



Ocean as a Global Commons

International Governance and the Role of Germany

Publication

[Report](#)

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The study "Ocean as a Global Commons: International Governance and the Role of Germany" was developed by Ecologic Institute at the request of the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) as part of the Science Platform Sustainability 2030 (Wissenschaftsplattform Nachhaltigkeit 2030). The aim of the study is to provide an overview of the different governance mechanisms in regard to the Global Commons "Oceans" area. The study addresses the following four research areas:

- Oceans: commons function for global sustainability and key challenges,
- Global oceans governance and the Agenda 2030,
- Contributions "with" and "by" Germany,
- Key transformation processes for strengthening the sustainability architecture.

The study will be presented at the beginning of December 2019 at the annual conference of the Science Platform in Berlin. Registration: <http://www.wpn2030.de/jahreskonferenz2019/>

The world's oceans cover the majority of the Earth's surface and provide essential resources and habitats to sustain our planet's life. Human activities both on land and at sea are placing enormous pressure on our oceans, affecting their wealth of biodiversity and their ability to provide key ecosystem functions and services. We are now coming to grips with the fact that the oceans and their resources are finite and exhaustible. The world's oceans are recognised as a global commons in need of improved governance and management. Despite an existing international legislative framework and multiple initiatives that aim to sustainably use and manage our oceans, action and cooperation from all global states is needed to halt and reverse unsustainable trends before a tipping point is reached.

The UN Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goal 14 on oceans marks a call for action on this front to address key ocean challenges. Within this framework, Germany promotes and engages in activities that build and expand ocean knowledge, that support the sustainable management of marine resources, and that encourage biodiversity protection. Despite some progress, much is needed to see the achievement of Goal 14. States should become proactive in supporting transformation measures for ocean sustainability. The integration of ocean concerns into existing international legislative frameworks and fora, such as the UNFCCC and FAO, could provide key operational starting points to strengthen the underlying sustainability architecture for ocean governance.

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