



## UN High Seas Treaty



# UN HIGH SEAS TREATY

aka BBNJ (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction) Agreement

*For the first time, UN members have agreed on a unified (legally-binding) treaty to protect biodiversity in the high seas*

## High Seas (HS)

All the saltwater bodies across Earth that aren't part of territorial sea/internal waters of a state

## Background of Treaty

Demand for an updated framework to protect marine life in the High Seas, is about 20 years-old

## Need to Protect HS

- Only 1.2% of HSs are currently protected
- 10% of global marine species at risk of extinction
- High exploitation due to commercial fishing, mining, acidification, pollution

The last int'l agreement on ocean protection was UNCLOS signed in 1982

*This treaty is the 3rd "implementing agreement" under UNCLOS*

## KEY FEATURES

- Create a new body to manage conservation of ocean life and establish marine protected areas in the high seas
- Estd. ground rules for conducting EIAs for commercial activities in oceans

## KEY PLAYERS

EU, US, UK and China (in brokering the deal)

## SIGNIFICANCE

- Achieving the 30x30 Target set at UN CBD COP15
- Legal protection of 2/3rd of the ocean (+ livelihoods of coastal communities)
- Comprehensive protection of endangered species/habitats on >40% of Earth's surface

## ROADBLOCK

How to fairly share marine genetic resources (MGR) & eventual profits among developed/developing nations



*Ocean ecosystems produce half the oxygen we breathe, represent 95% of the planet's biosphere and soak up CO<sub>2</sub> (world's largest carbon sink)*

[Read more...](#)

