



Using Ocean Accounts to Monitor Progress Towards the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Goals

Key messages

- The Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) sets global targets for halting biodiversity loss and promoting sustainable ecosystem management. Ocean accounts support countries in planning and developing their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).
- Ocean accounts track the extent and condition of marine ecosystems, supporting spatial planning and effective management processes for biodiversity conservation and restoration to deliver on the 30x30 targets.
- Ocean accounts are integrated datasets that provide economic, environmental, and social information related to ocean resources, supporting informed and sustainable decision-making.
- By identifying beneficiaries of marine resources uses, ocean accounts can inform equitable sharing of these benefits, promoting sustainable use and benefit-sharing as outlined in the GBF.
- Aligning ocean accounts with GBF targets enhances policymakers' ability to guide and measure progress, develop effective conservation strategies, and ensure sustainable marine resources use.
- By integrating governance data, ocean accounts aid in aligning national policies with GBF goals, promoting coherence and effectiveness in conservation efforts.

The Global Biodiversity Framework

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022, sets ambitious global targets to halt biodiversity loss and ensure sustainable management of ecosystems. Key targets include the conservation and restoration of 30% of the planet's land and marine areas by 2030, and integrating biodiversity considerations into all sectors of society.

The GBF emphasizes activities focused on:

- Reducing threats to biodiversity.
- Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing.
- Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming of biodiversity and the environment.
- Mobilizing financial resources for biodiversity conservation.

The GBF is a critical framework for guiding national policymaking and investment to address the drivers of biodiversity loss and enhance ecosystem resilience. It provides a structured approach for countries to set national targets through preparing new or updated National Biodiversity Strategies and

Action Plans (NBSAPs), implement conservation strategies, and report on their progress towards global biodiversity goals.

Overview of Ocean Accounts

Ocean Accounts (OA) provide a comprehensive, integrated record of ocean-related environmental, economic, and social data. Developed under the framework of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), OA are essential for sustainable ocean governance. Their purpose is to support informed decision-making by offering a detailed understanding of the interactions between the ocean's natural assets and human activities. By aligning various data sources, OA help in tracking the health of marine ecosystems, the economic benefits derived from them, and their social significance.

Key components of OA include:

- **Environmental assets** (e.g., coral reefs, mangroves)
- **Flows to the economy** (e.g., ecosystem services such as coastal protection)
- **Ocean economy** (e.g., marine tourism, shipping)
- **Flows to the environment** (e.g., pollutants)
- **Governance** (e.g., policies and regulations)
- **Social** (e.g., employment, social conditions)



The OA framework enhances the ability of policymakers to develop policies and strategies that balance economic development with environmental health, ensuring sustainable ocean development.

How Ocean Accounts and the Global Biodiversity Framework Align

The development of national ocean accounts can support national governments by facilitating the achievement of the GBF targets through comprehensive data integration and analysis:

- **NBSAPs:** Ocean accounts provide an integrated data foundation to form national targets and strategic priorities. Governance accounts could further be used to integrate biodiversity considerations into national policies and planning processes, mainstreaming the consideration of biodiversity.
- **Spatial Planning:** extent and condition accounts provide an inventory of ecosystems and their health. These accounts provide a common evidence base for discourse amongst stakeholders and assist in trade-off analyses.
- **Ecosystem Restoration and Conservation:** extent and condition accounts identify areas suitable for restoration and monitor effectiveness of interventions.
- **Species Conservation and Management:** condition accounts that contain detailed biodiversity data can assist in monitoring species status and trends, aligned with GBF targets.
- **Measuring pollution impact:** Ocean accounts can track the flows of pollutants to the environment, and their impacts on ecosystems and their services.
- **Climate Impact and Adaption:** Ocean accounts measure the potential loss or degradation of ecosystems due to climate change, and could further measure the importance of ecosystems in mitigating climate change impacts.
- **Sustainable Use and Benefit-Sharing:** Ecosystem services accounts identify the beneficiaries and access to marine resources, and provide a way to identify if they are equitably shared, as outlined in the GBF.

Beyond SEEA: Additional Insights from the Ocean Accounts Approach

The OA approach provides a more holistic and integrated understanding of ocean ecosystems that extends SEEA standard. The OA provides specific guidance to extend the SEEA framework by including additional components that capture social, cultural, governance, and economic dimensions of the ocean.

Key enhancements in the OA approach include:

- **Detailed Social and Cultural Data** that captures information such as employment, and the use and cultural values of communities dependent on marine and coastal resources, which inform inclusive and effective ecosystem management.
- **Governance Data:** ocean accounts could be used to structure the complex layers of governance, policies, and regulations relevant to a management context.
- **Disaggregation of National Accounts:** The OA approach provides methods to derive economic data specific to the ocean component of goods and services.
- **Local Knowledge Integration:** The OA approach elevates local and localized knowledge of ecosystems and dependencies of communities, facilitating their integration into decision-making frameworks. This inclusion ensures that the insights and experiences of local communities are recognized and leveraged in broader policy and management strategies.

References

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2. System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounts (SEEA EA, 2021).
3. United Nations System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA 2008).
4. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). (2022). Decision Adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
5. Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD). (2023). Guidance on the Identification and Assessment of Nature-related Issues: The LEAP Approach Version 1.0.

Contact GOAP Secretariat for more details

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Table 1: How OA provide information relevant to the development of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and national monitoring and reporting of progress against the 23 targets of the GBF

GBF Target	Link to OA component	Description of how OA can support the GBF target
Target 1: Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss	Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts	By measuring changes in extent and condition accounts, the accounts allow users to recognise if these ecosystems have been decreasing or increasing in extent and condition. By combining critical environmental information into spatial planning and management, ocean accounts measure progress towards conservation targets and their effectiveness.
Target 2: Restore Degraded Ecosystems	Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts; Ecosystem Services Supply Accounts	Restoration actions could be directly supported by ecosystem extent and condition accounts, that identify habitat loss or the degradation of ecosystems over time. This provides a baseline to identify areas for restoration and track improvements over time. Ecosystem service accounts further identify the benefits of restoration to communities and economic sectors.
Target 3: Conserve and Manage Protected Areas	Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts; Ecosystem Services Accounts; Governance and social	Ecosystem extent and condition accounts could underpin the monitoring and evaluation of protection effectiveness over time. Ecosystem Service accounts also highlight the benefits provided by protected ecosystems to justify protection. Including data on the users of ecosystem services can provide insights into equitable and sustainable use within these areas. Additionally, the OA approach integrates local and indigenous knowledge into decision-making, ensuring their insights and rights are recognized and leveraged in broader policy and management strategies.
Target 4: Manage human-wildlife interactions to Prevent Extinction of Threatened Species	Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts	Biodiversity-based condition accounts can track the status and trends of species. Further, ecosystem extent and condition accounts could monitor the state of habitats critical to endangered species. By understanding the dependencies of humans with species and their habitats, integrated and equitable management plans can be implemented.
Target 5: Sustainable Use of Wild Species	Ecosystem Services Accounts	Physical ecosystem service accounts can measure the supply and use of services related to wild species and related ecosystems. Changes to ecosystem services over time could identify the sustainability of activities using wild species, and potential impacts to non-target species and ecosystems.
Target 6: Control Invasive Alien Species	Ecosystem Condition Accounts; Ecosystem service accounts	Invasive species could be tracked within ecosystem condition accounts. In measuring their potential impact using ecosystem service accounts, decision makers can understand the risks to the continued supply of services and manage these species effectively.
Target 7: Reduce Pollution	Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts; Residual Flow Accounts	Residual flow accounts monitor pollution (e.g., solid wastes, nutrients) and their sources by sector, providing a basis for management interventions. These actions are further supported by ecosystem extent and condition accounts that could link pollution impacts to changes in ecosystem health.
Target 8: Minimize Climate Change and Ocean Acidification Impact	Ecosystem Condition Accounts; Ecosystem Services Supply Accounts	Ecosystem condition accounts can track changes in ecosystem health and resilience, while physical ecosystem services flow accounts can monitor the provision of services like coastal protection, informing nature-based solutions and adaptation measures.
Target 9: Sustainable Use and Benefit-Sharing	Ecosystem Services Accounts; Social	By tracking who benefits from ecosystem services through supply and use accounts, it is possible to ensure equitable and sustainable use, incorporating social dimensions into ecosystem accounting.
Target 10: Sustainable Management of Aquaculture and Fisheries	Ecosystem Condition Accounts; Ecosystem Services Accounts	Ecosystem condition accounts and ecosystem services flow accounts can monitor the productivity, sustainability, and resilience of these managed ecosystems, supporting biodiversity-friendly practices and long-term sustainability.
Target 11: Restore Nature's Contributions to People	Ecosystem Services Accounts	Physical ecosystem services accounts can track the provision of these services, helping to assess and enhance the benefits provided by ecosystems to people. OA can measure the dependencies and risks of different economic sectors and social



		groups on nature, providing a comprehensive view of how society and communities rely on and benefit from healthy ecosystems.
Target 12: Increase Access and Quality to Green and Blue Spaces	Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts; Ecosystem Services Accounts	Urban ecosystem accounts, along with ecosystem condition and services flow accounts, can monitor the quality, extent, and benefits of urban green spaces, contributing to improved human health and well-being.
Target 13: Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources	Ecosystem Services Users Accounts; Social	Ocean accounts can include social-contextual information on the use of genetic resources and traditional knowledge. By integrating this information, OA can support fair and equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms in accordance with international instruments.
Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity into Policies and Planning	Combination of Ocean Accounts components	OA provide comprehensive data to align policies with biodiversity goals, ensuring these values are recognized and managed effectively. This enhances policy coherence and conservation efforts. Different OA components, recorded individually or combined, support this target (e.g., biodiversity-based condition accounts, ecosystem services, and flows to the environment linked to economic accounts, governance data).
Target 15: Encourage Business to Assess and Disclose Biodiversity Impacts	-	The LEAP (Locate, Evaluate, Assess, Prepare) approach of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) can be integrated into ocean accounts to support transparent reporting and sustainable business practices.
Target 16: Promote Sustainable Consumption Patterns	-	Footprint indicators derived from environmental-extended input-output analysis, using accounts data, can inform sustainable consumption policies and practices, promoting equitable resource use.
Target 17: Implement Biosafety Measures	-	While specific ocean account components are not directly linked, OA can support biosafety measures by incorporating environmental risk assessments and monitoring the impacts of biotechnology on marine and coastal ecosystems.
Target 18: Reform Incentives Harmful to Biodiversity	-	SEEA Environmental activity accounts provide information on transactions related to environmental protection expenditures, taxes, and subsidies, helping assess and optimize economic resources for biodiversity conservation.
Target 19: Increase Financial Resources for Biodiversity	-	Environmental protection expenditure accounts can monitor the financial flows and investments in biodiversity, supporting effective resource allocation and tracking progress towards funding goals. Additionally, extent and condition accounts enable tracking the social and environmental impacts of these investments, providing insights into their effectiveness and outcomes.
Target 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building and Technology Transfer	-	Ocean accounts can support capacity-building by fostering partnerships, workshops, and events that enhance scientific research, technology transfer, and innovation for biodiversity conservation. Incorporating local and traditional knowledge can further strengthen these efforts.
Target 21: Improve Access to Data and Knowledge	All accounts	By providing a framework to centralize and combine data in a standardized manner, ocean accounts assist in overcoming knowledge fragmentation and providing a common evidence-base for stakeholders. Accounts support informed decision-making, participatory management, and public awareness on biodiversity issues.
Target 22: Ensure Inclusive Participation and Access to Information	Social and governance accounts	Ocean accounts emphasize inclusive and equitable representation in decision-making by incorporating social and governance data. This approach facilitates the participation of indigenous peoples, local communities, women, and marginalized groups in biodiversity governance.
Target 23: Promote Gender Equality in Biodiversity Actions	Social accounts	The ocean accounts framework provides the means to link social equity considerations, including gender equality, with ecosystem change. They could track impacts on women's livelihoods due to habitat loss or highlight the contributions of women to biodiversity conservation.