

The UN Atlas of the Oceans supports Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, the blueprint for the sustainable development of oceans adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit. Development of the Atlas, a joint project of the UN agencies responsible for matters relating to ocean issues, began as an initiative of the United Nations Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas with funding from the UN Foundation.

Under FAO's lead, six UN agencies constitute the core development group and have committed fiscal resources to the project. Non-UN partners may also support each agency. Other UN agencies are contributing ocean-related information from their areas of expertise. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has also formally joined. Major national agencies, such as the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the United States and the Head Department of Navigation and Oceanography of the Russian Federation, are assisting the project as well.



Detailed information is available at www.oceansatlas.org



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The software supporting the Internet portal is the Java-based Community Directory Server (CDS) developed in collaboration between the Fisheries Department and Information Systems and Technology Division of FAO as part of the World Agricultural Information Centre (WAICENT).



UN ATLAS OF THE OCEANS

www.oceansatlas.org





The UN ATLAS OF THE OCEANS, developed by UN agencies and their partners, is a sophisticated Internet portal containing a wealth of information relevant to the sustainable development of oceans. It is the principal gateway to detailed information on oceans for policy-makers, resource managers, industry workers, non-governmental organizations, the media, scientists and students.



The UN Atlas offers four main subject gateways:

ABOUT THE OCEANS

- How oceans were formed
- How oceans are changing
- Maps, statistics and databases
- Ocean dynamics
- Physical and chemical properties
- Ocean-atmosphere interface
- Biology
- Ecology
- Coasts and coral reefs
- Monitoring and observing systems
- Research
- Education and training
- International cooperation
- Oceans of the future



ISSUES

- Climate change
- Economics
- Emergencies
- Food security
- Governance
- Human health
- Pollution and degradation
- Safety
- Sustainable development

All these topics include background information, UN agency programmes, legal and policy frameworks, institutions, research needs and an assessment of what the future holds.



USES

- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Recreation and tourism
- Transportation and telecommunication
- Coastal settlements
- Offshore oil, gas and mining
- Energy
- Marine biotechnology
- Non-consumptive uses
- Ocean dumping and ship wastes
- Waste disposal from land



GEOGRAPHY

This gateway offers information categorized by region. Developments will take into account the diversity of geographical groupings adopted throughout the UN.

- Africa
- All countries
- America
- Antarctica
- Asia
- Europe
- FAO Fishing Areas
- Marine areas
- Mediterranean countries
- Oceania
- Pacific islands

All these topics include descriptions of the sector, main development or legal frameworks, statistics, status and trends, current issues and governance.

