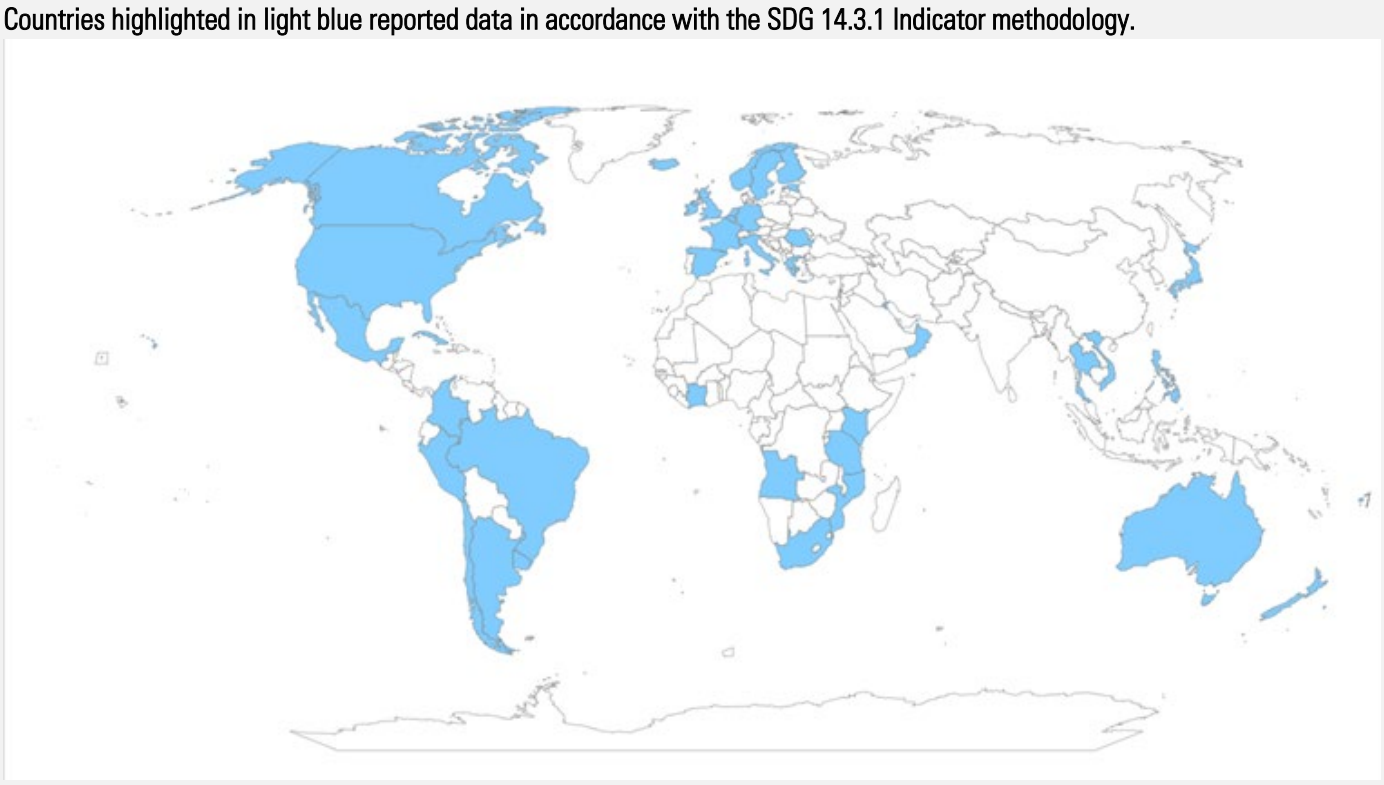
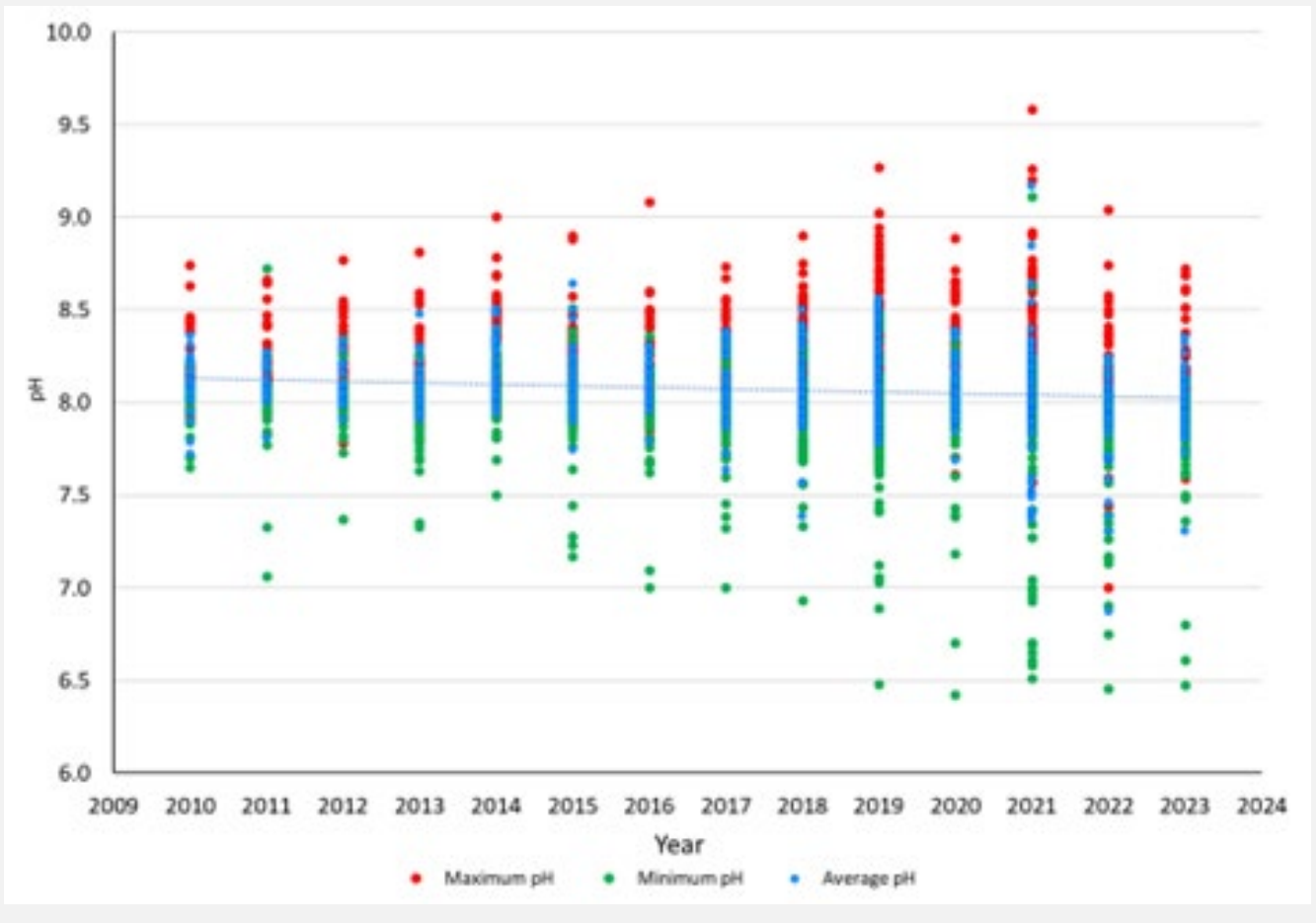
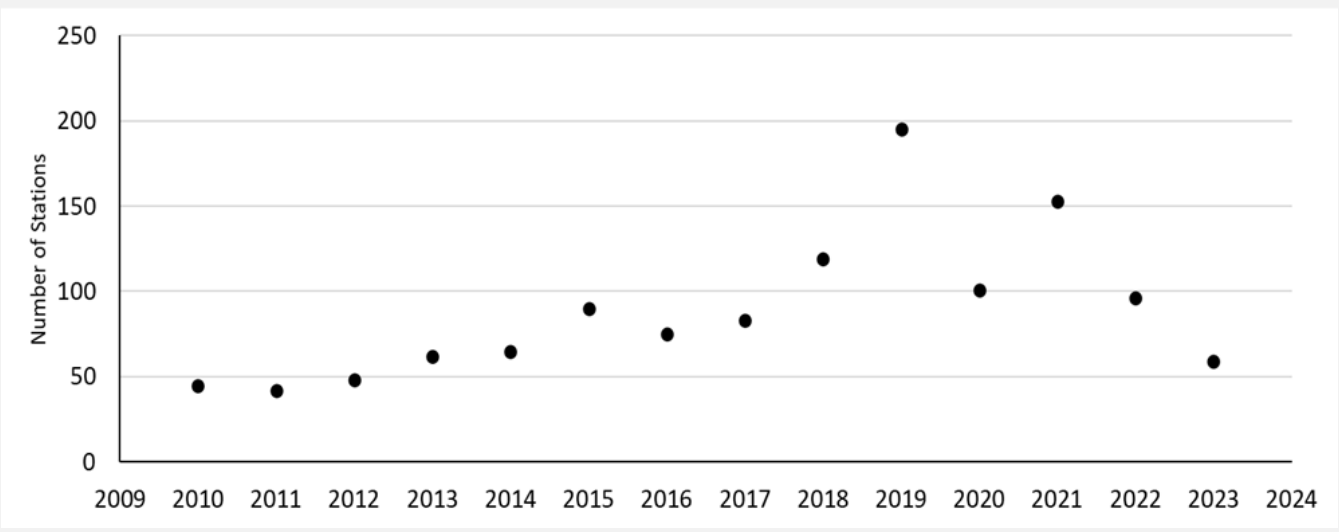


Figure 2: Variations in the annual average pH values (± standard deviation) from a suite of representative sampling stations in open and coastal waters.





Ocean acidification has been observed globally, in all ocean basins and seas. Monitoring of the rate and extent of change requires continued observations at high spatial and temporal resolutions, particularly if mitigation and adaptation strategies at relevant scales are to be developed. The growing number of observations of ocean acidification confirms the importance of these observations for a more detailed regional view of the patterns and trends around the globe.

The number of stations in all ocean basins for which ocean acidification data was reported continues to increase, providing a more detailed regional view of the patterns and trends in ocean acidification around the globe (178 stations in 2021; 765 in 2025). The reported observations of ocean acidification show great regional variability. While a limited set of long-term observations sites in the open ocean have shown a continuous decline in pH over the last 20 to 30 years, at a national scale, and in coastal regions, indicator datasets present a more varied picture. In addition to absorbing atmospheric CO2, coastal areas are subject to a range of additional processes affecting the carbonate chemistry of the water, such as freshwater influx, ice-melting, nutrient input from agricultural and industrial activities, temperature change, and biological activity, which together result in high variability in pH. This local and regionally specific ocean acidification is of great relevance to marine organisms and biological processes because they are exposed to the full range of variations during their lifetime and potentially provide some resilience to acidification at least in the short-term. Concurrent observations of chemical and biological change in the ocean at highly resolved spatial and temporal scales are necessary to determine the vulnerability and adaptation capacity of marine ecosystems to ocean acidification.

While the number of stations in all ocean basins reporting on ocean acidification continues to increase, there are still important gaps in observations and data in many areas, especially in coastal Asia and Africa and most open ocean areas outside of the North Atlantic Ocean. These gaps limit global modelling of future scenarios and impacts, resulting in an inability to undertake assessments of vulnerability and resilience for vast areas of the ocean. Continuous efforts to increase the

capability of nations to measure and report on ocean acidification, particularly in currently undersampled areas, will be key to achieving the SDG Target 14.3: the reduction of local, regional, and global impacts of ocean acidification.

(2) WMO Greenhouse Gas Bulletin (GHG Bulletin) - No.20: The State of Greenhouse Gases in the Atmosphere Based on Global Observations through 2023. https://library.wmo.int/idurl/4/69057

(3) Friedlingstein, P., et al. (preprint) Global Carbon Budget 2024, https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-2024-519

(4) IPCC, 2021: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Masson-Delmotte, et al. (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- SDG 14.3.1 Data Portal: https://oa.iode.org/
- Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON): https://goa-on.org/
- Ocean Acidification Research for Sustainability (OARS) UN Ocean Decade Programme: https://goa-on.org/oars/overview.php

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Custodian agency(ies): IOC-UNESCO

Target 14.4 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

Indicator 14.4.1 Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Target 14.5 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

Indicator 14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas

Globally, average protection of Key Biodiversity Areas has increased from ~25 to 44% over the last quarter century – but more than half of each site remains to be protected

Safeguarding globally significant sites is one of the most important and impactful conservation approaches. Over the last quarter-century, the world has made substantial progress towards protecting such Key Biodiversity Areas, making important contributions towards both SDG14 (for the oceans) and SDG15 (for land, freshwater, and mountains). Specifically, the mean coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures has increased from ~25% to ~44% worldwide. However, this indicator tells a story of a glass half-empty as well as one half-full, in revealing that on average, more than half of the area of each Key Biodiversity Area remains unprotected. The world has a long way to go to meet SDG Targets 14.5, 15.1, and 15.4, and hence Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The specifics of the indicator are remarkably consistent across different biomes. In the marine environment, mean coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas has increased from 25.8% in 2000 to 46.0% in 2024, as tracked by SDG Indicator 14.5.1. Meanwhile, SDG Indicator 15.1.2 reveals similar progress on land (26.7% to 44.6%) and in freshwater (27.1% to 43.7%), and SDG Indicator 15.4.1 shows similar progress for mountains (25.1% to 41.4%). While mean coverage is similar between biomes, there are substantial differences between regions. Northern America and Europe are the regions showing the greatest mean protected and conserved area coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas, increasing for all three indicators from ~40% in 2000 to ~60% in 2024. By contrast, slowest progress has been achieved in Oceania, where mean protected and conserved area coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas has only increased from 5.8% to 22.6% in the marine biome, 6.3% to 15.8% on land, and 5.3% to 8.7% in mountains. For freshwater, progress has been most challenging in Central Asia and Southern Asia, and in Western Asia and Northern Africa, where mean coverage has risen from around 12% to 22%.

These aggregate statistics encompass many thousands of stories of success in safeguarding individual sites. Examples include restoration efforts in REGUA reserve close to Rio de Janeiro, and the work of the Wildlife Conservation Society – Mozambique in safeguarding Chimanimani National Park, the only home to many threatened amphibian and plant species. Other successful KBA conservation efforts are being led by Nature Kenya on Mount Kenya and in the Lower Tana River Forests, while further examples of restoration success come from the work of a consortium of partners (Department of Environment of Antigua and Barbuda, the Environmental Awareness Group, Fauna & Flora, and Re:wild) on Redondo Island, and that of Udzungwa Corridor Limited and Reforest Africa in the Udzungwa Mountain Range.

The rationale underpinning SDG Indicators 14.5.1, 15.1.2, and 15.4.1 is that the distribution of biodiversity is extremely uneven around the world: Key Biodiversity Areas are identified through national processes applying a global standard to identify sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity. Countries are establishing KBA National Coordination Groups, working collectively to identify, re-assess, monitor and promote conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas. Where relatively comprehensive assessments have been made by these groups, the results show that as many as half of these sites are being missed from current conservation planning. Key Biodiversity Areas safeguard can be achieved either through formal protected area establishment, or through "other effective area-based conservation measures" where conservation is not necessarily the primary purpose of management, but where management activities are nevertheless sufficient to allow retention of the species and ecosystems for which a given site has been identified as significant.

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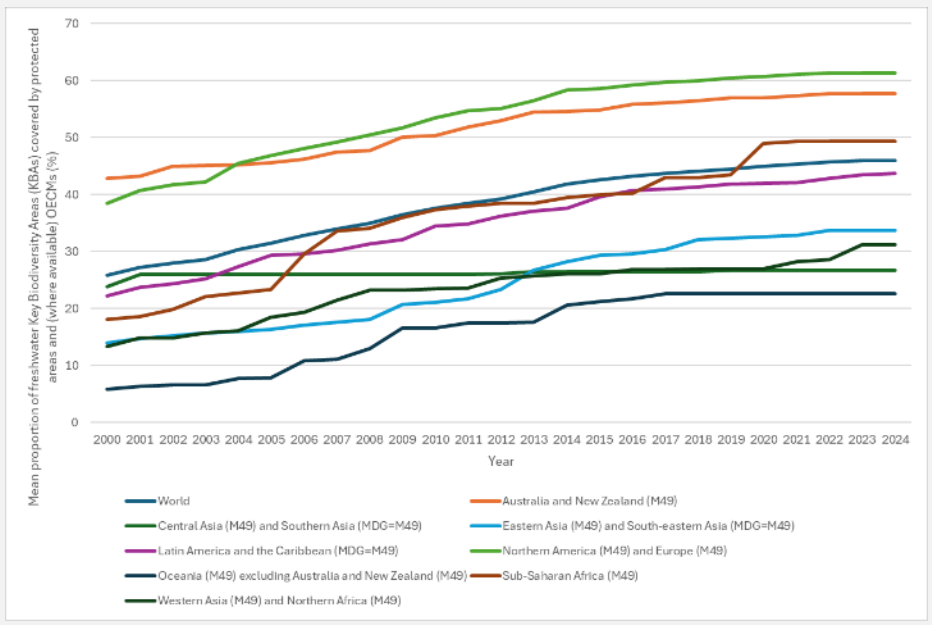
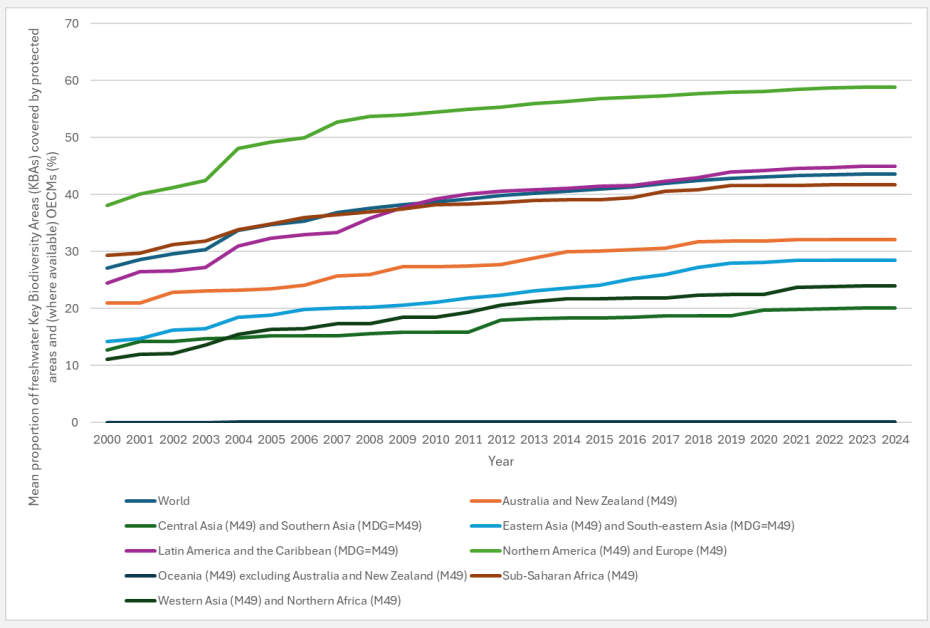


119-15.1.2-2837-ER_PTD_FRHWRT-5654-Figure



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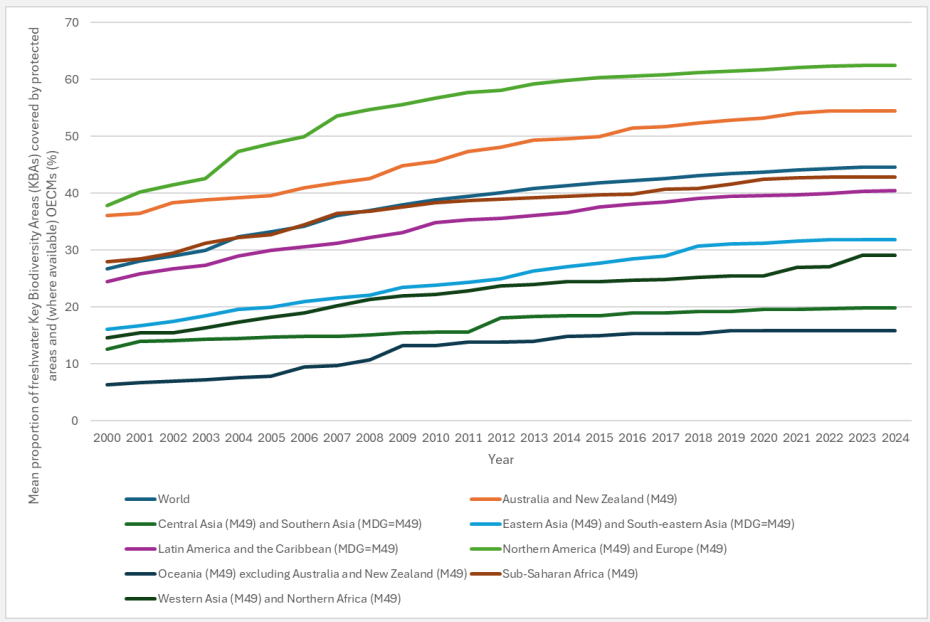
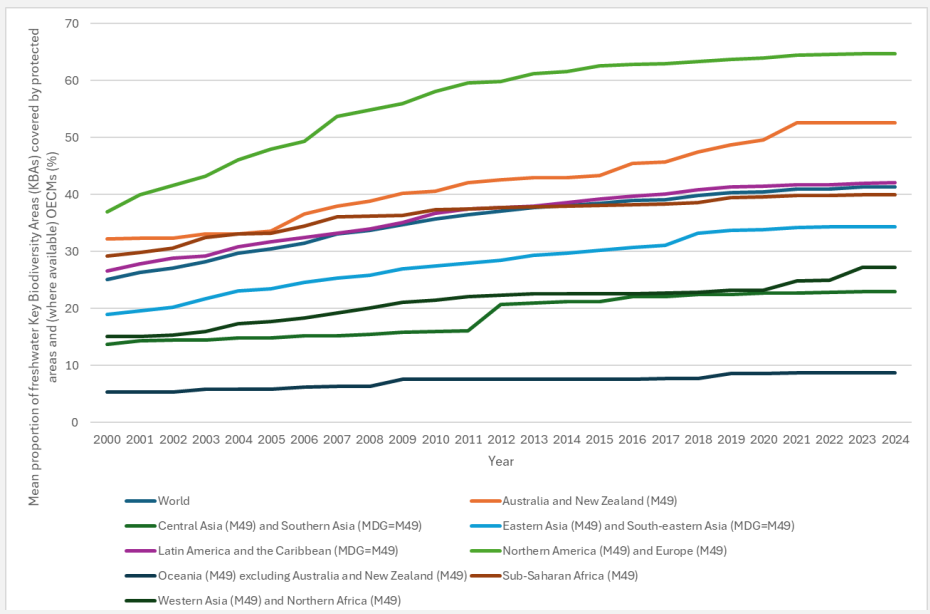


119-15.4.1-2838-ER_PTD_MTN-5654-Figure



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- Targeting site conservation to increase the effectiveness of new global biodiversity targets https://www.cell.com/one-earth/fulltext/S2590-3322(23)00563-8
- World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/
- Protected Planet: The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM), November 2024 (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, 2024) https://www.protectedplanet.net/en
- Protected Planet Report 2024 https://digitalreport.protectedplanet.net
- REGUA https://www.regua.org.br/en
- Região Serrana do Rio de Janeiro KBA https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/20213
- Rejuvenated Caribbean 'moonscape' island granted protected area status https://www.rewild.org/press/rejuvenated-caribbean-moonscape-island-granted-protected-area-status
- Redonda KBA https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/19939
- Chimanimani National Park KBA https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6690
- Udzungwa Mountain Range KBA https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22510
- Mount Kenya KBA https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6395
- Lower Tana River Fotrests KBA https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6413

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Thomas Brooks, IUCN; Stuart Butchart, BirdLife International; Emily Howland, UNEP-WCMC; Andrew Plumptre, KBA Secretariat; Tom Scott, BirdLife International

Custodian agency(ies): UNEP-WCMC, UNEP, IUCN

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 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[b]

Indicator 14.6.1 Degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

States globally continue there efforts towards combatting IUU fishing

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing threatens the social, economic and environmental sustainability of global fisheries, hindering countries' abilities to manage their fisheries effectively. Adopting and implementing relevant international instruments is key to curbing IUU fishing.

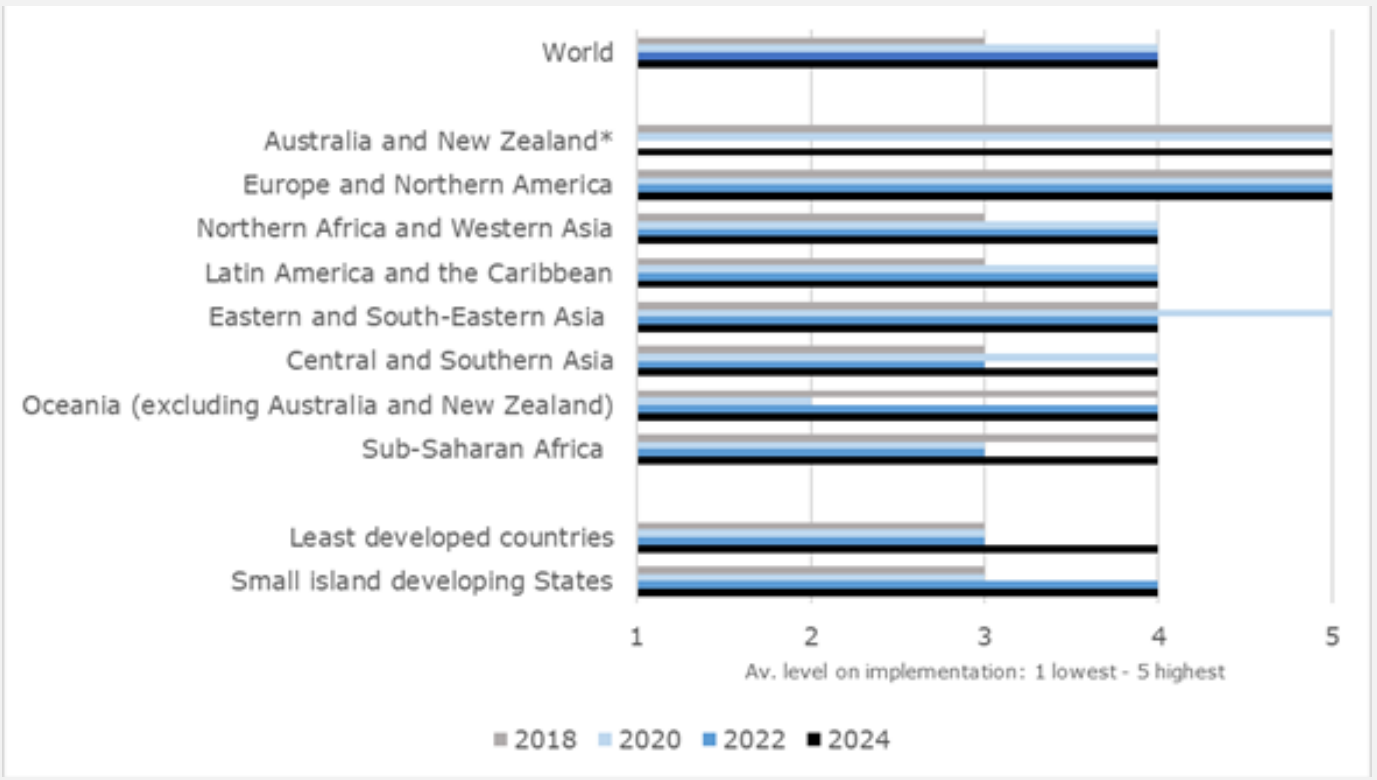
Indicator 14.6.1 measures the degree of implementation by States of relevant international instruments to combat IUU fishing by scoring their responses to the questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments using a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). The global average score as measured by this indicator increased from a 3 in 2018 to 4 in 2020, and has remained the same through to 2024. The percentage of States achieving a score of 5 increased from 48 percent in 2018 to 56 percent in 2022 and 2024. Reporting rates, excluding those States that resulted as not applicable for this indicator, increased from 90 in 2022 to 101 States in 2024, therefore reflecting more representative aggregate figures globally and for certain regions.

Small island developing States, faced with specific challenges in fully implementing these instruments due to the large amounts of waters under their jurisdiction, registered an improvement from an aggregate score of 3 in 2018 and 2020 to 4 in 2022 and 2024. In the case of least developed countries, which can face challenges due to limitations in availability of human or financial resources, reflected an increase in the aggregate level of implementation from 3 in 2022 to a 4 in 2024. In terms of regional groupings, fluctuation can be seen over the years in certain regions however no clear trend can be noted in the aggregate levels of implementation.

Key developments relevant to indicator 14.6.1 have occurred in recent years with the adoption in 2022 of the World Trade Organization Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, and the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Transshipment. The FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), the first binding international instrument developed expressly for combatting IUU fishing, now counts 78 Parties representing 65 percent of coastal States as at January 2025, including the European Union as one Party representing its Member States. In 2023, the PSMA Global Information Exchange System (GIES) was launched, an information system facilitating PSMA implementation by providing a way for States to exchange compliance information on fishing vessels. The FAO meanwhile has continued to expand its assistance to States including through the provision of support on legal and policy matters, monitoring, control and surveillance, enforcement, inter-agency coordination, catch documentation, electronic information exchange and the delivery of specialized training courses all aimed at furthering capacity of States to combat IUU fishing.

Whilst global and regional figures from this indicator paint a positive picture, IUU fishing remains a serious threat and requires continued and concerted efforts in order to minimise its potential impact on people and the environment. Emphasis should continue to be placed towards adopting and effectively implementing the increasingly comprehensive framework of international instruments and tools that have been put in place in order to close the net on IUU fishing.

SDG indicator 14.6.1 aggregate scoring, 2018 - 2024



Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Piero Mannini, FAO; Giuliano Carrara, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

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

Indicator 14.7.1 Sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries

Custodian agency(ies): FAO, UNEP-WCMC

Target 14.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

Indicator 14.a.1 Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology

Custodian agency(ies): IOC-UNESCO

Target 14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

Indicator 14.b.1 Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries

A decade of SSF Guidelines helps achieving SDG 14.b

2024 marked the 10th anniversary of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). The first decade has seen increasing levels of uptake and implementation, embedding the SSF Guidelines firmly in global and regional policy processes, within fisheries and beyond. Importantly - chapters 5 and 7 of the SSF Guidelines speak directly to SDG 14.b. which calls to provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.

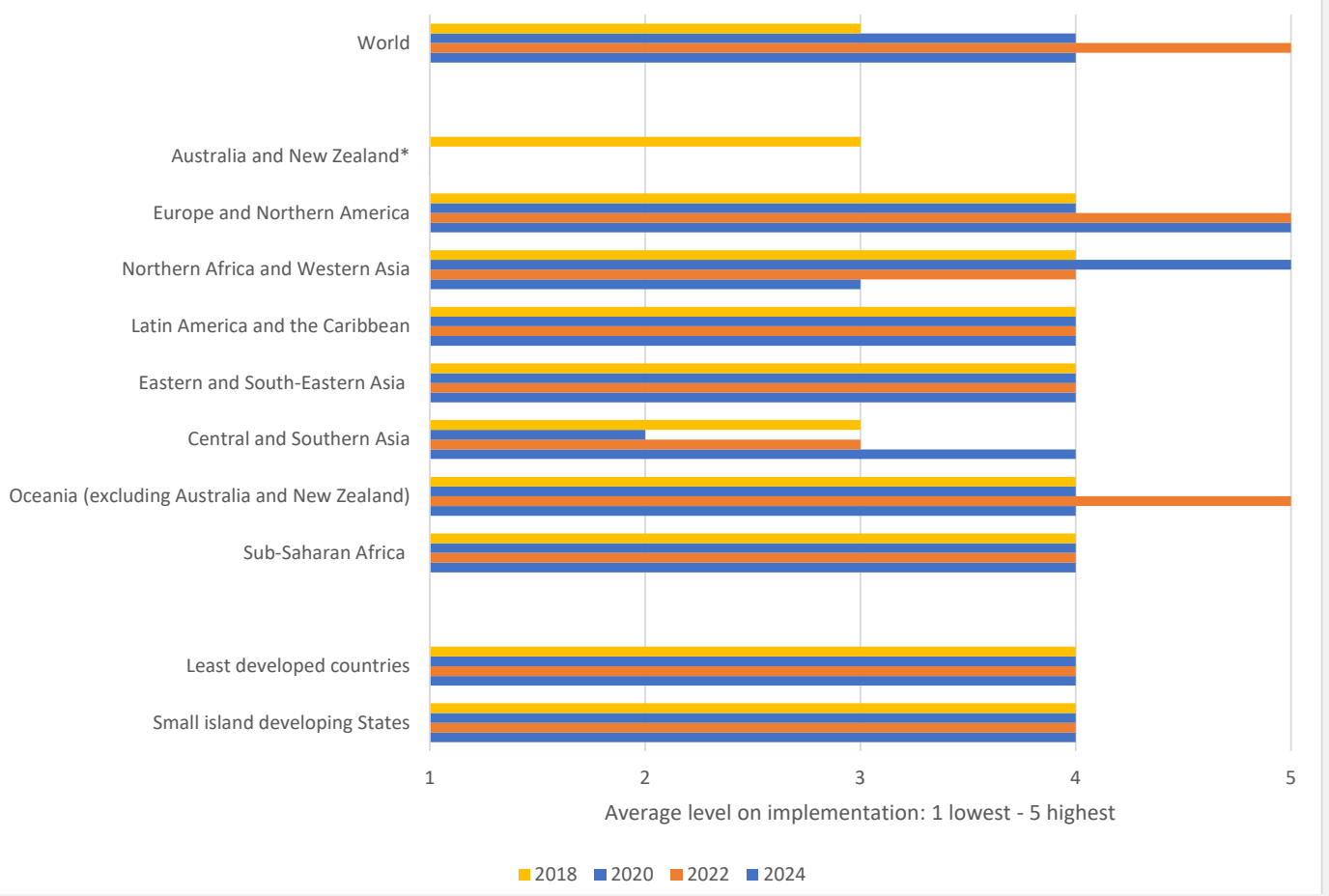
FAO and partners have provided a large amount of capacity building, guidance, materials and resources, including e-learning and communication materials, to promote transformation and progress towards access to resources and markets, and the SSF Guidelines implementation more broadly, which pay specific attention to the most vulnerable and marginalized, in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

Most importantly, significant uptake at country level has started, paving the way for moving from an international voluntary instrument to firm expressions of political will at national level. This is taking various forms. Several countries in Africa as well as the Philippines have engaged in the development of National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF). NPOA-SSFs developed include priorities for implementation to address specific challenges around access of small-scale fishers to their marine resources and markets. Other countries have directly taken up the SSF Guidelines in management plans, policies and legislation, further paving the way to ensure access in the sense of SDG 14.b

The multiple contributions of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development have also been recognized in the cover article of Nature Issue 8047 in January 2025. The article, which is backed by data and information generated under the FAO, Duke University and World Fish Illuminating Hidden Harvests Initiative, argues for a better contextualization of the importance of the small-scale fisheries sector with respect to other uses of water and land, such as tourism, shipping, energy and aquaculture. Evaluating trade-offs across the multidimensional benefits provided by these sectors at local or regional levels can better inform policies aimed at ensuring broader sustainable development. In providing these multidimensional contributions and values, the paper highlights the policy attention deficit that results in systemic global underinvestment in the evidence and knowledge base, and ultimately in the management and governance of small-scale fisheries, perpetuating the social, economic and political marginalization of millions of fishers and fishworkers worldwide.

In a political economy context, which appears to become less favorable to diversity and inclusion, it would appear more urgent than ever to put the SSF Guidelines into action to not lose a sector that provides food, nutrition and livelihoods for millions of people, while having a key role to play in resource conservation.

Progress In The Degree Of Application Of A Legal/Regulatory/Policy Institutional Framework Which Recognizes And Protects Access Rights For Small-Scale Fisheries By Region, 2018–2024 (SDG Indicator 14.b.1)



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- FAO SDG 14.b - website
- FAO SSF Guidelines - website
- FAO SSF Lex - website
- Illuminating Hidden Harvests - website
- Nature article on small-scale fisheries

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Mele Tauati, FAO; Giuliano Carrara, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Target 14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 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"

Indicator 14.c.1 Number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources

Custodian agency(ies): UN-DOALOS and other UN-Oceans members