

Ocean Sanctuary Alliance News

November 2016



KEEPING SCORE

By Tulik Beck,
H.E. Ambassador of Palau
for the Oceans and Seas



Welcome to the second issue of the Ocean Sanctuary Alliance News.

To the right is an article by a prominent marine scientist whose organization MP Atlas is keeping track of recently announced plans to expand marine protection in the Arctic, the Antarctic, and in the Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans.

It is encouraging to see such progress toward the one measurable goal of SDG 14 which aims to protect the Ocean. Commitments by more than a dozen countries have raised the amount of ocean promised to be protected to 6.4%. This tells us that the 10% goal can be achieved by 2020. This means the international community is making a serious effort to reverse the declines in fish stocks caused by overfishing. We at OSA salute the Member-States who are stepping forward and taking action.

OCEAN SECURITY: IT'S TIME

In this issue you will also read about collective efforts in Africa – on both the East and West coasts – to crack down on illegal fishing in territorial waters. This involves sharing information to identify and track vessels which are fishing in protected areas, or catching and killing protected species like sharks, or transferring fish catches illegally between boats.

This type of international collaboration among neighbors is an effective way to form a united front against marine miscreants.

We often hear about “paper parks,” ocean areas which are sanctuaries in name only, unmonitored, unenforced, and protecting nothing. There is much to be done in this area so that sanctuaries can accomplish what they are meant to do—restore damaged and depleted marine environments and regenerate fish stocks.

We hope Member-States of the UN will start to think about Ocean security the same way they think about security on land – as a vital responsibility of the organization.

Progress Report on 10X20 Initiative

NEW PROMISES ADD UP TO
6.4% GLOBAL MARINE PROTECTION

By Lance Morgan
President, Marine Conservation Institute



The global community is rallying support for marine protected areas (MPAs) as an effective conservation tool and global ocean MPA coverage has doubled in the last 3 years. Nations recognize the dire situation in our oceans and are taking steps to strongly protect marine areas to safeguard vulnerable life in the sea.

International conservation goals, including SDG goal 14 target 5 as well as the Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi Biodiversity Target 11) call for Member-States to conserve at least 10% of coastal and marine areas in ecologically representative protected areas by 2020, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information.

At the 2016 Our Ocean Conference in September, hosted by US Secretary of State John Kerry, Member-States, NGO's and private foundations stepped forward to announce over 136 new initiatives on marine conservation and protection, valued at more than \$5.24 billion, as well as new commitments to protect over 1.5 million square miles of the ocean.

In addition in October The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources – known as CCAMLR – announced that the Antarctic's Ross Sea will be the largest marine protected

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President of the UN General Assembly Welcomes Commitments to Healthy Oceans



AMB. PETER
THOMSON

“This is very encouraging news as we prepare to gather all key stakeholders to help reverse the decline in the health of our Ocean. I commend the leadership of the countries who have made these commitments, and other key players such as the *Ocean Sanctuary Alliance* that continue to inspire action needed globally to save our ocean from an irreversible decline. With the distressed state of our beloved Ocean, much more urgent action is needed. I therefore look forward to game-changing partnerships and commitments to be brought to the conference on Implementing SDG 14 in New York, June 5-9 next year.”

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area in the world by December 2017. This announcement represented agreement by the EU as well as 24 individual Member-States.

MPAtlas.org, an initiative of Marine Conservation Institute, is a visual database that tracks global marine conservation efforts as well as protected area promises and progress. Using this database, the most comprehensive and up-to-date in the world, we know that as of August 2016, 2.3% of the global ocean was in marine protected areas (MPA) with pledges to protect another 2.1% in specific areas. Recently created MPA's and new commitments have added another

2.0% of the global ocean. If all of the proposed MPAs are implemented as planned the total amount of marine area protected would reach 6.4% of the ocean.

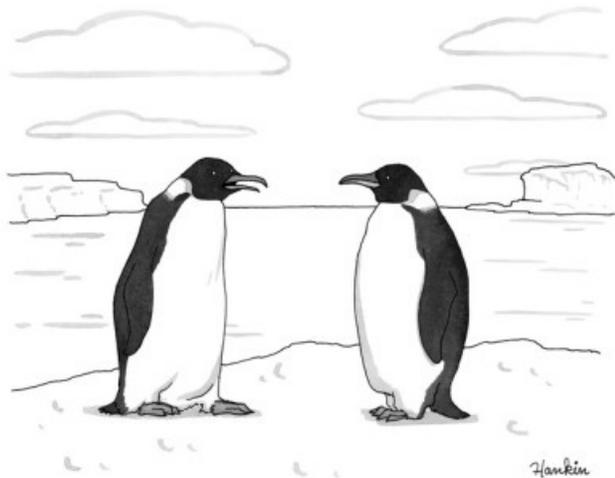
Among the nations recently announcing expanded ocean protection are Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Malta, Morocco, New Caledonia, Norway, Palau, Russia, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Globally many Member-States are coming closer to the 10% tar-

get, and some nations are already there (Australia, Chile, Kiribati, Monaco, Palau, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the US, to name some).

Many others have renewed their commitment to get to 10% by 2020. Unfortunately, however, a large number of nations are still quite far from the 10% target. Marine Conservation Institute will be working with Ocean Sanctuary Alliance to track these numbers over the next few years as 2020 fast approaches.

While commitments to protect our ocean are an essential first step to safeguarding marine life, it is important to recognize that the ecological benefits inherent in conservation commitments will not take effect until they are implemented and enforced.



"I'm thinking about freezing my eggs."

The **Ocean Sanctuary Alliance** is a partnership of UN Member States and leaders from across disciplines. Our mission is to restore and sustain the world's ocean by securing national commitments to establish science-based marine sanctuaries.

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In the News: Africa Targets Illegal Fishing, East and West

Somali crack down secures \$65 000 USD fine for illegal fishing

By Sally Frankcom, *The Fish News Desk*
Nov. 10, 2016

The owners of the Greko 1 have agreed to pay a \$65,000 USD settlement to the Federal government of Somalia for illegal fishing in Somali waters.

The vessel remains moored in Mombasa

port and the illegal catch is to be sold to allow payment of the fine.

Flag State, Belize, has supported the sanctions, and taken decisive action against the vessel in issuing a prohibition from sailing notice which means the vessel is not allowed to leave the port of Mombasa unless it receives expressed authorization from Belize to do so. The issuance of a fishing authorization or license by Belize to the vessel has also been suspended until further notice.

The fishing vessel Greko 1 was spotted, fishing in the Somalia EEZ, by the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR – Operation ATALANTA), which has been operating in the region to prevent piracy since 2008. The Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission (DG MARE) analysed the data provided by EU NAVFOR and transmitted it to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission secretariat for further analysis and communication to the rel-



Pirate vessel Greko I

evant national authorities and UNFAO.

<https://stopillegalfishing.com/news-articles/somali-crack-secures-65-000-usd-fine-illegal-fishing/>

These East African Countries Show How Teamwork and Technology Can Thwart Illegal Fishing

By Emma Bryce/ ENSIA

October 14, 2016 — Early in December 2012, an Asian vessel called the Premier entered the Indian Ocean to fish. In West Africa, authorities knew that the boat had been fishing illegally in Liberian waters before it made its way to Africa's other coast. That raised the ire of East African countries, which weren't keen to welcome a lawbreaker into their seas. Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritius, the Comoros, Mozambique, and the Seychelles rapidly mobilized against the vessel, shutting it out of their ports and refusing to grant it a fishing license.

"All of a sudden, the Premier was surrounded by countries that were saying no to everything," recalls Benedict Kilu, a Kenyan principal fisheries officer who was part of the team that tracked the vessel at the time. In 2013, unable to land its catch, the disgraced ship was finally driven out of the region. Ultimately, it was forced to pay US \$2 million to Liberia for plundering its fish.

The beating heart of this crime-busting, resource-conserving effort was **FISH-i Africa**, a network of countries committed to sharing fisheries intelligence that was established in 2012 by the not-for-profit Stop Illegal Fishing. Composed of the six countries that drove out the Premier, along with Madagascar and

Somalia, **FISH-i Africa** seeks to form a united front against illegal — or "pirate" — fishing.

"It's eight like-minded countries working together to share information and stand shoulder to shoulder where illegal fishing is concerned," says Tony Long, director of the Pew Charitable Trusts' Ending Illegal Fishing Project, which provides technical support to aid **FISH-i's** efforts.

Because illegal fishing is unregulated — meaning catch is concealed and almost impossible to trace — it has become a major driver of overfishing. By flouting the rules designed to protect certain habitats and species, it can also undermine vulnerable ecosystems and threaten marine species. But, where attempts to fight it were once hampered by bureaucracy and snail's-pace information sharing between countries, now they're happening in real-time on **FISH-i's** digital communications platform. Here, member countries exchange vessel license lists, news about suspect activities and details obtained during port inspections to build up a record of the vessels entering their waters.

FISH-i also closely tracks vessels' activities on the high seas using satellite data and shares that information via the platform. This helps authorities flag vessels that may be fishing in off-limits areas, or those that betray unusual travel patterns that suggest they're transferring fish illegally between boats.

Ideally, these investigations can reveal whether vessels have appropriate licenses, where they've been fishing and perhaps if they have a criminal record. Countries that wise up to illegal fishers' transgressions then have grounds to shut their ports to these vessels so they can't sell their catch or even to force them to pay fines, as in the case of the Premier.

United Front

The platform was created to reclaim the estimated US \$200 million in revenue that the eight **FISH-i** countries lose annually to illegal fishers invading East African waters. Home to the world's second-most productive tuna fishery, this region attracts commercial fishing vessels from around the world, including illegal fishers — whose activities range from using false flags, fake licenses and fictitious names to fishing prohibited species and fishing in protected waters.

So far, the united front is working. Since it was founded, **FISH-i** has been involved in more than 30 investigations of suspect ships. It has identified criminal networks distributing fake fishing licenses in Tanzania, exposed vessels using multiple fraudulent identities and tracked down fugitive ships. Its relationship with INTERPOL, the international crime investigation agency, also enables **FISH-i** to widely share and receive information about pirate fishing.

<http://ensia.com/features/east-africa-illegal-ocean-fishing/>

West Africa Task Force

The West Africa Task Force was formed in 2015 to provide a regional approach to fisheries enforcement. West Africa is endowed with abundant fisheries resources making this region a hot spot for illegal fishing operators. National efforts by individual countries to strengthen their fisheries management systems have resulted in improved monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of some fisheries. However, many of the regions commercial fish species are migratory and the national and foreign fishing operators that target them follow these stocks, so effectively tackling illegal fishing requires a regional cooperation.

The six member countries of the Fisheries Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) — Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo are the founding members of the West Africa Task Force.

The West Africa Task Force is supporting regional cooperation in order to identify, track, gather evidence and mount enforcement and prosecution actions against illegal fishing operators. It does this by:

- Supporting a case from the point where intelligence is received to enforcement prosecution of perpetrators,
- Sharing information and cooperate effectively,

In the News: Africa Targets Illegal Fishing, East and West CONTINUED

- Tracking vessels and identify possible illegal fishing activity,
- Identifying the illegal fishers and eliminating illegal and 'risk' vessels from license lists and registers,
- Improving understanding of the fishing operations to inform MCS operations and strengthen MCS capacity,
- Cooperating and harmonising with other countries, regions, organisations and initiatives; and
- Building the foundations for long term regional and sustainable MCS structures in the region.

The **West Africa Task Force** model has been developed based on lesson learning from the FISH-i Africa Task Force in the Western Indian Ocean region. The West Africa Task Force is coordinated by the FCWC Secretariat, Trygg Mat Tracking, Stop Illegal Fishing and NFDS. The Norwegian Development Agency (Norad) is backing a 3 year project to support this partnership called 'The Fisheries Intelligence and MCS support in West Africa'.
<https://stopillegalfishing.com/initiatives/watf/>

Global Organisations Discuss Tackling Crime in the Fisheries Sector

By Sally Frankcom, *The Fish News Desk*
Oct. 25, 2016

GLOBAL – The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organization) and UNODC (UN Office on Drugs and Crime) recently held a jointly organised conference on the fight against crimes that take place in the fisheries sector.

The conference (13-14 October) brought together more than 100 delegates from around the world. Over the course of the two day conference, participants heard from stakeholders – including international organisations, tax authorities, fisheries authorities, law enforcement, practitioners, non-governmental organisations – about how to better fight tax crimes and other crimes in the fisheries sector.

Delegates to the conference on tax crimes and other crimes agreed that greater international co-operation is required to prosecute and deter fisheries associated crimes.

The main conclusions coming out of the meeting were that:

- Effectively fighting fish crime requires strong cooperation, between police, prosecutors and fisheries managers within a country and across countries to tackle the frequently transnational nature of crimes committed.
- Investigating and prosecuting fisheries crimes is time-consuming and expensive. This is part of why cooperation is so important, but it also means that ways to ease and lower the costs of cooperation must be found.

In particular, having established frameworks that act as an umbrella for cooperation can increase trust, build relationships and otherwise ease the costs of working across borders to fight fish crime. Organisations like the OECD, the FAO and UNODC can help build these frameworks.

Different jurisdictions and agencies collect data that can help investigate crimes, but often lack the mandate to share it. Promoting open data exchange through a common framework can bring evidence of crimes to those who can act on it.

Not all countries are willing participants in the fight against fish crime. Strengthening established international agreements to mandate cooperation and penalise bad behaviour can bring some of the more reluctant players on board.

Political will is often the missing element in the fight against fish crimes. Moving this issue up the political agenda takes increased awareness of damage caused by illegal activities and the amounts of money involved.

Enforcement starts with legislation. Each country has responsibilities as a flag state, coastal state, market state or port state as well as for their own nationals. Gaps in the law give impunity to illegal actors.

<https://stopillegalfishing.com/press-links/global-organisations-discuss-tackling-crime-fisheries-sector/>

Pacific nation of Kiribati establishes large shark sanctuary

By Nick Perry, *Associated Press*

Nov. 19, 2016

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — The island nation of Kiribati has established a large shark sanctuary that will help ensure the creatures are protected across much of the central Pacific.

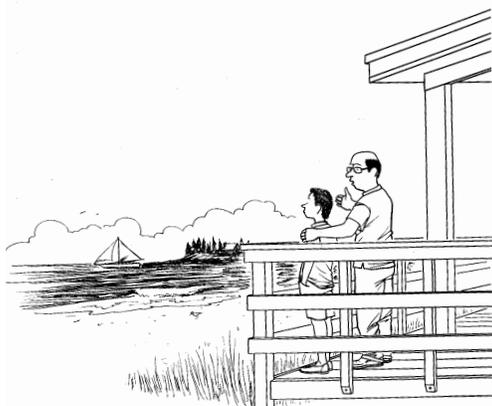
Vice President Kourabi Nenem said at the sanctuary's launch on Friday that the nation was committed to protecting sharks from exploitation and overfishing.

Kiribati has banned commercial shark fishing in the sanctuary, which is about the size of India.

Palau established the first shark sanctuary in the region in 2009, and has been followed by the Marshall Islands, French Polynesia and other nations.

The Pew Charitable Trusts estimates that 100 million sharks are killed each year by commercial fisheries. It says sharks are vulnerable to overfishing because they're slow to mature and reproduce.

Sharks are prized by some for their fins, which are used in shark fin soup.



"Someday, son, this will all be yours — and underwater."



The illicit trade often involves hacking off a shark's fin while it is still alive.