



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Blue Growth Initiative

Partnering with countries
to achieve the Sustainable
Development Goals

Business as usual *versus*...

The Blue Growth Initiative is FAO's framework for sustainably developing fisheries and aquaculture. Blue Growth differs from business as usual in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, which historically focused on single interests, such as producing more fish or safeguarding the environment, and did not prioritize social benefits.

**Business
as usual**
Focus on individual
development interests



Maximize profit
and production



Maximize
environmental
sustainability



Focus on social benefits or
livelihoods has traditionally
not been prioritized

Business-as-usual fisheries
and aquaculture development
focuses on single interests

FAO's Blue Growth Initiative

The concept of Blue Growth is similar in many respects to that of the Blue Economy—a concept that came out of Rio +20—in that both center on the pillars of sustainable development: environmental, economic, and social.

FAO uses the term Blue Growth to emphasize the need for growth in many Member States particularly in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The goals of the Blue Growth Initiative are to maximize economic and social benefits while minimizing environmental degradation from these sectors. These goals are closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (supported by the Sustainable Development Goals—SDGs).



Blue Growth Initiative developments

There is no one-size-fits-all approach for the Blue Growth Initiative. Blue Growth approaches remain flexible for different realities, from tropical inland fisheries to Arctic coastal countries. The BGI framework for transitioning to Blue Growth consists of three phases:

- creating enabling conditions;
- implementing targeted interventions; and
- mainstreaming.

Blue Growth Initiative developments highlighted here provide concrete examples of countries and communities working alongside FAO to incorporate Blue Growth into their policies. Implementation spans the three pillars of sustainable development, referred to here as the following platforms: Blue Communities (social), Blue Production (environmental) and Blue Trade (economic).

Platforms*



Enabling conditions*



Status of Blue Growth activities



* All platforms and enabling conditions are essential to Blue Growth. Platforms and enabling conditions highlighted by country in the map represent priority areas for strengthening based on country requests.

Blue Growth stories from around the world

AFRICA

Cabo Verde Adopting Blue Growth policies to harness the potential of the ocean

The small island developing state of Cabo Verde is surrounded by the ocean. Not surprisingly, the fisheries sector plays a key role in its economy, contributing to employment, livelihoods, food security, and to overall GDP. In 2015, the government adopted a Blue Growth Charter in order to coordinate all Blue Growth policies and investments, ensuring that efforts cut across all ministries

and sectors. Through this formal commitment to achieving Blue Growth, Cabo Verde is working to create the necessary enabling conditions to begin targeted interventions and investments aimed at harnessing the potential of the ocean to promote economic growth and create employment for its island population.

CARIBBEAN

Barbados Technical Innovation with Aquaponics

As a small island developing state, Barbados' energy and freshwater supplies are limited and costly. Given these constraints, aquaponics—which combines aquaculture (growing fish) with hydroponics (growing plants in water)—has enabled

Barbados to generate several important environmental benefits and economic efficiencies, including providing protein rich tilapia for local consumption and generating high value lettuce crops for restaurants.

ASIA

Bangladesh Sustainably Enhancing Shrimp Farming

Aquaculture contributes significantly to food security and rural livelihoods in Asia, including in Bangladesh, where shrimp farming is less labor intensive but more lucrative than other trades. But the rapid development of shrimp farming has also resulted in significant environmental degradation and competition for agricultural space

and freshwater. FAO is supporting Bangladesh in transitioning to a Blue Growth framework. Most recently, FAO developed a monitoring tool to assess the impact of shrimp aquaculture on habitats, landscapes and biodiversity, and to devise mitigation measures.

Caribbean

With rising populations, tourism and a focus on healthy diets, Caribbean Blue Growth activities are focused primarily on increasing volumes of fish for local consumption by small- and medium-scale aquaculture and aquaponics, in an economically viable, ecologically sustainable and socially acceptable manner.



Asia and the Pacific

In Asia and the Pacific, aquaculture of fish and crops, such as seaweed, are the key drivers to Blue Growth. Combining innovative techniques and financing, farmers in these countries are producing their products more efficiently and marketing them more effectively, generating more jobs, higher income, all while sustainably preserving the environment.



Blue Growth Initiative globally

Africa and the Near East

Africa and the Near East are focused on using Blue Growth as a vehicle to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 14, to conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, particularly in light of population growth and increased migration flows, alongside the added stress of climate-change impacts, which place greater pressure on limited natural resources.



Blue Growth Initiative and SDGs

Global fish supply is expected to reach 190 million tonnes in 2030 (an increase of 36 million tonnes from 2011). The BGI can help meet this heightened demand for seafood and support the currently 200 million people employed in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable way. In this spirit, the goals of the BGI are closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

GOAL 1

Increase decent work opportunities and foster healthy, resilient, gender- and age-inclusive communities



GOAL 2

Increase financial and technical innovation



GOAL 3

Sustainably manage the environment and its resources and minimize degradation



GOAL 4

Reduce food loss and waste for more efficient resource use and increase energy efficiency to reduce the carbon footprint of fisheries and aquaculture



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BLUE GROWTH
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