



22 MAY 2016  
**INTERNATIONAL DAY  
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**  
**Mainstreaming Biodiversity;**  
Sustaining People and their Livelihoods

## Sustainable Fisheries

The fisheries and aquaculture sector is a vital source of livelihoods, nutritious food and economic opportunities, and has a key role to play in meeting one of the world's greatest challenges: feeding a population set to rise to 9.6 billion people by 2050. Fisheries and aquaculture play a significant role in eliminating hunger, promoting health and reducing poverty. Never before have people consumed so much fish or depended so greatly on the sector for their well-being. Fish is extremely nutritious – a vital source of protein and essential nutrients, especially for the poor. But fisheries and aquaculture is a source not just of health but also of wealth. Employment in the sector has grown faster than the world's population. Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods, and marine fisheries directly or indirectly employ over 200 million people. Small-scale fisheries (marine and inland) employ about 90 per cent of those involved in fisheries. Globally, the market value of marine and coastal resources and industries is estimated at \$3 trillion per year or about 5 per cent of global GDP.

Fish continues to be one of the most-traded food commodities worldwide. It is especially important for developing countries, sometimes worth half the total value of their traded commodities. Oceans, seas, coastal areas and the associated “blue economy” are critical to global and national development, food security and the fight against hunger and poverty. They are both engines for economic growth and sources of food and jobs. However, overfishing, pollution and unsustainable coastal development are contributing to irreversible damage to habitats, ecological functions and biodiversity. Climate change and ocean acidification are compounding such impacts at a time when the rising global population requires more fish as food, and as coastal areas are becoming home to a growing percentage of the world's population.



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



COP12 / MOP7 / MOP1  
PYEONGCHANG KOREA 2014



### **Work of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

Work under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has focused on sustainable fisheries to support global food security. This focus on sustainable fisheries is embodied in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. In addition, the CBD's work on such issues as ocean acidification, coral reefs and ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) provide an important means by which to advance towards the sustainable use of oceans. In 2010 the Conference of the Parties (COP) adopted decision X/29 which identified means to achieve this target, including by implementing the ecosystem approach, eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, minimizing the detrimental impacts of fishing practices, and mitigating and managing by-catch. To facilitate the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 6 and other Targets relevant to marine and coastal biodiversity, the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, coordinated by the CBD Secretariat in collaboration with various partners, was created in 2010 as a platform to build partnerships and enhance capacity. In 2011, the CBD Secretariat convened, in collaboration with FAO, UNEP and the Fisheries Experts Group of the IUCN Commission of Ecosystem Management, a Joint Expert Meeting on Addressing Biodiversity Concerns in Sustainable Fisheries, which reviewed and proposed options to address biodiversity concerns in fisheries management. In 2012, COP adopted decision XI/18, in which COP encouraged inter-agency collaboration between biodiversity and fisheries bodies and the participation by a range of experts on biodiversity, indigenous and local communities in fisheries management, and invited fisheries management bodies to integrate biodiversity considerations into their work. The CBD Secretariat has also convened expert processes on sustainable fisheries. In 2014, Parties adopted Decision XII/22 to facilitate technical training on scientific methodologies and approaches of applying the EBSA criteria as well as the compilation and use of scientific and technical information contained in the EBSA repository and information-sharing mechanism, and, Decision XII/23, where countries are encouraged to strengthen exist-





ing sectoral and cross-sectoral management to address local stressors, such as overfishing, destructive fishing practices, land- and sea-based pollution, coastal development, tourism and recreational use. According to the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, overfishing remains a major threat to marine ecosystems, although an increasing number of fisheries, especially in developed countries, are moving towards more sustainable management.

### **Aichi Biodiversity Targets**

Fisheries are of great relevance to several of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, a set of time-bound, measurable targets agreed by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010, especially Target 6, which seeks to ensure that, by 2020, all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, to avoid overfishing, and, that recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, that fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits. Target 11 is also relevant for fisheries, and urges countries to expedite their current efforts to protect important fish habitat and restore depleted fish stocks, as it focuses on achieving, by 2020, conservation, through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, of at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, and integration of these areas into the wider landscapes and seascapes. Other targets of relevance to fisheries include targets 8, 9 and 10.





## COP 13

At COP 12, countries called for the reintroduction of agriculture, forestry and fisheries into the list of strategic actions for mainstreaming and integrating biodiversity to be considered by COP 13. Fisheries will be one of the main themes discussed at the High-Level Segment of COP 13. Mexico, the host country of COP 13, has put in place sustainable management regulations and fish sanctuary areas, to promote the sustainable use of resources and to safeguard native species, examples that can be followed by other parties to the CBD, in order to achieve sustainable management of fish resources, as well as some of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development Goals.

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## Important links

- Convention on Biological Diversity: [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)
- Aichi Biodiversity Targets: [www.cbd.int/sp/targets](http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets)
- Global Biodiversity Outlook 4: [www.cbd.int/gbo4](http://www.cbd.int/gbo4)
- United Nations Decade on Biodiversity: [www.cbd.int/2011-2020](http://www.cbd.int/2011-2020)
- Programme of Work on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity: [www.cbd.int/marine](http://www.cbd.int/marine)
- Programme of Work on Inland Waters Biodiversity: [www.cbd.int/waters](http://www.cbd.int/waters)

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