

The Ocean and Rio+20: challenges and opportunities

**NOAA: Silver Spring, MD
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2012: UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)



Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



The Objective of the UNCSD (Rio+20)

- to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges.

The Foci of the UNCSO (Rio+20)

- A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication
- Institutional framework for sustainable development
 - This is to ensure the balanced integration of economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development.



Where does the ocean fit in?



Marine Biodiversity is
essential for sustainable development



Ocean threats

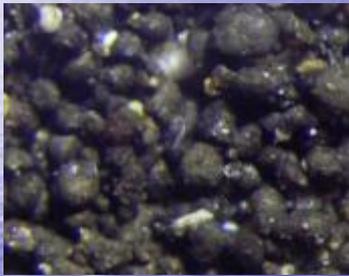


Oil & gas extraction

Spills & leaks



Marine debris



Mining



Bioprospecting



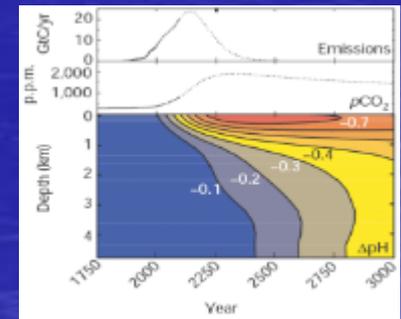
Sunken rigs and ships



Fisheries



Waste disposal



Climate Change ⁷

The ocean has reached a critical tipping point



State of the World's Fisheries

- The combined estimates for fully exploited, over exploited, depleted or recovering from depletion is the highest ever (85%)
- Over half of the fish stocks (53%) were fully exploited with no room for further expansion
- 32% were either overexploited (28%), depleted (3%) or recovering from depletion (1 percent).

Source: FAO, The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2010



Promises made need to be kept

- UNCSD (Rio+20) objectives and focus
- UNCED (Rio, 1992)
- WSSD (Johannesburg, 2002)
- CBD (most recently Nagoya, 2010)



1992 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil “Earth Summit”

UN Conference on Environment and Development

- 172 governments; 102 Heads of State or Govt
- Resulted in the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the CBD, the UNFCCC, UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Forest Principles
- Agenda 21 agreed to convene an intergovernmental conference under UNCLOS on straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks.
 - Led to Fish Stocks Agreement in 1995



2002 Johannesburg, South Africa "Earth Summit 2"



World Summit on Sustainable Development

- 22,000 participants, 100 world leaders
- Resulted in Johannesburg Declaration and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI)
- Reaffirmed the MDGs and Agenda 21
- Agreed that "oceans, seas, islands and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth's ecosystem and are critical for global food security and for sustaining economic prosperity and the well-being of many national economies, particularly in developing countries."

Johannesburg Plan of Implementation



- The Ecosystem Approach and Integrated Management
- Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities
- Biodiversity and Marine Protected Areas
- Small Island Developing States
- Fisheries
- Global Marine Assessment
- Coordination of UN Activities on Oceans

JPOI

Biodiversity and Marine Protected Areas:

- Agreed to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth.
- Agreed to the elimination of destructive fishing practices, and the establishment of MPAs based on scientific information, including representative networks of MPAs by 2012.

JPOI, cont.

Fisheries—agreed to:

- Implement the FAO IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing by 2004
- Implement the FAO IPOA for the Management of Fishing Capacity by 2005
- Eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and to overcapacity
- Maintain or restore depleted fish stocks to levels that can produce MSY no later than 2015

CBD CoP10 (Nagoya): Target 6

- Target 6: by 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem-based approaches so that:
 - overfishing is avoided;
 - recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species;
 - 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.



CBD CoP10 (Nagoya): Target 11



- Target 11: conserving 10% of coastal and marine areas being managed through protected areas and similar measures.
 - Today: 13% of the world's land areas are protected, only about 1% of global marine areas are protected in some way with less than 0.5% fully protected.

Close to zero protection of marine ecosystems and biodiversity occurring in deeper waters, and in the international waters of the high seas.

Opportunities: Rio+20 and beyond



Rio+20

Imperatives for the Ocean

Governments need to

- Ensure that the principles of the Rio Declaration & commitments in Agenda 21 and JPOI are operationalized in a time-bound and effective final outcome
- Be bold, visionary and effective

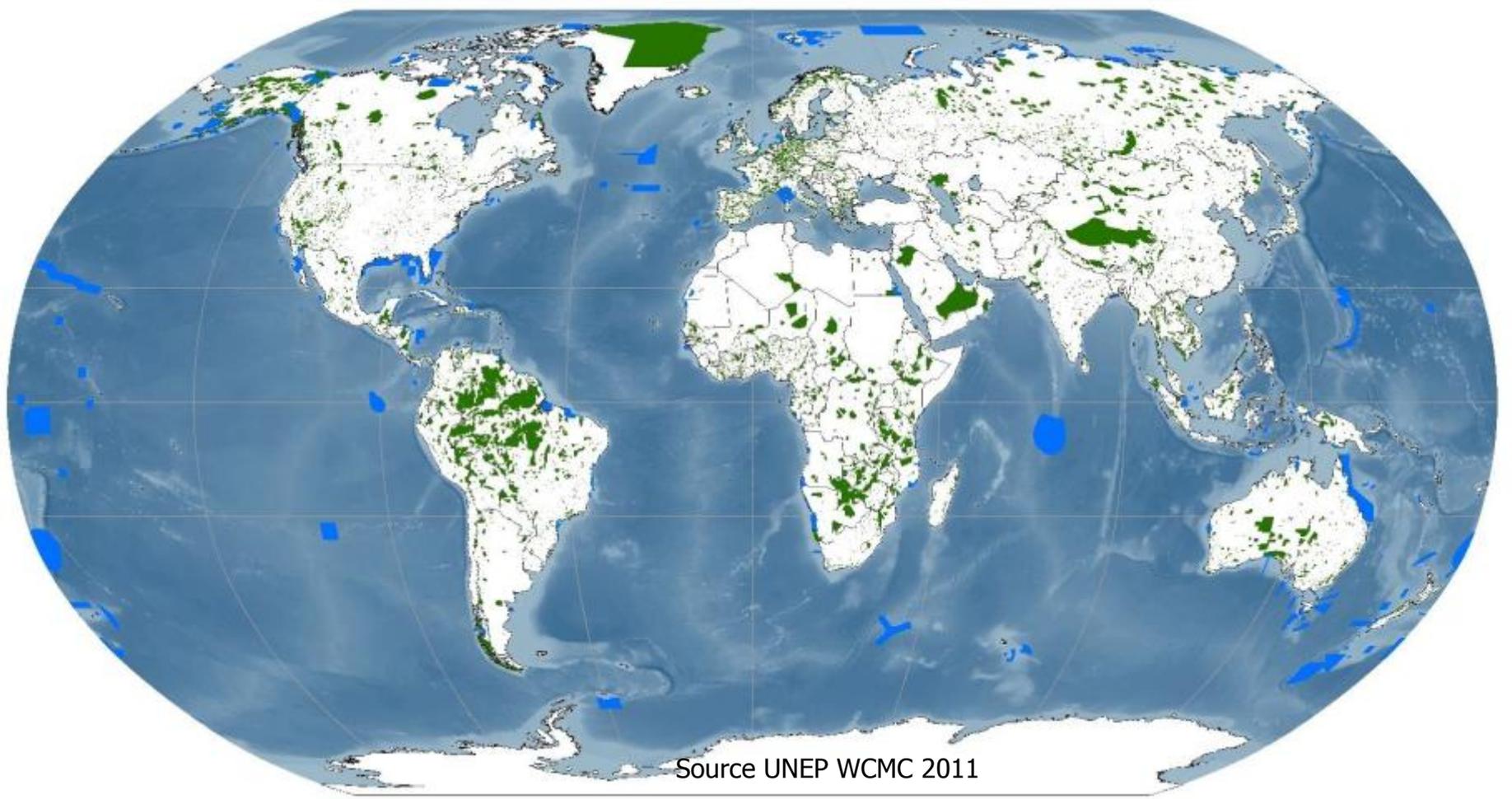
Conserve High Seas Biodiversity

Actions need to be taken to:

- Establish marine protected areas and reserves on the high seas (legal framework needed)
- Require prior environmental impact assessments for activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction
- Improve monitoring, control and surveillance of high seas fishing vessels



Global Protected Area Coverage



Existing Legal Frameworks and high seas management instruments

- UNCLOS
 - constitution for the ocean
- RFMOs and Regional Seas Conventions
 - different mandates, incomplete coverage
- ISA
 - remit limited to the Area
- IMO
 - narrow mandate, sectoral approach
- CBD
 - EBSA process



Governance gaps

The sectoral nature of current high seas governance means that there is no mechanism for

- Creating multi-sector marine protected areas
- Coordinating environmental assessments, strategic environmental assessments
- Managing impacts, including cumulative impacts, across sectors.

A new legal framework—such as
an implementing agreement under UNCLOS—
is essential for the Conservation of High Seas Biodiversity



Potential elements of a new agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction

- Area-based management tools, including identification and establishment of MPAs and reserves
- Environmental Impact Assessments
- Technology transfer, information sharing
- Capacity building
- MGRs, including fair and equitable sharing of benefits



Sustainable fisheries

Governments need to act to:

- Restore and maintain healthy fish stocks—including restoring fish stocks to MSY
- Hold RFMO/As accountable
- Implement effective, transparent and science-based fisheries management in accordance with the ecosystem approach and precautionary principle
- Renew the JPOI commitment to eliminate destructive fishing practices



Sustainable fisheries (cont'd)

- Recommit to implement the FAO IPOA-overcapacity and IPOA-IUU
- Recognize illegal fishing as criminal activity
- Combat IUU fishing through strengthened flag and port State measures
- Establish effective measures for monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement



End Harmful Fisheries Subsidies

A large fleet of fishing boats is docked at a pier. In the foreground, several prominent red cranes are visible, likely used for handling fishing gear. The boats are packed closely together, and the water is visible in the background.

- Contribute to IUU and overcapacity
- Threaten food security

Recommit to JPOI and CBD subsidy targets

How does it look?

- Informal informal negotiations ongoing
- Oceans now a **TOP PRIORITY**
- Text on fisheries, subsidies, high seas biodiversity, IUU, ocean acidification, etc.
- Role of US, G77, EU, others



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