



UN Oceans Conference 2022

For Prelims: UN Oceans Conference 2022, Ocean Ecosystem, World Ocean Day, Decade of Ocean, Climate Change

For Mains: Conservation, Environmental Pollution & Degradation, Government Policies & Interventions, Significance of the Oceans, Initiatives to Protect the Ocean

Why in News?

Recently, the [UN \(United Nations\) Ocean Conference 2022](#) was held to ensure global cooperation towards protection and sustenance of the [Ocean ecosystem](#) of the world.

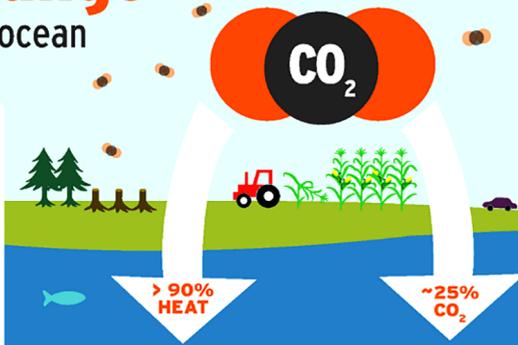
- The conference was **co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Portugal**.
- **Minister of Earth Sciences** led the Indian delegation at UN Ocean Conference. India promised to provide **science and innovation-based solutions for the implementation of Goal 14** through partnerships and environmentally friendly.
- The UN Ocean conference 2022 is aligned to [SDG \(Sustainable Development Goals\) 14](#) 'life below water' and stresses on the critical need for scientific knowledge and marine technology to build ocean resilience.

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Climate Change

A triple threat for the ocean

Burning fossil fuels, deforestation and industrial agriculture release carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other heat-trapping gases into our atmosphere, causing our planet to warm. The ocean has buffered us from the worst impacts of climate change by absorbing more than 90 percent of this excess heat and about 25 percent of the CO₂, but at the cost of causing significant harm to marine ecosystems.



WARMER

LESS OXYGEN

MORE ACIDIC



SEA LEVEL

Sea level rise is accelerating, flooding coastal communities and drowning wetland habitats.



BLEACHING

Warm-water coral reefs (marine biodiversity hotspots) could be lost if the planet warms by 2°C (3.6°F).



TOXIC ALGAE

Larger and more frequent blooms are making fish, birds, marine mammals and people sick.



HABITATS

Lower oxygen levels are suffocating some marine animals and shrinking their habitats.



ACIDIFICATION

More acidic water harms animals that build shells, such as corals, clams, and oysters.



FISHERIES

Disruptions in fisheries affect the marine food web, local livelihoods, and global food security.

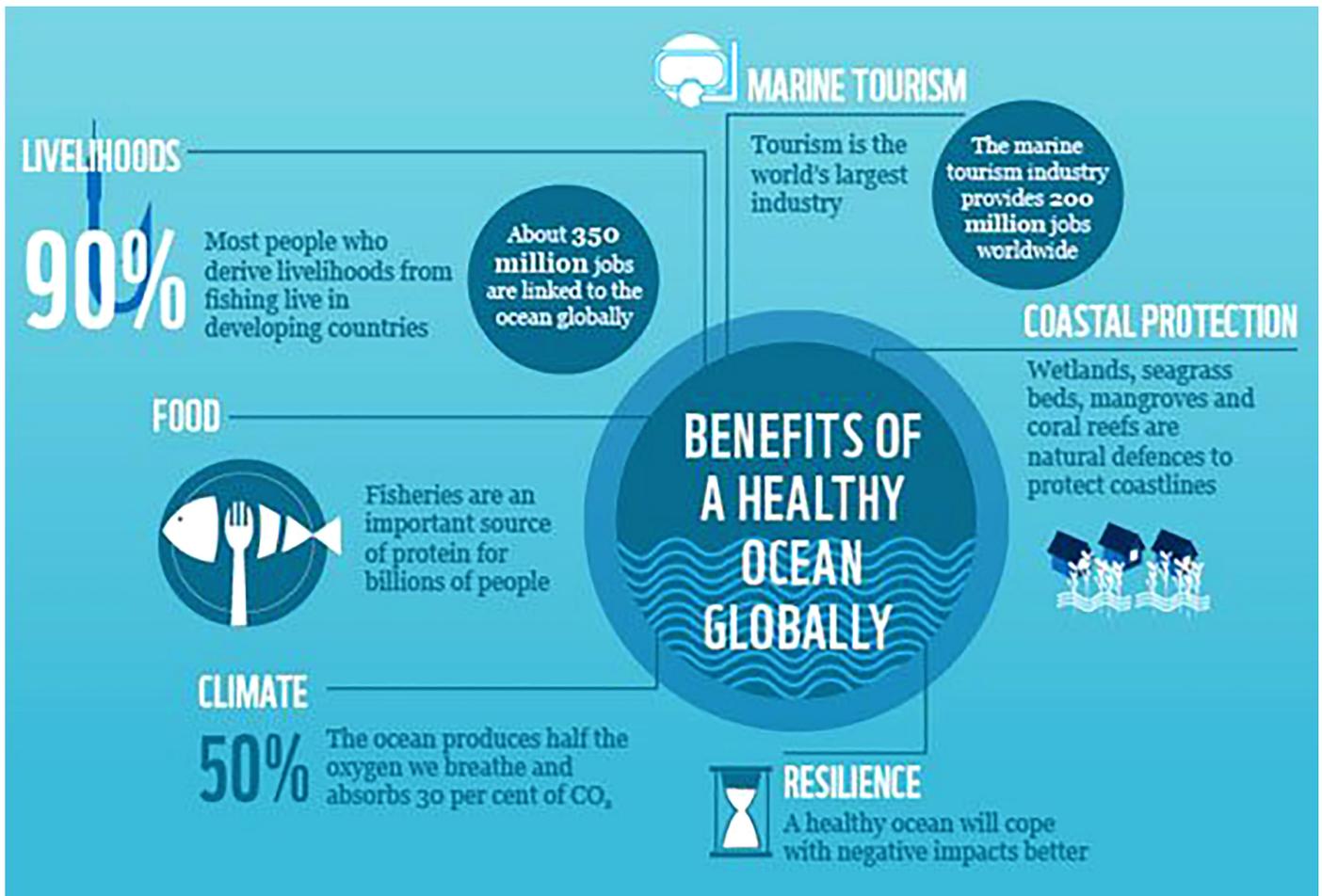
What are the Key Agenda of the Conference?

- **Moratorium on Deep Sea Mining:**
 - Push for a moratorium on [deep-sea mining](#) of rare metals needed for a boom electric vehicle battery construction.
 - The digging and gauging of the ocean floor by machines can alter or destroy deep-sea habitats.
- **Carbon Sequestration:**
 - Focus on [carbon sequestration](#) to boost the ocean's capacity to soak up CO₂, by either enhancing natural sinks such as mangroves or through geoengineering schemes.
- **Blue Deal:**
 - A “Blue Deal” was promoted to enable the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth.
 - It includes **global trade, investment and innovation to create a sustainable and resilient ocean economy.**
 - Focus on blue food to ensure marine harvests from all sources are sustainable and socially responsible.
- **High Seas are Unregulated:**
 - No comprehensive legal framework covers the high seas. Oceans cover **some 70% of the earth's surface and provide food and livelihoods for billions** of people.
 - Some activists refer to them as the **largest unregulated area on the planet.**
- **Threat to Ocean:**
 - Threats to the oceans include [global warming](#), [pollution \(including plastic pollution\)](#), [acidification](#), [marine Heatwaves](#) etc.

What are the Initiatives to Ensure Sustainable Ocean Ecosystem?

- **Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development:**

- The UN has proclaimed a Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) to support efforts to **reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health and gather ocean stakeholders worldwide** behind a common framework.
- **World Oceans Day:**
 - 8th June is [World Oceans Day](#), the United Nations day **for celebrating the role of the oceans in our everyday life** and inspiring action to protect the ocean and sustainably use marine resources.
- **Marine Protected Areas:**
 - In general terms, a Marine Protected Area (MPA) is a marine area that provides protection for all or part of the natural resources it contains.
- **GloLitter Partnerships Project:**
 - It is launched by the [International Maritime Organization \(IMO\)](#) and the [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) of the UNs (FAO) and initial funding from the Government of Norway. It is aimed to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter from shipping and fisheries.
- **India- Norway Ocean Dialogue:**
 - In 2019, the Indian and Norwegian governments **agreed to work more closely on oceans by signing a MoU** and establishing the India-Norway Ocean Dialogue.
- **India's Deep Ocean Mission:**
 - it is a mission mode project to support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Government of India.
- **India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI):**
 - It is an **open, non-treaty based initiative for countries to work together for cooperative and collaborative solutions** to common challenges in the region.



Way Forward

- The post **Covid-19** economy **should prioritise sustainability and resilience in ocean-based value chains**. The Covid-19 pandemic unevenly impacted ocean sectors such as marine fisheries, marine and coastal tourism and maritime transport.
- Expanding digitisation efforts to lower costs for business in developing countries, setting up a blue bank for investments, and improving regulations of blue finance.
- All of these suggestions can be seen as a call for a Blue New Deal, as sister to the Green New Deal already gaining political support and traction around the world.

Source: TH

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