

FAO to support implementation of landmark treaty for marine biodiversity

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The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) has welcomed the approval by UN member states of a landmark legally binding agreement, under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in international waters, covering nearly two-thirds of world's ocean.

FAO is set to support its Members in implementing the accord, often referred to as the "High Seas Treaty", on safeguarding Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), which has been under discussion for nearly two decades and was approved at an intergovernmental conference in New York after 5 negotiating sessions.

The BBNJ Agreement "is of great importance to our efforts to tackle environmental challenges and promote the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity on the high seas," said Manuel Barange, Director of FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Division.

The agreement "enables us to complete the legal and institutional framework for global ocean governance and as a result manage and conserve our precious marine living resources more effectively," Barange added.

FAO has consistently advocated for sustainable and effective fisheries management as the best way to replenish stocks, conserve biodiversity and ensure people continue to benefit from the ocean's resources, including the high seas.

In tackling biodiversity challenges, including those in areas beyond national jurisdiction, the Organisation argues that lasting progress can only be achieved through sustainable practices that enable humans to restore the health of marine ecosystems as part of effective management solutions.