STRONG High Seas

Strengthening Regional Ocean Governance for the High Seas
71% of the planet are covered by oceans

~ 60% of the oceans are high seas

Territorial Sea | Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) | Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
---|---|---
12 nm | 200 nm
Continental shelf | Extended continental shelf
Continental slope | The Area

Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)
The High Seas in View

The High Seas are Full of Life

- Deep-sea species often show **longevity, high endemism, low growth rates, late maturity** and **high sensitivity to disturbances**
- **Unique oceanographic and biological features**, e.g. seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold seeps
- **Highly productive ecosystems**
- Largely **unexplored** and **understudied**

The High Seas are providing Important Services

- **Provisioning services**: Seafood, raw materials, genetic and medicinal resources

- **Regulating services**: Climate regulation, carbon sequestration, air purification, habitat

- **Supporting services**: Nutrient recycling, primary production

- **Cultural services**: Recreation, spirituality, history, science and education
The High Seas are Under Pressure


Rising high seas catches

Location of deep-sea minerals

Shipping  Fishing  Pollution  Seabed mining  Climate change
The High Seas are Connected to National Waters

• Clear-cut **jurisdictional and geopolitical distinction** between ABNJ and national waters, but tight **ecological connectivity**

• Connectivity is **essential for the functioning of ecosystem** (restocking of marine resources)

Complex, Fragmented Governance Framework

UNSG → Annual Report on Oceans and Seas → UNGA

UN-Oceans (Interagency collaboration mechanism)

Commission on Limits of the Continental Shelf → Office of Legal Affairs DOALOS

UNCLOS

FAO

UNEP

UNDP

UNESCO

IMO

ILO


Mining

Fishing

Biodiversity

Development

Science

Shipping

Labour

Dumping

Convention Migratory Species

International Whaling Commission

Antarctic Treaty System (ATS)

The Arctic Council

CBD Conventions

CITES

Fish Stocks Agreement

PSMA

Compliance Agreement

17 Regional Fisheries Management Organisations

13 Regional Seas Programmes

5 Partner Programmes

London Convention

MARPOL + Annexes

SOLAS

London Convention

International Whaling Commission

Antarctic Treaty System (ATS)

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London Convention

MARPOL + Annexes

SOLAS

Annual Omnibus Resolution

Source: Ocean Atlas 2017, Creative Commons (CC BY 4.0) - petraboeckmann.de (Credit: Global Ocean Commission)
The Future BBNJ Agreement


- UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) (1995)
- UN Agreement on Biodiversity beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) (In negotiation)
# The BBNJ Negotiations: Timeline

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BBNJ Working Group meetings</th>
<th>PrepCom meetings</th>
<th>UNGA Resolution 69/292</th>
<th>UNGA Resolution 72/249</th>
<th>IGC 1</th>
<th>IGC 2</th>
<th>IGC 3</th>
<th>IGC 4 (planned)</th>
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Source: [http://enb.iisd.org/oceans/bbnj/igc1/4sep.html](http://enb.iisd.org/oceans/bbnj/igc1/4sep.html)
The BBNJ Negotiations: Elements

- Marine genetic resources
  ... or how genetic resources from marine species can be accessed, used, and their benefits shared in an equitable and transparent manner

- Area-based management tools
  ... or how to regulate human activities in ABNJ in and around ecologically important or vulnerable marine areas in a more integrated manner using spatial management tools

- Environmental impact assessments
  ... or how to evaluate the impact of current and future human activities on the marine environment and, when activities are deemed to have an impact, to either cease them or establish strict regulations on how they should be carried out to reduce and limit the environmental impacts

- Capacity building and technology transfer
  ... or how to ensure the ability of developing and geographically disadvantaged states to participate in ABNJ research, commercial use, and management
The STRONG High Seas Project

Strengthening Regional Ocean Governance for the High Seas

5-year project (June 2017 – May 2022)

Funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI)

Coordinated by the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)

Supported by:

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision of the German Bundestag
Partners of the STRONG Project

Project Objectives

- **Facilitate the development of comprehensive, cross-sectoral approaches** to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in ABNJ in the Southeast Atlantic and Southeast Pacific;

- **Identify best practices and provide support** to regional institutions and national authorities in the implementation of existing regional instruments and the development of new approaches;

- **Develop possible options for regional governance** in a future international instrument under UNCLOS and **transfer regional lessons learned to the global level** to promote ocean governance at different scales.
Project Focus

- Strengthening ocean governance in the focal regions
- Strengthening dialogue between marine regions
- Linking regional and global governance

Support integrated and ecosystem-based governance approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in ABNJ at the regional level.
The Regional Approach

- Sensitive to the environmental specificity and uniqueness of the region – essential for an ecosystem-based approach
- Higher buy-in by regional stakeholders
- More stringent measures and higher legal commitment
- Policy convergence between regional states

Complementary to the global process!
Increase Coherence between the Regional and Global Levels

Figure 2: A new agreement will need to increase coherence and integration between and across regional and global institutions, both vertically and horizontally, to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ.

Credit: Gjerde et al. 2018, STRONG High Seas Project
Implementing partners: IASS, IDDRI, WWF DE, WWF CO, UCN, BirdLife, IOI

Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS)

Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention

Member States of CPPS

Member States of the Abidjan Convention

Collaboration with the regions
- Identification of topics for in-depth assessment
- Co-design of regional specific scientific assessments (project outputs)
- Data and information exchange
- Review and evaluation of project relevant outputs
- Co-development of joint workshops and trainings
- Ongoing exchange (stakeholder platform)
Project Activities: Scientific Work

• Co-development of **scientific assessments of the two focal regions** with partners:
  • Legal and institutional assessment (2018)
  • State of the high seas: ecological baselines and human pressures *(exp. 2019)*
  • Socioeconomic importance of the high seas *(exp. 2020)*
  • Conservation and management measures *(exp. 2021)*

• Scientific work on **monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS)** of human activities in ABNJ
  • Two expert workshops (2018 and 2019)
  • Report on the role of MCS in a new high seas treaty *(exp. 2019)*
  • Expert workshops in the regions (2019 and 2020)
  • Global MCS conference (2021)
Project Activities: Dialogue Workshops

- **Bring together stakeholders** from governments, the private sector, the scientific community and civil society for workshops in the Southeast Pacific and Southeast Atlantic regions
- Discuss ocean governance, **foster exchange and build networks**
- **Co-create ecosystem-based, cross-sectoral approaches** for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in ABNJ

### Dialogue Workshops 2018
- 13-14 June
  - Cali, Colombia
- 27-28 June
  - Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire

### Dialogue Workshops 2019
- 13-15 March
  - Guayaquil, Ecuador
- 10-12 June
  - Cape Town, South Africa

*Further Dialogue Workshops planned in 2020, 2021 & 2022*
Project Activities: Dialogue Workshops
Project Activities: Capacity Building

Regional capacity building workshops
• From 2020 onwards in the Southeast Pacific & Southeast Atlantic regions

Capacity Building Workshops held during the BBNJ negotiations
• September 2018 & August 2019 in New York
Project Activities: Facilitate dialogue between regions

To foster interregional exchange and collaboration, we facilitate dialogue among the two focal as well as other marine regions:

- Identify best practices
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and joint learning
- Develop common approaches and a community of practice

- Organisation of the PROG Marine Regions Forum in Berlin in 2019
Project Activities: Support the Ongoing BBNJ Negotiations

- Undertake **scientific work to develop possible options** to increase coherence and integration between and across regional and global institutions, both vertically and horizontally, in a future international instrument under UNCLOS

- Organisation of **side events** and **high-level expert meetings** to present and discuss possible options in a future international instrument under UNCLOS
Thank you!

Delivered under the framework of the Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance (PROG)

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