Norad

OCEAN REPORT 2025

Making Waves

Norway's support for a sustainable ocean

Ocean Report 2025: Making waves

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The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

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Cover photo: **Jayne Jenkins, Ocean Image Bank** | Barracuda school in Papua New Guinea.
Photo: **Uda Deshapriya, Unsplash** | Woman drying fish Chilaw, Sri Lanka →

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Preface

Norway is an ocean nation and the ocean has been a vital part of our culture and economy throughout our history.

The ocean sustains ecosystems and supports economic growth worldwide. This is why sustainable ocean management, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is a key priority in Norwegian development policy. While SDG 14 focuses specifically on conserving and sustainably using the ocean, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, many of the other SDGs include ocean-related elements.

In order to deliver on the SDGs, the world must increase ocean-based production. The ocean holds enormous potential for enhancing welfare and prosperity across the world. We can harness this potential if we manage to strike the right balance between conservation and sustainable use of ocean resources. The High-level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel) is advocating for the development of Sustainable Ocean Plans to facilitate sustainable use of the ocean and maximise benefits and value creation for current and future generations. This is also the aim of our ocean-related development assistance.

This report highlights Norway's multifaceted approach to the ocean in its development cooperation, which includes activities relating to ocean health, wealth, finance, equity, and knowledge, in line with the Ocean Panel's recommendations. Norway is working to ensure a resilient and thriving ocean economy and mitigate the increasing pressures on the ocean through initiatives aimed at reducing illegal fishing, enhancing sustainable aquaculture, and supporting global cooperation on marine pollution, among others.

In this context, support for the negotiations on a Global Plastics Treaty is crucial. Although significant progress was made in 2024, the negotiations were not concluded as planned. Norway is working to secure agreement on an ambitious treaty in 2025. The Norwegian Development Programme to Combat Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter plays an active role in supporting efforts to reduce plastic pollution in developing countries.

Norway remains committed to promoting sustainable ocean development and gives priority to projects that enhance ocean health and foster responsible resource management. Norway's ocean-related development assistance provides a basis for sharing knowledge and experience with communities and stakeholders globally in order to ensure that the ocean can continue to be a source of life and prosperity. Programmes such as Ocean for Development and Fish for Development are crucial to achieving this.

Norway uses its extensive ocean expertise to develop and implement initiatives that can strengthen national frameworks for sustainable and integrated ocean management. This includes enhancing capacity to enforce legislation and promote sustainable economic development, food security, and decent working conditions in ocean-related sectors.

Norway will continue to champion sustainable ocean practices. This report outlines our efforts to support the development of a thriving ocean economy.

Espen Barth Eide,
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Åsmund Grøver Aukrust,
Minister of International Development

Lisetta Trebbi, Acting Director,
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

Acronyms

AGF	African Guarantee Fund
AHA	Aquatic Health for long-term improvements
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
EAF-Nansen	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries - Nansen Programme
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
ESO	Entrepreneurial Support Organizations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FASA	Fish Feed Production and Aquatic Sustainability in Africa
FMC	Fisheries Management Cycle
FMP	Fisheries Management Plans
FRLD	Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage
FSO	Floating Storage and Offloading
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GRID-Arendal	Global Resource Information Database-Arendal
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (fishing)
LBM	Liquefied Biomethane
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)
NIVA	Norwegian Institute for Water Research
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OPTOCE	Ocean Plastic Turned into an Opportunity in Circular Economy
PCCP	Passenger and Cargo Control Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SSF Guidelines	Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Eductional, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO-IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VMEs	Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems
WCO	World Customs Organization
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Norwegian ocean-related development assistance in numbers

← Photo: **Nick Polanszky, Ocean Image Bank** | Mobula rays, sea of Cortez

Healthy oceans are necessary in order to achieve sustainable ocean economies, and to fulfill the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Therefore, Norway collaborates with developing countries in meeting their national aspirations by prioritising the conservation of marine ecosystems alongside economic growth.

This report is organised according to the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy's framework, which emphasises five key transformations: ocean health, wealth, equity, finance, and knowledge. Furthermore, sub-chapters are generally organised around how Norway's development cooperation contributes towards the Ocean Panel's outcome goals for 2030.

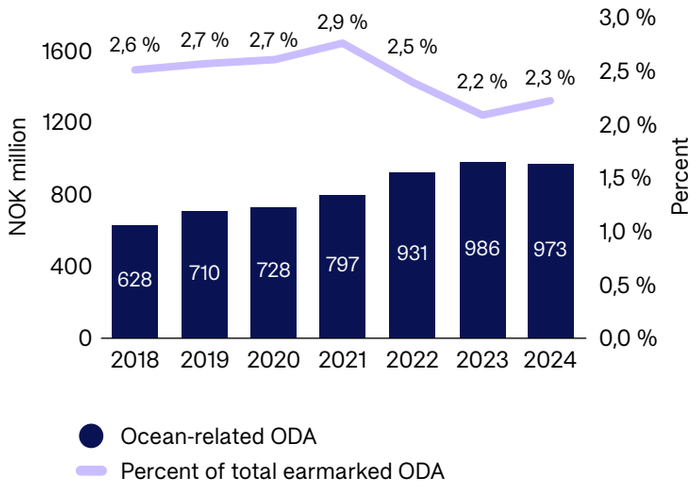
International cooperation is essential for tackling common issues such as marine pollution, illegal fishing, and climate change. By leveraging global partnerships and innovative solutions, sustainable ocean development uses the ocean's vital resources in ways that support long-term ecological health and economic viability.

Ocean-related development assistance in numbers

Norway's official development assistance (ODA) includes three ocean programmes: Ocean for Development, Fish for Development and the Programme to Combat Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter. Ocean-related ODA amounted to 973 million NOK in 2024 and was at the same level as in 2023. The total Norwegian development assistance in 2024 was NOK 56 billion. As a percentage of total earmarked ODA, the ocean-related aid has decreased since 2021 due largely to the growth in aid to Ukraine.

FIGURE 1

Ocean-related aid



OCEAN PANEL OUTCOME 2030:

Sustainable Ocean Plans are providing a credible basis for safeguarding the long-term health and resilience of the ocean, attracting investment and creating jobs to the benefit of coastal communities and national economies.

FIGURE 2

Ocean-related development assistance in numbers

973 million NOK

973 million NOK (2.3% of earmarked ODA) to ocean-related activities in 2024.

46% to multilateral partners

Almost half of Norwegian ocean-related ODA was channeled through multilateral partners, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, in 2024.

22 countries

22 countries received country-specific ocean-related ODA in 2024.

15 Norwegian institutions

More than 15 Norwegian institutions contributed with their technical expertise to partner countries on ocean- and fisheries related partnerships in 2024.

122 active projects

122 ocean-related projects with net disbursements in 2024.

Most of the ocean-related ODA was channeled through multilateral organizations (46 %) and NGOs (33 %). The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) received the largest amount, 264 million NOK, mainly for the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) – Nansen Programme, which contributes to food and nutrition security by improving fisheries management, strengthening the capacities of fisheries institutions and generating scientific knowledge on marine resources and ecosystems.

Of the geographically specific ocean-related aid, the majority was allocated to Africa (49 %), followed by Asia (13 %). The top recipient countries in 2024 were Mozambique, Colombia, India, Ghana and Indonesia.

FIGURE 3

Ocean-related aid by partners, 2024

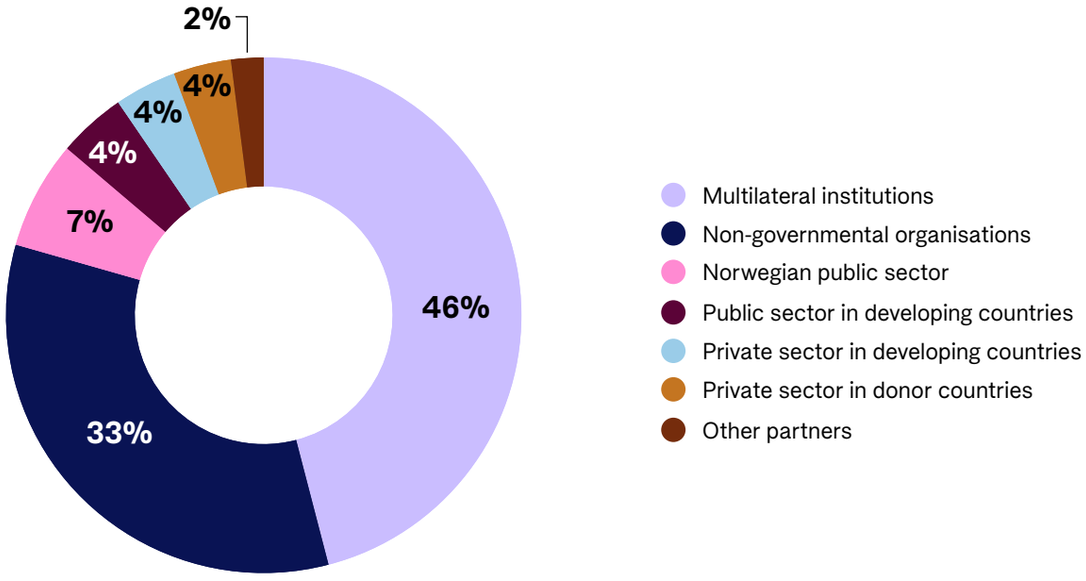
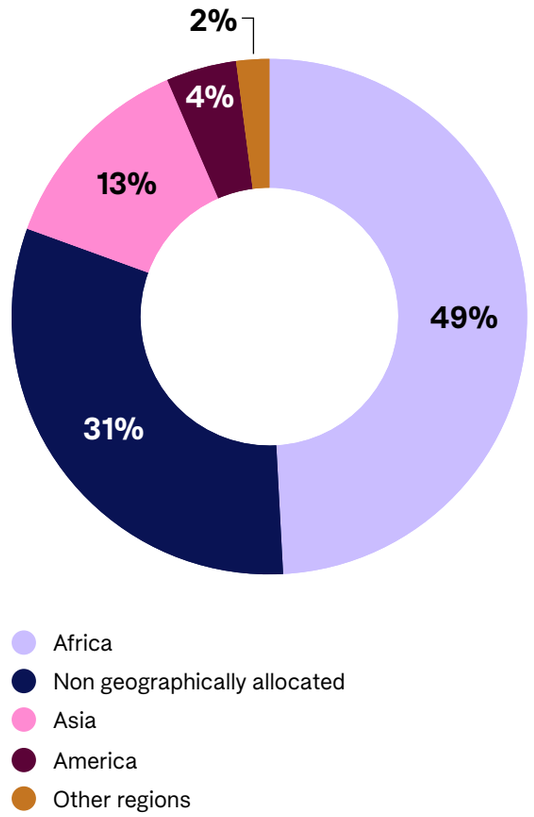


FIGURE 4

Ocean-related aid by regions, 2024



Ocean Wealth

← Photo: **Tracey Jennings, Ocean Image Bank** | Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Ocean wealth is the economic, social, and environmental value derived from the ocean and marine ecosystems. It encompasses the sustainable use of ocean resources to generate wealth while maintaining marine environments. If the ocean were a country, it would rank among the top ten global economies, with an estimated value of $24 trillion.[1]

Much of Norway's wealth is linked to the ocean, and this is also reflected in our development assistance, particularly by ensuring sustainability of fish stocks for food security and value creation. This includes improved fisheries management, the combatting of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, post harvest value creation, and sustainability initiatives in the aquaculture sector. Norway also promotes the sustainability of the shipping sector.

← Photo: **GMAP UNIDO** | Feeding at fish farm

1 Hoegh-Guldberg, O. et al. 2015. Reviving the Ocean Economy: the case for action - 2015. WWF International, Gland, Switzerland., Geneva, 60 pp.

OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

Wild fish stocks are restored and harvested at sustainable levels, aquaculture is sustainably grown to meet global needs, and waste is minimised and managed throughout the value chain.

Bilateral cooperation on sustainable oceans- and fisheries governance

The Ocean and Fish for Development Programmes forms part of Norway's broader institutional cooperation programme, the Knowledge Bank. These initiatives facilitate long-term partnerships between Norwegian public institutions and counterparts in partner countries to build capacity and improve governance. The goal is to strengthen institutions and public administration by sharing knowledge, systems and best practices. The partnerships are based on mutual trust and learning. They also contribute to sustainable development and more effective public services.

Sri Lanka

Norway's bilateral cooperation with Sri Lanka works toward the rebuilding of coastal fish stocks through sustainable fisheries management. The project strengthens government institutions in order to manage the fisheries sector within a robust legal framework. Significant achievements in 2024 include the development of a tablet application for recording landing data and a photo-based system for fish identification, enhancing the reliability of artisanal fisheries statistics. Scientists from Sri Lanka's National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency have conducted the first high standard scientific surveys, and a management plan was created for small pelagic speices of fish on the west coast.

Ghana

The collaboration with Ghana has progressed through technical advice and capacity building for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management. Notable achievements in 2024 include the submission of a new Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill to Parliament, the adoption of improved stock assessment models, and the introduction of a data management strategy. Capacity development initiatives like QGIS training and trawl gear experiments have enhanced monitoring and control. The programme has also updated aquaculture regulatory frameworks, improved fish health management, and established monitoring schemes for fish feed, all contributions to the socio-economic development in Ghana.

Colombia

In 2024, the Fish for Development programme contributed to Colombia's capacity in fisheries management, aquaculture, and fish health. Fisheries data from the dolphinfish fishery was collected, and Colombia was recognised as a cooperating party to Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). A national aquaculture seminar in Cartagena led the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) to initiate work on a new aquaculture law. Environmental monitoring efforts were launched in La Cocha Lake, with plans to expand to other lakes. The Colombian Agriculture and Livestock Institute (ICA) has strengthened laboratory capacity by introducing five new molecular tests for salmonid diseases and improving surveillance of diseases in aquaculture generally.

Indonesia

In 2024, the Ocean for Development Project in Indonesia advanced significantly, marking its first year of implementation after a three-year pre-project phase. The collaboration between Statistics Norway, the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA), and the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries; the Ministry of Finance and Statistics Indonesia (BPS) is centred around ocean accounting. Key achievements include the review and approval of natural resources valuation guidelines by Norwegian and Indonesian partners, and a joint presentation at the International Small Islands Studies Association conference in Lombok. Norwegian partners shared insights from marine ecosystem accounting initiatives and integrated coastal planning in the Oslo fjord. Notable activities included a Savu Sea pilot survey and progress in maritime gross domestic product assessments. Workshops with Indonesia's Ministry of Finance also facilitated the compilation of tables on ocean-related supply and use.

Mozambique

Anchored by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on strengthened ocean governance, signed in 2023, the Ocean for Development programme in Mozambique was launched in 2024. The programme's goal is to create an enabling environment for sustainable social and economic development, including increased production and consumption of aquatic foods, contributing to food security, nutrition, and livelihoods. The program has four areas of work: i) integrated ocean management, ii) environment - marine and coastal, iii) fisheries and aquaculture research and development, and iv) fisheries statistics. The Norwegian and Mozambiquan partner institutions commenced some project activities in 2024. Due to the unrest following the presidential election, several activities were postponed.

Kenya

An MoU was signed between Kenya and Norway in 2024 with the intention to collaborate on ocean-related issues. Key areas of collaboration are sustainable ocean planning, marine aquaculture management,

and technical and scientific research. The Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR) and Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) have developed a programme of collaboration on these issues. Further plans are being made for the coming years to work towards common goals in the MoU.

Post harvest value addition

Norway supports the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's (UNIDO) Global Market Access Programme (GMAP) in Colombia and Mozambique which works on improving seafood quality and compliance with international standards, through institutional and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) capacity building in the aquaculture sector. The programme strengthens national infrastructure and improves SME compliance with relevant standards. By combining capacity-building with strengthened governance the project ensures that local producers previously excluded from formal value chains can compete and help shape the growing aquaculture sector. In 2024, GMAP Colombia provided technical assistance to several aquaculture producers, resulting in new and renewed certifications, boosting Colombia's tilapia exports. In Mozambique, GMAP trained professionals in biosecurity and food safety, improving farm practices, and supporting a monitoring system for aquaculture products to maintain exports.

Photo: **FishNet UNODC** | Training of port officials on fish exports, Namibia →

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUU) amount to about 20% of the total fish caught worldwide and poses a significant threat to marine ecosystems, the livelihoods of fishers, and global food security. The Norwegian foundation, Trygg Mat Tracking, has been instrumental in tackling these challenges in the West Central Gulf of Guinea. The project has enhanced regional capacity and collaboration to combat illegal fishing by sharing vessel tracking data and providing alerts on unauthorised fishing activities. This initiative also includes risk assessments, operational planning, and information exchange.

Our partner GRID-Arendal supports Guinea through the use of drones to combat IUU fishing. Drones offer a cost-effective, efficient way to monitor vast, remote ocean areas that are difficult to reach with traditional patrol boats. Successful local demonstrations have garnered support from both national and international organisations and are now being expanded to Madagascar for a regional pilot project aimed at sustainable fisheries management.

The UN Office of Drug and Crime (UNODC), The FishNET project plays a vital role in strengthening port officer capacity, law enforcement, and reducing corruption risks. They have improved inspection programmes, investigation procedures, and case preparation in countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, and South Africa, ensuring that illegal activities are swiftly identified and dealt with, promoting healthier and more sustainable fisheries.

Aquaculture

Fish health and access to sustainable local feed production are essential to unlock the potential of aquaculture as a food source. Norway has supported WorldFish, in collaboration with the Norwegian Veterinary Institute and local partners, through two initiatives that advance fish feed production (FASA project) and build capacity in fish health and biosecurity (AHA project). The FASA project aims to improve food security, increase incomes, and reduce waste by researching local feed ingredients, integrating gender-sensitive approaches, and collaborating with policymakers for a more equitable aquaculture sector. The AHA project made strides in 2024 towards the enhancment of aquaculture sustainability in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Ghana and Kenya, through capacity building and regional networking, strengthening research, education, and collaborations in aquatic health for long-term improvements.

Larive International's Samaki Poa project is working to bridge the aquaculture skills gap in East Africa. Through collaborations with partners along the aquaculture value chain – including hatcheries, feed suppliers, farms, and training institutions – the project has delivered practical training to active farmers and aspiring aquaculturists in Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. The project has also established a comprehensive digital aquaculture training. The platform features over 17 courses and 150+ videos in English and Kiswahili, reaching more than 4,000 individuals across 30+ African countries. The project is transforming aquaculture education and fostering a skilled workforce to meet the increasing fish demand in sub-Saharan Africa.

Photo: **Larive International** | Aquaculture training in East Africa

Sustainable ocean transport

CO_2 emissions from shipping account for approximately 3% of global anthropogenic emissions.[2] The GreenVoyage2050 initiative, established by Norway and led by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), supports developing countries in decarbonising their maritime sectors, in support of IMO's strategy to reach net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. A highlight is the seaweed-to-fuel project in South Africa, producing liquefied biomethane and e-methanol from seaweed grown in coastal desert areas. This offers sustainable shipping fuels without using arable land or freshwater. In 2024, the project underwent a pre-certification audit under the International Sustainability and Carbon Certification (ISCC) scheme, aiding investment and fuel agreements. Besides reducing emissions, it creates jobs, especially for women and marginalised groups, supports rural development, and enhances ecosystems through carbon drawdown.

The TEST Biofouling project is advancing sustainable biofouling practices in developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Launched in 2022, the project builds on the achievements of the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloFouling Partnerships by supporting innovative technology demonstrations and gender inclusion in the maritime sector. In 2024, regional pilots in Panama City, Panama, and Busan, Korea showcased in-water cleaning technologies to prevent invasive species spread. These demonstrations enhanced expertise in biofouling risk assessment and compliance, tailored to local conditions.

OCEAN PANEL OUTCOME 2030:

Shipping investments have effectively accelerated the shift towards zero-emission and low-impact marine vessels.

2 UNCTAD, 2023, Review of Maritime Transport – Towards a green and just transition

Ocean Health

← Photo: **Martin Colognol, Ocean Image Bank** | Before (left) and after (right) coralrestauration in Komodo, Indonesia

The ocean hosts 80% of the planet's biodiversity, and its preservation is vital for global ecological balance. Norway collaborates with a wide range of partners to address key challenges threatening ocean health.

Norway takes a comprehensive approach to ocean health through treaty negotiations, capacity building, and development projects. While ocean health is influenced by factors addressed in other chapters, such as by ocean industries, unequal participation in ocean management, lack of ocean knowledge and misdirected finance, the initiatives presented in this chapter target primarily climate change, plastic pollution, and biodiversity conservation.

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

The climate crisis is deeply tied to the ocean. The ocean stores carbon, is slowly rising, and is rapidly forming increasingly disastrous storms that threaten coastal communities. Norway contributes to climate adaptation by supporting partner countries in order to manage the impact of climate change. In addition to ocean-related activities, these efforts also contribute to general low-emission development and the conservation of carbon sinks such as rainforests and marine ecosystems.

Climate action has a high priority in Norwegian ODA. For example, Norfund's Climate Investment Fund amounts to NOK 10 billion between 2022-2026. Norway has also supported countries like Brazil and Indonesia in delivering massive emission reductions from reduced deforestation through the international climate and forest initiative, amounting to about NOK 3 billion per year. Norway has also pledged NOK 3.2 billion to The Green Climate Fund (GCF) for the period 2024-2027, in addition to contributing USD 256 million to the newly established Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD). For the purposes of this report, however, climate finance is generally not included under ocean-related finance figures.

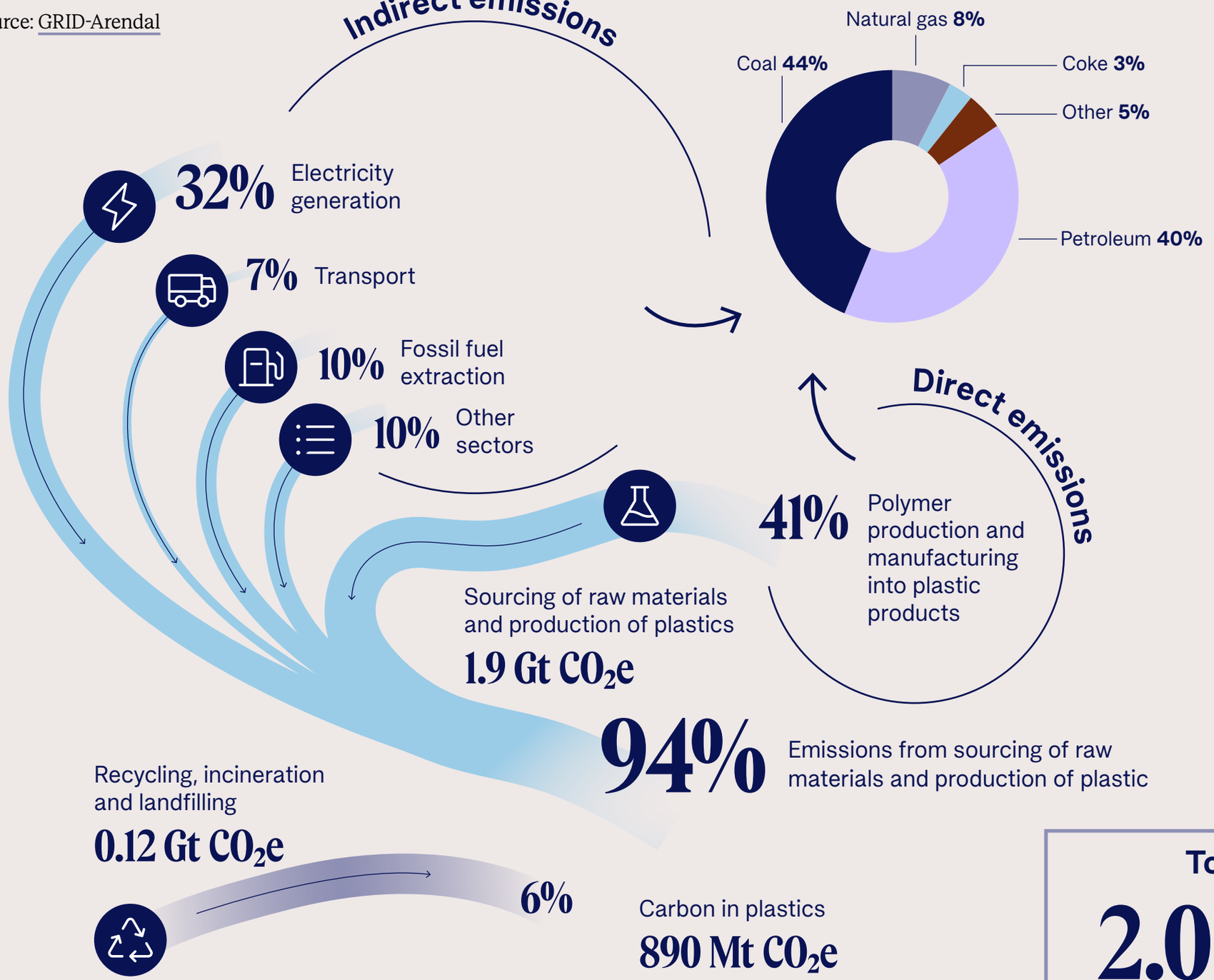
OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

Marine and coastal ecosystems are healthy, resilient and productive, and nature-based solutions are key elements in developing coastal infrastructure.

FIGURE 5

Emissions from sourcing of raw materials and production of plastic

Source: GRID-Arendal



Gt = Gigatonnes
Source: Cabernard L., Pfister, S., Obershelp, C. and Hellweg, S. (2022). Growing environmental footprint of plastics driven by coal combustion. Nature Sustainability 5(2), 139-148

Reduce ocean pollution

Norway has a dedicated programme on reducing marine litter, which in 2024 totalled 26 million USD. The programme aims to reduce plastic and waste leaking into the ocean, including the support of strengthened global frameworks, improving local waste management systems, and innovative technical solutions.

Global plastics treaty

The global negotiations for a legally binding treaty on plastic pollution aim to address the pressing challenge of plastic pollution. Initiated by a historic resolution at the UN Environment Assembly in March 2022, the process seeks to develop a treaty to manage the full lifecycle of plastics. As the negotiations progress, Norway supports developing countries' ability to actively participate with capacity building, advocacy and technical support. The process is expected to finalise an agreed treaty text at the resumed last negotiation session in Geneva, Switzerland in August 2025.

Norway also supports the AFRIPAC project with IUCN and GRID-Arendal, which supports Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, and Sierra Leone in plastic pollution negotiations. WWF also advocates for a strong treaty text and provides technical support for governments and civil society. Notably, WWF worked with Mexico to rally 94 countries to support bans on harmful chemicals and plastics.

Norway's commitment extends to ensuring equitable participation of civil society and scientists in the treaty discussions. NIVA coordinates the Civil Society and Rights Holders Coalition, which includes 202 organisations from 65 countries and promotes civil society voices in the negotiations. The Scientists' Coalition for an Effective Plastics Treaty – with 430 members from 70 countries – grounds negotiations in scientific evidence. These coalitions work alongside delegations to hold them accountable to civil society and scientific standards.

OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

The ocean is no longer a sink for pollution and ocean dead zones are minimised.

Reducing plastic pollution in the ocean

Illegal import of plastic and hazardous waste is a high concern in Southeast Asia, primarily from wealthy countries. The UNODC Passenger and Cargo Control Programme (PCCP), in cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO), supports Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam with capacity building and technical assistance, leading to significant seizures of illegal waste. In 2024, a series of trainings were conducted, and as of summer 2024, participating authorities had reported seizures of over 131,000 tons of plastic and hazardous waste.

The waste sector often employs informal workers in poorly paid and unhealthy working conditions, despite the importance of their work. UNDP works towards integrating Vietnam's informal waste workers into a formal Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR scheme). The current EPR system excludes them, creating blockages in waste management. Efforts include advocating for policy changes and financial support. They also support workers through health insurance, PPE, and connection to local waste management facilities, promoting a fairer circular economy in Vietnam.

← Photo: **Toby Matthews, Ocean Image Bank** | Hammerhead shark caught in ghost fish net Hawaii, USA

Efforts to improve locally led waste management systems are crucial for reducing marine plastic pollution. The Clean Oceans through Clean Communities (CLOCC) project – a collaboration between Sirk Norge and the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) – works closely with local authorities to enhance waste management systems in regions like Banyuwangi, Tagel, and Tabanan in Indonesia and Tamil Nadu in India.

Community engagement and the raising of awareness are also central to Norway's approach. In Mozambique, Cooperativa de Educação Ambiental REPENSAR (CEAR) fosters environmental education and community involvement in waste management. By 2024, CEAR trained 1169 individuals and processed 98 tons of waste. The "Casa de Vidro" eco-centre, constructed from recycled materials, serves as a living, working and educational space.

The GEF-funded Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States (ISLANDS) programme also employs engagement and awareness raising as part of its work to address plastic pollution in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). In the Caribbean and the Pacific, more than 40,000 young people have been engaged through awareness campaigns in partnership with schools, environmental clubs, and NGOs. This effort is important in order to further educate the next generation about waste management and a sustainable ocean.

Protect and restore marine and coastal ecosystems

Norway also works to protect and restore ocean ecosystems through the support of developing countries in their management of marine protected areas. The Blue Action Fund, backed by Norway since 2021, has since its inception financed 220 conservation processes in developing countries, working to establish or improve management of MPAs covering an area of 461,810 km². More than 750,000 people are reached through these projects. Technological innovations, such as a new monitoring system, contributed to a 91.67% reduction of illegal fishing in the Cocos Marine Conservation Area in the Pacific.

Support is also leveraged through the World Bank's PROBLUE program, which is an umbrella multi-donor trust fund, supporting the sustainable development of marine and coastal resources in a healthy ocean. The support for PROBLUE is central to Norway's goal for sustainable management in 100% of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). As an example the programme supported Tanzania and Indonesia with the integration of satellite data for marine area management. In 2024, the programme was expanded with an additional 37 million USD to a total of 183 million for capacity building, institutional support, and operational co-financing for more than 100 partner countries.

Photo: **MarViva** | Improved monitoring at the Cocos Marine Conservation Area, Costa Rica ↑

International cooperation is essential to the sustainable management of shared ocean environments. The Ocean Coordination Mechanism (OCM) for the Wider Caribbean is a result of the GEF-funded ProCaribePlus project and exemplifies the power of collaboration among countries, intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), and ocean stakeholders, to enhance cooperation. As of January 2025, 17 states and 9 IGOs have officially signed the memorandum of understanding, activating the OCM. This pioneering mechanism promotes inclusive ocean governance through initiatives like the Ocean Action Programme.

Photo: **UNDP** | FSO Safer off the coast of Yemen ↓

BOX 1

Case Study : FSO Safer – A catastrophe prevented by international cooperation

The FSO Safer oil tanker, anchored off the coast of Hodeida, Yemen, was used as a floating storage facility for oil from inland Yemen for many years. After the Houthi movement seized control of Hodeida, the ship was neglected and began to rust. This raised alarms about the hull leaking. With 1.1 million barrels of oil onboard – over four times the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez – a leak could have led to devastating consequences for the entire Red Sea region.

In response, the international community, led by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), launched a fundraising campaign to facilitate the transfer of oil to a new vessel. This complex operation required the UN to procure a large tanker, negotiate insurance amid deteriorating security conditions in the region, and engage the Dutch company SMIT to handle the oil transfer from FSO Safer to the new ship. The fundraising and logistic coordination took approximately two years, culminating in the gathering of USD 135 million, with Norway contributing around USD 3.5 million. Major contributions came from the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia, alongside private Yemeni companies and a loan from the CERF emergency response fund.

By August 11, 2023, the oil was successfully transferred to an UN-owned tanker, alleviating the immediate crisis. Although many challenges remained, the coordinated international effort, led by the UN, played a crucial role in averting an ecological disaster and stabilising the situation in the region.

Ocean Finance

← Photo: **Joe Calhi, unsplash.com** | Nairobi

The ocean economy is a critical driver of global development. With an estimated value exceeding $2.5 trillion annually, the ocean economy holds immense potential to create jobs, stimulate innovation, and mitigate climate change.[3]

Despite this, SDG 14 – Life Below Water – remains the least financed SDG and there is critical need to boost investments in a sustainable and inclusive ocean economy.[4] Norway works with a range of partners to mobilise resources and attract investments, strengthen rules and regulations, and create jobs in companies and organisations that prioritise ecological sustainability and equitable access.

Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship in blue sectors

Through strategic partnerships, Norway supports innovative ideas, entrepreneurship and financial solutions in the ocean economy. Through a private sector initiative launched in 2023, Norway partnered with several incubators, accelerators, and first-loss facilities: Equity Bank, African Guarantee Fund, Village Capital, Renew Capital, Techbridge Invest, and Katapult Ocean. These collaborations address the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and start-ups as well as by micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the ocean economy.

Village Capital has launched the Empowering Sustainable Entrepreneurship Africa programme, which aims to bolster climate-focused startups in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, and Tanzania. By enhancing the capacity of entrepreneurial support organisations and facilitating investment-readiness programmes, Village Capital supports the entrepreneurial ecosystem to drive innovation in all five countries. Notable successes include Reach for Change in Ghana, which has received funding to advance climate action among local startups, improving financial sustainability and impact.

OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

Sustainable ocean finance is accessible for all and drives ecologically sustainable and socially equitable economic growth.

3 Hoegh-Guldberg, O. et al. 2015. Reviving the Ocean Economy: the case for action - 2015. WWF International, Gland, Switzerland., Geneva, 60 pp.

4 WEF_Tracking_Investment_in_and_Progress_Toward_SDG14.pdf

Renew Capital works to integrate advanced technological solutions and comprehensive investor education for MSMEs in Mozambique, Ghana and Malawi in order to address the acute shortage of capital accessible to MSMEs and startups. In Mozambique, one of the companies supported is Appload, a logistics company, which is bridging the transportation gap faced by small-scale fishers. Appload's digital marketplace aims to revolutionise cargo transportation, ensuring that fresh seafood reaches inland markets efficiently. This initiative enhances economic opportunities for fishers and contributes to food security by reducing spoilage and increasing the availability of fresh seafood in urban areas.

Norway also supports UNDPs Ocean Innovation Challenge (OIC) Fund, where 36 innovative projects have received support to develop their ideas. The projects have successfully attracted an additional US$25 million in investments. Projects such as solar-powered seaweed drying facilities in Zanzibar have improved the livelihoods of women seaweed farmers by reducing spoilage and enhancing the quality of dried seaweed. This initiative, supported by MAVUNOLAB, demonstrates the impact of renewable energy in empowering local communities and fostering sustainable practices in the ocean economy.

Photo: **Randall Mabwa, Blue Ventures, 2025**
Faki (right) and Mwanahamisi (left) sifting dried anchovies on Zanzibar, Tanzania →

BOX 2

Techbridge and Ecoharvest Solutions Ltd.

Techbridge is one of the incubators/ accelerators that received funding under the 2023 private sector initiative. One of the incubated startups, Ecoharvest Solutions Ltd., has in one year transitioned from a participant at an innovation challenge, gone through the incubation phase, and is now ready to join the accelerator. Ecoharvest has already had an incremental revenue increase of $38 000, raised $30 000 in funds, created 37 full and part time jobs, and recycled 172 tonnes of plastic.

Financing for for micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises through risk-sharing

Norway's support to African Guarantee Fund (AGF) and Equity Bank seeks to enhance access to finance for MSMEs within green and blue sectors in selected African countries. AGF provides risk-sharing solutions to financial institutions, thereby enhancing access to credit for MSMEs across sectors with high growth potential, while Equity Bank works more directly with entrepreneurs, start-ups, early stage and growth stage businesses in order to ensure they have access to financing through de-risking instruments.

The support to AGF has been instrumental in shifting some of their efforts to the ocean sectors. So far, the volume of guarantees issued related to blue economy is 1,1 million NOK, the volume of loans disbursed to MSMEs are 2,2 million NOK, while 12 blue economy MSMEs are benefitting from this programme.

Photo: **Srikanth Mannepuri, Ocean Image Bank** | Village in Godavari mangrove forest, India ↓

FIGURE 6

The World Bank's PROBLUE fund – Key figures

PROBLUE

$183 million portfolio

275 activites in over **100** economies

Fisheries and aquaculture – Marine pollution – Oceanic sectors – Seascape management

Have so far resulted in

↓

Improved regional collaboration

49 countries with strengthened regional engagement in the blue economy

Improved investments

$26 billion The fund has supported World Bank investments worth $26 billion to make them "bluer".

Improved capacity

700 capacity-building events with over **12 000** participants held

Better policies and plans

56 policies and plans that improve blue economy development have been informed by PROBLUE.

Innovative financing mechanisms to support a sustainable ocean economy

In 2024, PROBLUE supported several countries in assessing and developing innovative financing tools to increase finance volumes, such as blue bonds. For instance, in Indonesia they are supporting the development of a coral bond. The bond will channel private sector investments to ocean conservation in pilot marine protected areas. A study developed coral bond impact metrics and a data management system along with a monitoring protocol for coral cover and reef fish biomass. PROBLUE is also supporting the establishment of accessible and affordable insurance for the marine fisheries sector using parametric insurances in India. In the Carribbean it is supporting the inclusion of nature-based solutions and marine ecosystems in catastrophe risk models and assessments and insurance instruments.

BOX 3

Success story: Illuminar el Mar – Combatting fisheries bycatch of endangered marine species

Through the UNDP OIC Fundacion Mare Nostrum is pioneering Bycatch Reduction Technologies (BRTs) in Ecuador's small-scale fisheries to protect endangered marine species. It focuses on testing the effectiveness of LED lights and electromagnetic devices in reducing the unintentional capture of sharks, sea turtles, and other fauna in longline and gillnet fishing. The project's trials have demonstrated a significant reduction in the bycatch of sea turtles (58%), sharks (45%), cetaceans (73%), and mobula rays (50%). The project's approach to bycatch reduction offers a replicable and scalable model for other regions facing similar challenges. The use of BRTs, coupled with community engagement and a sustainable business model, can be adapted to various contexts to promote the conservation of endangered marine species while supporting the livelihoods of small-scale fisheries worldwide.

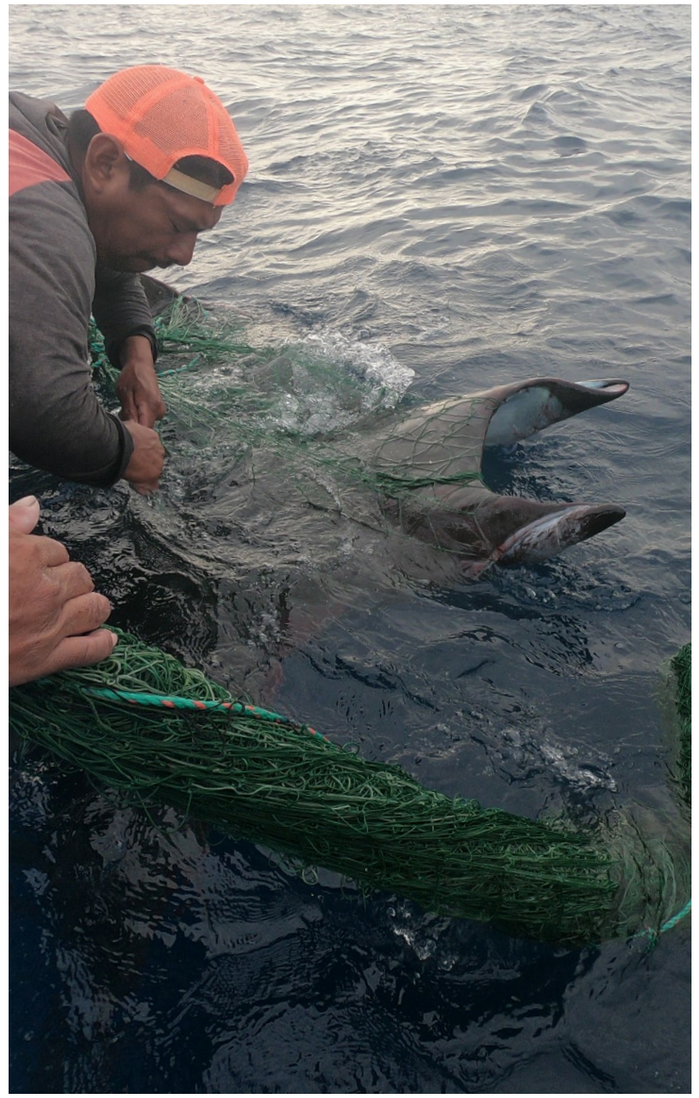


Photo: **Mare Nustrom UNDP** | Ray caught in fishing net ↑

Ocean Equity

← Photo: **Vedat Kandemir, Pexels** | Fishing boats Tirebolo, Türkyie

A sustainable ocean economy places people at its core, ensuring equal access to ocean resources, upholding human rights, and promoting transparent and inclusive practices. Local communities – and women in particular – must be empowered for sustainable ocean management.

Around the world, millions of people rely on the ocean for food, jobs, and a way of life. But overfishing, climate change, and inequality threaten both marine ecosystems and the communities that depend on them, especially in vulnerable nations like small island developing states and least developed countries. That's why Norwegian support for marine development is protecting the ocean while improving the lives of people – especially women – in coastal areas.

Norway supports developing countries' capability to implement international maritime law. The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) plays a pivotal role by providing information, advice, and assistance to States, enhancing their understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Through DOALOS/Norway programmes, strategic capacity-building initiatives are tailored to meet the needs of developing countries.

Human rights are another important aspect of how international law can be leveraged towards the achievement of equity in the ocean sector. Norway's commitment to these principles is evident through initiatives like the Raftostiftelsen Ocean and Human Rights Platform, which collaborates with partners in developing countries such as CREER (believe in English) in Colombia, Health and Mother Earth Foundation in Nigeria, and the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights in India. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rafto supports initiatives like Programme Paix and the Christian Initiative for Peace, Reconciliation and Development.

Transparency furthers good governance and holds governments and companies accountable. To strengthen journalism on ocean issues, Norway has supported the Pulitzer Center and its Ocean Reporting Network. The support for inclusive knowledge creation is covered in the next chapter of this report. This support has resulted in a range of impactful articles. Below is an example highlighting the importance of how journalism can promote equity in the ocean economy.

OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

People have equitable access to ocean resources, benefits are fairly distributed and the most vulnerable are protected from the risk of harm.

BOX 4

Secrets of Mare Doricum's black box

Daniel Yovera, an investigative journalist from Peru, spent several months investigating what caused the January 2022 oil spill – the largest oil spill in Peruvian history – resulting in a documentary on epicentro.tv. The Italian oil tanker "Mare Doricum" was unloading at La Pampilla Refinery, owned by the Spanish Company Repsol, when it accidentally spilled nearly 14,000 barrels of oil into the sea. The accident affected protected natural reserves, beaches, and marine resources in an unprecedented way.

The obtaining of audio recordings from the vessel's "black box" and images from its cameras were key to the investigation. cataloguing a chain of errors that led to the spill. Shortly after the documentary was published, Peru's public prosecutor for environmental crimes submitted a request to include the report in the investigation file as an "element of conviction" in the government's legal case against Repsol.

Economic equality and inclusive governance

Norway works to address global inequality at various levels, from global trade systems to local communities. Globally, about 492 million people rely on small-scale fisheries. 2024 marked the 10th anniversary of the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). The SSF Guidelines, funded in part by Norway, are the first international instrument entirely dedicated to small-scale fisheries. It emerged from a long and inclusive global consultative process.

Norway also supported FAO's work to implement the SSF Guidelines globally through projects addressing gender equality, climate resilience, and food security. In 2024, two new National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries were launched in Madagascar and the Philippines, with funding provided for further implementation. Additionally, 2,244 post harvest fishworkers in Ghana, Tanzania, the Philippines, and Uganda received practical training to improve post harvest practices.

Social protection, although a relatively new concept within fisheries, is now recognised as a key pillar for achieving an equitable blue transformation, reducing vulnerabilities while promoting sustainability, livelihoods, and resilience. The FAO also established a global database for social safety nets in the fisheries sector, which enables countries to develop, implement, and monitor social programmes for small-scale fishers and facilitates experience sharing and South-South cooperation.

Fishing is often seasonal, and incomes can vary widely. This creates a need for alternative incomes for many coastal communities. In Colombia, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) focuses on sustainable additional livelihoods for fishing communities prioritising food security and local supply. This includes agricultural training, tools, and seed banks, and exploring product transformation and sales points, while traditional home gardens are being built to strengthen food security. Over 80 small-scale fishers in La Guajira and Nariño received training in sustainable fishing, business management, and digital marketing. With guidance and collaboration, women's groups developed new fish-based products and partnerships with local restaurants. These efforts not only improved livelihoods but also promoted the sustainable use of marine resources.

Photo: **Martin Colognoli, Ocean Image Bank** |
Men mending fishing nets, Indonesia

Equitable incomes from fisheries requires equitable power dynamics and participation in ocean governance. In Kenya, Blue Ventures, WCS and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) support data-driven and community-led fisheries management. More than 300 fishers are now collecting and analysing data, strengthening community-led management and helping fisheries support livelihoods for generations to come. Local fish processors have improved their handling and storage of fish, using new community guidelines to reduce losses and increase quality. They've also improved equipment like fryers and boilers and are increasing incomes – especially for women, who make up the majority of processors.

In Ghana, Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) works to promote participatory co-management with local fishing communities to end illegal fishing. The project provides platforms for the strategic engagement of key actors for participatory national fisheries management plan. They also work to improve income resilience through enhanced businesses and value addition. Engaging and empowering women throughout the fisheries value chain is a core goal through activities like Village Savings and Loans Association formations and capacity strengthening.

Disadvantaged communities often have difficulties starting businesses, despite the wealth of ideas and competence. In Mozambique and Tanzania, WWF is supporting the establishment of sustainable community-led enterprises. The regional Southwest Indian Ocean (SWIO) Venture Builder has been launched to promote bankable livelihood alternatives. In Indonesia, WCS implements an alternative livelihood programme supporting eco-friendly fishing practices and sustainable business models, including the establishment of small Fisher Shops offering legal gear and business units selling fish caught with eco-friendly methods. They are also working on establishing a Multi-Stakeholder Cooperative to market products and share profits.

In Bandungharjo Village, Central Java, Indonesia women fishers formed the Berkah Laut Cooperative in September 2024 to improve their livelihoods amidst economic stagnation and climate change impacts. Supported by Hivos' FOCUS Project, which provided training and technical assistance, the cooperative focuses on products like smoked milkfish and shrimp crackers, aiming to become a hub for local economic activity and tourism. It offers savings and loan services to its members. Originally a fisherwomen's cooperative, it was renamed to include farmers, promoting inclusivity and food sovereignty.

Photo: **Victor Birai, Unsplash** | Cargo ship off the coast of Mombasa, Kenya ↓

Gender equality in the ocean sector

Africa's Blue Economy is estimated to grow to 57 million jobs by 2030. Traditionally male-dominated, these ocean industries are recognising the need to increase gender equality. Norway's development assistance considers impact on gender equality for all its programmes and projects. Here we list some examples of Norwegian-supported initiatives which directly enhance women's roles in the growing blue economy.

The Empowering Women in the Blue Economy project is part of the WE4D programme which is a joint initiative between Germany, the EU and Norway, implemented by GIZ, to boost female entrepreneurship in green sectors in Africa. The Blue Economy project aims to enhance women's skills and market opportunities, fostering the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources in Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique. By helping women-led businesses flourish in sectors like fish processing, aquaculture, eco-tourism, and seaweed farming, the project promotes economic growth and gender equality.

As part of FAO's implementation of the SSF Guidelines in Madagascar, women working in fisheries are gaining new tools and knowledge to grow their businesses. Training in fish processing, quality control, and entrepreneurship – along with new equipment such as drying ovens and coolers – have helped women preserve more fish, reduce spoilage, and increase their income. Some groups also started equipment-sharing systems to support collaboration and cut costs.

The TIKA organisation in Leticia, Amazonas, made history by leading the first EcoGourmet pilot focused on inland waters involving 90 fisherwomen. Their flagship product, CHONI fish flour, is an innovative result of transforming low-market-value fish using ancestral knowledge and modern techniques to create a nutritious food with Amazonian identity.

Addressing gender-based violence is part of building a safer and more inclusive fishing sector. For example, female fish traders can be pressured to exchange sexual services for fish from fishermen. In Kenyan fishing communities one study found that 34% of men in 303 households self-reported they engaged in the sexual exploitation of women in exchange for fish. In Zambia, more than 33,000 people received support from the IUCN Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Environments (RISE) Grants Challenge, that reduced exploitation and promoted women's participation in environmental and fisheries governance. These changes also contributed to national policy improvements, including increased government funding and coordination to address gender-based violence.

Photo: **GMAP UNIDO** | Processing fish filets →

BOX 5

RISE: As one woman shares;

"As a restaurant owner and fishmonger, I've faced numerous challenges to access fish, particularly as a woman in a male-dominated industry. Many women who visit these fishing camps would only have access to the fish if they agree to have sex with a fisherman. Therefore this barrier has prevented many women from accessing the fish despite having their own money. The RISE project transformed many lives for women including myself. I gained valuable knowledge and skills, including self-defense, GBV care and support to GBV survivors and response and reporting, GBV management, and psychosocial counseling. I am one of the women who responds to and reports GBV cases to serve my community. These trainings were an eye-opener, revealing the prevalence of abuse and exploitation against women and girls in the fishing communities."

By investing in sustainable fishing, gender and economic equality, as well as inclusive governance of ocean resources, Norwegian marine development is helping coastal communities adapt to challenges and leads the way toward a more sustainable blue economy – one that protects people, livelihoods and marine life for generations to come.

Photo: **UNDP** | Mavunolab (Ocean Innovation Challenge) ↓

Ocean Knowledge

← Photo: **CORDIO** | Ocean research underway

Despite covering 70% of the Earth's surface, the ocean remains one of the least understood environments, with only about 20% of its depths thoroughly mapped and studied.

Ocean knowledge enables communities, policymakers, and stakeholders to make informed decisions that safeguard the health of our ocean for future generations, ensuring resilience against climate change and fostering an ocean economy that benefits all.

EAF-Nansen programme

The EAF-Nansen Programme is a longstanding collaboration between Norway, the FAO, the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research, regional organisations, and 32 partner countries in Africa and the Bay of Bengal. Celebrating 50 years in 2025, the programme has employed the research vessel Dr. Fridtjof Nansen to gather data on marine resources and ecosystems, contributing to the monitoring and assessment of fisheries while addressing global challenges such as the loss of biodiversity and climate change. Between 2017 and 2023 the programme discovered 24 species new to science, carried out 62 research surveys involving over 650 scientists, and trained over 800 individuals in fisheries management, stock assessment and research. 20 fisheries scored over 50% in EAF implementation score.

In 2024, a new four-year phase of the programme commenced, working to bridge science and management to improve ocean governance, while addressing challenges like pollution and climate change, with the primary goal of increasing food security. The programme has three integrated focus areas, and this report will highlight results under each of these.

Scientific Advice

The programme has significantly advanced global and local understanding of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) through discoveries on seamounts in the equatorial and southeast Atlantic Ocean and continental margins of various countries. These data have been crucial in informing fisheries management bodies about the distribution of VME indicator species and associated resources, contributing to efforts aimed at protecting VMEs from adverse impacts from bottom fisheries.

In 2024, the meta-database (Surveys Catalogue) and data request portal was established, which allows stakeholders to be informed about the surveys conducted with R/V Dr. Fridtjof Nansen and request data and information from the surveys. This is a key step in ensuring that data are used and shared.

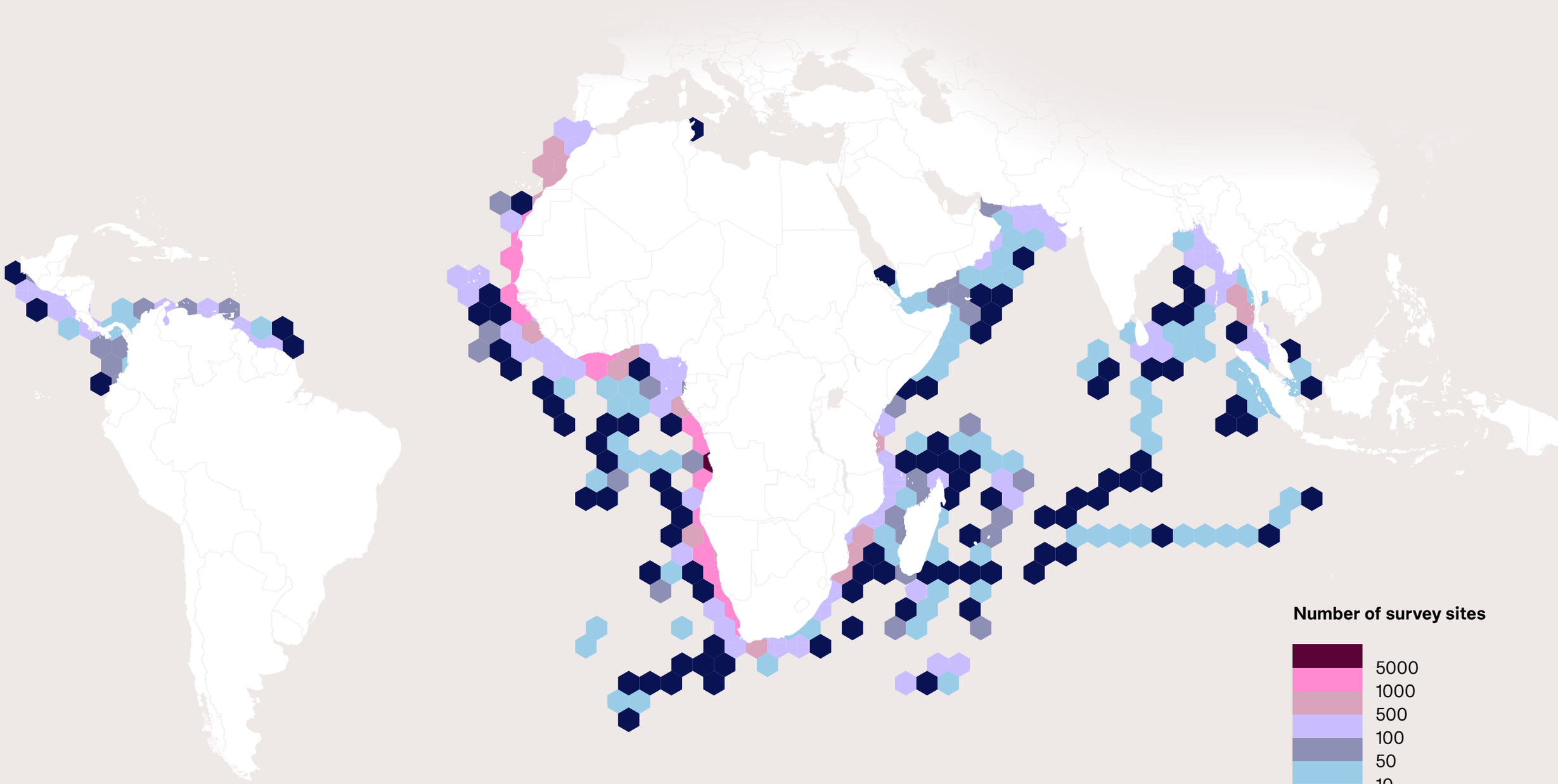
OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

Through the UN Decade of Ocean Science, ocean literacy has been enhanced worldwide. People understand the value of the ocean and have acquired the skills and knowledge to participate in the sustainable ocean economy.

FIGURE 7

Ocean sites surveyed by EAF Nansen over 50 years

The sites are specific locations in the ocean which EAF Nansen surveys to provide data on the state of marine environments and changes over time.



Source: FAO and Havforskningsinstituttet

Fisheries Management

In the programme phase that ran from 2006-2017, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo were assisted in preparing a fishery management plan for the beach seine fisheries using the EAF-Framework. Since 2017 progress has been made in strengthening the management system for beach seine fisheries, aiming to make it effective, permanent, adaptive, evidence-based, and regionally coherent. This was achieved by establishing and operationalising the Fisheries Management Cycle, strengthening the consultative and planning process for implementing fisheries management plans. All decisions, management measures, and activities related to the implementation of the beach seines management plan were made and discussed within the framework of their co-management structures, including:

- **Management of fishing efforts:** In Togo and Benin, boat registration and licensing were introduced to control fishing, shifting away from unrestricted access. Fishing effort is now frozen, with plans to gradually reduce active beach seines to support sustainable fisheries.
- **Closed season:** Regional, national, and local consultations have contributed to a harmonised closed season. Côte d'Ivoire adopted a two-month closure for industrial fisheries and one month for artisanal fisheries. Benin implemented a 1 ½ month closure for beach seines, and Togo plans a regional-scale closure. Closed seasons are implemented to protect fish populations during critical periods, usually the spawning season when fish reproduce.
- **Spatial management:** Studies identified critical habitats, contributing to the creation of two MPAs in Benin and one in Côte d'Ivoire.
- **Gear selectivity improvement:** Experimental fishing in three countries showed that larger mesh sizes reduce juvenile fish capture, but also lower overall catch, impacting fishers' income. Compensation measures could be used to offset this economic challenge.

In the current programme phase, Senegal and The Gambia are about to formalise their fisheries management plans (FMPs) for the sardinella fishery, and five other countries are receiving support for FMP development.

Capacity Development

Men, women and youth often play different roles in fisheries resources management and have different interests and needs that must be considered in the development of fisheries-based food systems. The programme helped establish dedicated gender desks within the fisheries Ministries in Tanzania and Gambia to mainstream gender in all activities of the institutions' work within the national fisheries sector. The experience showed that there are different levels of awareness and consideration of gender issues to be considered, and that there is a need to build institutional capacity on gender mainstreaming. A growing body of evidence suggests that addressing gender issues and integrating women's empowerment into natural resource conservation leads to improved governance and ecological results.

BOX 6

Nansen and climate research

Climate change affects marine ecosystems, fisheries, and global food security. Understanding these impacts is essential for ensuring sustainability and resilience. By generating data on ocean acidification, the EAF-Nansen Programme has created a time series that can contribute to assessing climate change impacts on marine organisms and habitats. Cross-disciplinary studies on cold-water coral reefs in West-Africa and the Gulf of Guinea reveal higher acidity levels and lower oxygen content due to upwelling of carbon dioxide-rich water. These conditions challenge calcification and slow down growth. Yet some corals persist, indicating potential adaptation mechanisms to climate change. These observations underscore the need for continued research on vulnerable habitats to better understand their resilience and adaptive capacities in the face of climate change, ocean acidification, and other stressors.

← Photo: **FAO** | Celebration of 50 years with the EAF Nansen programme in Mombasa, Kenya

UN Decade of Ocean Science

Norway supports the ongoing UN Decade of Ocean Science, whose Secretariat is based in IOC-UNESCO. With Norway's and others' support, over 23,000 individuals from more than 3,200 partner institutions, including 2,500 Early Career Ocean Professionals, are engaged in "Decade Actions" as of 2024. *The Decade* has seen the launch of more than 29,700 capacity development initiatives, reaching over 260,000 beneficiaries, with 155 newly endorsed Decade Actions, and over 10,000 knowledge products generated across the different Ocean Decade Challenges.

Over the past six years, Norway has partnered with CORDIO, a Kenyan ocean research institution, in their mission to improve the health and resilience of marine ecosystems and coastal peoples' well-being in the Western Indian Ocean through research, conservation action, and support to policy and governance. This support has strengthened RMC as a research institution, which provides important data into national, regional and global processes, such as marine spatial planning. They also focus on empowering communities to engage in research to manage their own resources sustainable. For instance, 350 community members were trained in coral reef monitoring, which equips them with skills to assess reef health using scientific and traditional methods.

UNEP's Global Plastics Hub, supported by Norway, uses their Digital Platform to share knowledge and data, aiding countries in developing effective policies and strategies against plastic pollution. The platform provides resources and guidance, assisting nations like Saint Lucia in creating national plastic inventories and strategies, supported by tools such as the Country Dedicated Workflow for detailed planning. The Hub also promotes uniform monitoring methods, contributing to global estimates of plastic emissions and SDG 14.1 data. The Hub aims to enhance decision-making, transparency, and project development, leveraging enriched data and AI solutions to support comprehensive progress in tackling plastic pollution.

OCEAN PANEL 2030 OUTCOME:

- ***Decision-making affecting the ocean reflects the value of and impacts on the ocean's natural capital.***

- ***A globally shared data revolution has contributed to sustainable ocean management worldwide.***

Photo: **CORDIO** | Participants at a Cordio workshop on sustainable coral reef management

Looking ahead to 2030

← Photo: **Johanne Fremstad, Norad** | Sandwhich Harbor, Namibia

Building a sustainable ocean economy by 2030 requires bold, coordinated action across the five transformations: ocean wealth, health, equity, finance, and knowledge. Norway is committed to advancing these transformations through responsible ocean industries, the protection of marine ecosystems, equitable access to ocean resources, increased ocean finance, and strengthened science-based governance.

Norway's development assistance programmes – Fish for Development, Oceans for Development and the Development Programme to Combat Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter – are central to this effort, supporting partner countries in managing marine resources sustainably, improving food security, and reducing pollution. Norway will continue to support developing countries, along four pathways:

First, enhancing ocean research and data collection are crucial to better understand marine ecosystems and address challenges such as climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. Investing in technological advancements and supporting initiatives like the UN Decade of Ocean Science will drive innovation.

Second, strong and enforceable governance frameworks must be established globally, ensuring the sustainable management of marine resources and land-based industries impacting ocean health. Collaborative international policies should focus on reducing overfishing and illegal practices, protecting critical habitats, and mitigating marine pollution. Furthermore, climate change must be addressed through ambitious and effective climate action in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

Third, empowering coastal communities – in particular women and vulnerable groups, through financial inclusion and education will foster sustainable practices. Integrating socio-economic empowerment with conservation efforts is possible.

Lastly, mobilising ocean finance from a range of public and private sources will be critical to ensure that SDG 14 is sufficiently financed.

"After almost 100 years on the planet, I now understand the most important place on Earth is not on land, but at sea [...] If we save the sea, we save our world".

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH