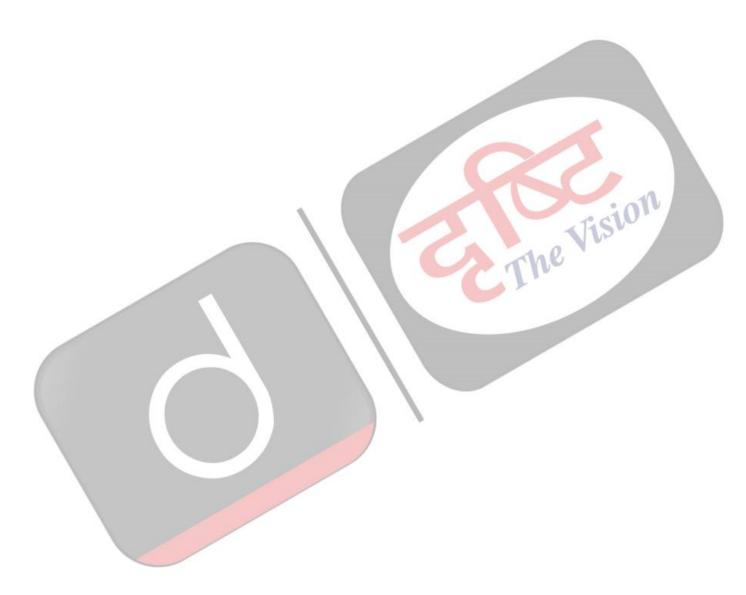


## **UN High Seas Treaty**

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## **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

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

Background of Treaty

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

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...

