



Food and Agriculture
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The BBNJ Agreement

Fisheries and the BBNJ Agreement:
FAO support to implementation

ATLAFCO Workshop

May 18-19, 2026, Casablanca, Morocco



Marine biodiversity is the foundation of sustainable fisheries

The BBNJ Agreement is an opportunity to integrate fisheries into the conservation of biodiversity in ABNJ.





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WHO MANAGES FISHERIES



- Fishing industry
- National fisheries administrations
- Regional fisheries bodies
 - Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)
 - Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies
- Global fisheries bodies, instruments and frameworks

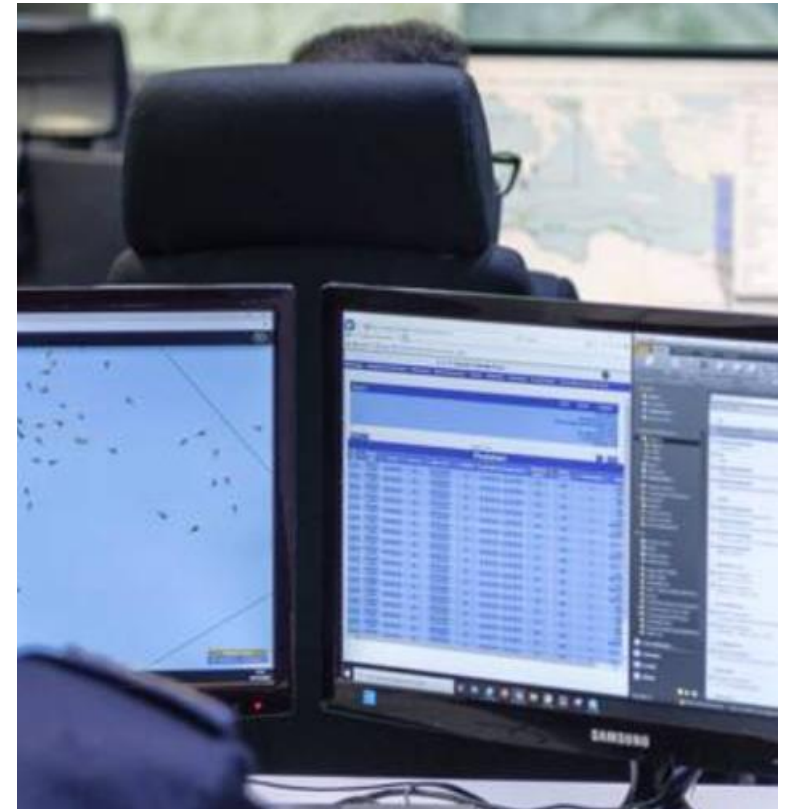
➤ ***All have a role in managing fishing in ABNJ***



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HOW ARE FISHERIES MANAGED IN ABNJ

- Regulation and management
 - Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management
- Monitoring, control and surveillance
- Science and data
- Multi-jurisdictional cooperation and collaboration



INTERSECTION WITH BBNJ

- ABMTs
 - Spatial management a common fisheries management tool
 - Potential implications and benefits
- EIAs
 - “Equivalent” processes in fisheries
 - Info from fisheries will be necessary
- CBTMT
 - Fisheries bodies are contributors and beneficiaries
 - Risk of duplication without cooperation
- MGRs
 - Interface with fisheries research
 - Supporting role for fisheries bodies
- CHM
 - Fisheries collect, hold, analyse and share data and science on biodiversity and activity in ABNJ



FISHERIES ENGAGEMENT IN BBNJ IMPLEMENTATION

- Fisheries expertise can support implementation processes
- Fisheries science and data are relevant to BBNJ decision-making
- Fisheries perspectives are important in discussions on ABMTs, EIAs and implementation
- Coordination between fisheries and national BBNJ processes will be important





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FAO'S MANDATE IN RELATION TO BBNJ

FAO assists Members and relevant organizations in implementing international instruments related to conservation and management of marine living resources


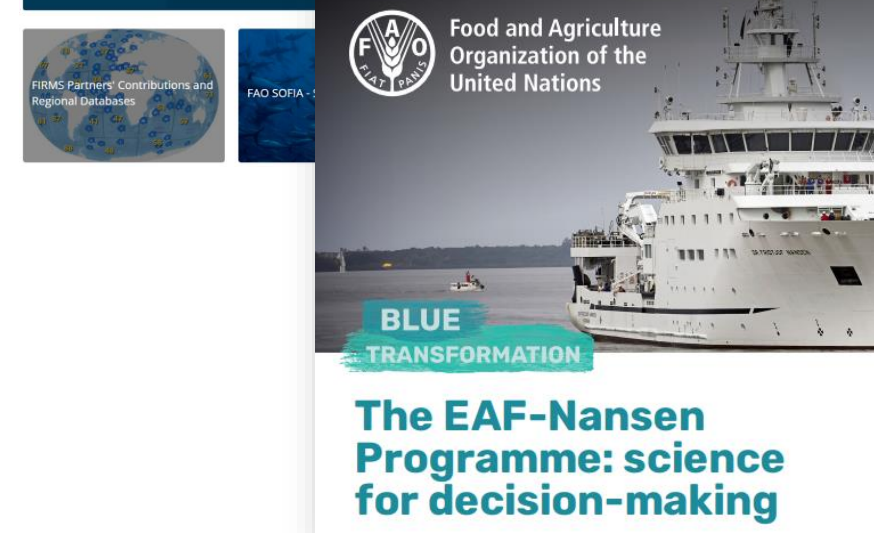
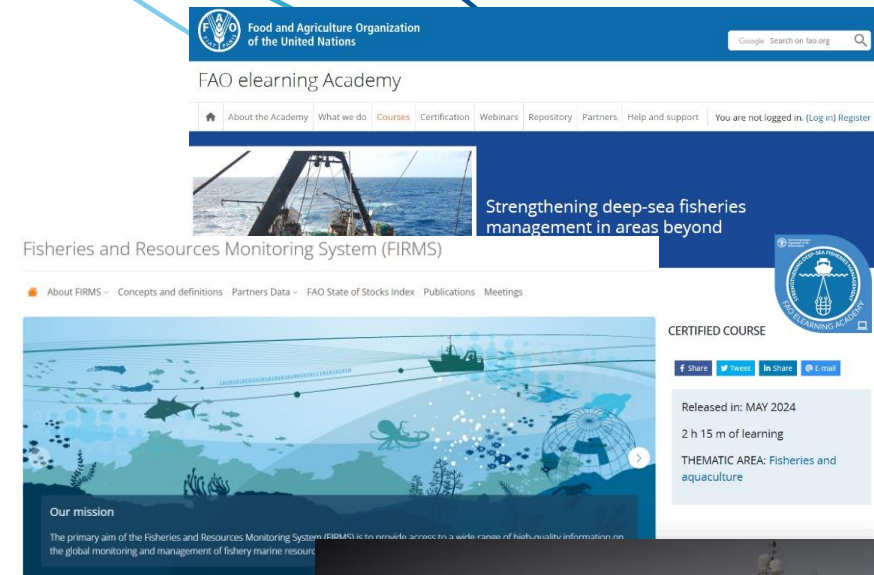
FAO provides a global forum where Member Nations:

- discuss fisheries and aquaculture issues,
- negotiate and adopt international instruments to promote global cooperation,
- foster global, regional and national sustainable development initiatives

to secure responsible fisheries and aquaculture worldwide, including in the BBNJ

FAO SUPPORTING BBNJ

- Data collection and analysis
- FAO Systems and Data Platforms: CWP, FIGIS, FIRMS
- Ocean governance, coherence and coordination
 - Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariats Network (RSN)
 - Committee on Fisheries (COFI)
- Technical expertise: Fisheries, Oceans governance, MCS, Spatial management, MGRs
- Projects supporting BBNJ management: GEF Common Oceans Program, EAF-Nansen Project
- Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- FAO delegation participation in BBNJ processes



FAO SUPPORTING BBNJ

- **GEF Enabling Activities for ratification and early implementation of the BBNJ Agreement**
 - National-level support for ratification and implementation readiness
 - 175,000 USD per country (13 countries, including Morocco and 4 in the pipeline)
- **Global and regional support to the BBNJ Agreement**
 - Partners: UNDP and UNEP, and in close collaboration with DOALOS and GEF
 - Supporting countries through technical guidance, capacity development, and strengthened coordination for national implementation

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UN environment programme

UNDP

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SUPPORT TO THE BBNJ AGREEMENT RATIFICATION PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION READINESS (BBNJ G&R)

The BBNJ Agreement entered into force on 17 January 2026 marking a milestone for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Effective implementation will require strengthened capacity, enhanced coordination, and accessible knowledge across global, regional, and national levels. Building a shared understanding of the Agreement's provisions, as well as the practical pathways for engagement and implementation will enable countries and regional organizations to engage effectively in decision-making and implementation processes.

Over the next two years, the GEF-funded project "Global and Regional Support to the BBNJ Ratification Process and Implementation Readiness" (BBNJ Global and Regional) will support national and regional organizations to build capacity, strengthen cooperation, and advance ratification and implementation.

Implemented by FAO, UNDP, and UNEP in close collaboration with UN DOALOS and the GEF, the project will accelerate ratification efforts and support implementation readiness, with particular focus on small island developing states (SIDS) and landlocked countries, while promoting the participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

The project will generate global knowledge products, compile best practices, strengthen coordination and establish harmonized approaches for capacity building and stakeholder engagement that reflect the Agreement's complexity and cross-sectoral nature. It complements the GEF-funded "Enabling Activities to Support the Ratification and Early Implementation of the BBNJ Agreement" (EA-BBNJ) project, which focuses on national-level preparatory work, including institutional assessments.

FAO and the marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) process

Information package for BBNJ delegates

PROJECT COMPONENTS

- **Component 1: Capacity-building, awareness raising and outreach material**
Activities: Development of capacity-building modules, awareness raising and outreach materials, including gap analyses, best practices and digital knowledge platforms, to support awareness, knowledge sharing and implementation readiness.
- **Component 2: Training, information and coordination**
Activities: Delivery of regional training, workshops, and knowledge-sharing activities, in coordination with relevant bodies, to strengthen understanding, participation and capacity for ratification and implementation.
- **Component 3: National level coordination and support**
Activities: Provision of targeted technical support, guidance and coordination to strengthen national legal, institutional and policy preparedness to enhance quality and coherence of national-level efforts.
- **Component 4: Monitoring, evaluation and knowledge dissemination**
Activities: Establishment of monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management mechanisms to track progress, support adaptive management and demonstrate contributions to implementation.

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Fisheries and the BBNJ Agreement – A Guide

- Supports States and RFMOs in understanding the fisheries-BBNJ interface.
- Promotes coherence between the BBNJ Agreement and existing fisheries governance frameworks.
- Highlights how fisheries can contribute to:
 - Environmental impact assessments (EIAs)
 - Area-based Management Tools (ABMTs) and MPA
 - Science, monitoring and implementation processes.
- Supports informed and proactive fisheries engagement in BBNJ implementation.



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Fisheries and the BBNJ Agreement – A Guide

Steps Forward

- Engage in BBNJ institutional processes
- Strengthen data sharing and interoperability
- Build capacity and access to marine technology, particularly for developing States
- Promote coherence across standards, monitoring and compliance systems
- Support inclusive participation of fisheries stakeholders and communities



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THANK YOU

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