

## MSC urges WTO to end harmful fishing subsidies by end of 2020

**The Marine Stewardship Council urges the World Trade Organisation to meet 2020 deadline on ending harmful fishing subsidies**

The Marine Stewardship Council – an environmental not-for-profit whose mission is to end overfishing – has joined calls for the World Trade Organisation to abolish harmful fishing subsidies and to deliver the UN target which calls for their elimination by 2020.

More than \$22 billion of harmful ‘capacity building’ fishing subsidies contribute to overfishing, and lead to the loss of livelihoods and income for coastal communities. They have also been linked to Illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing activity.



### Examples of harmful subsidies



Port construction  
& renovation



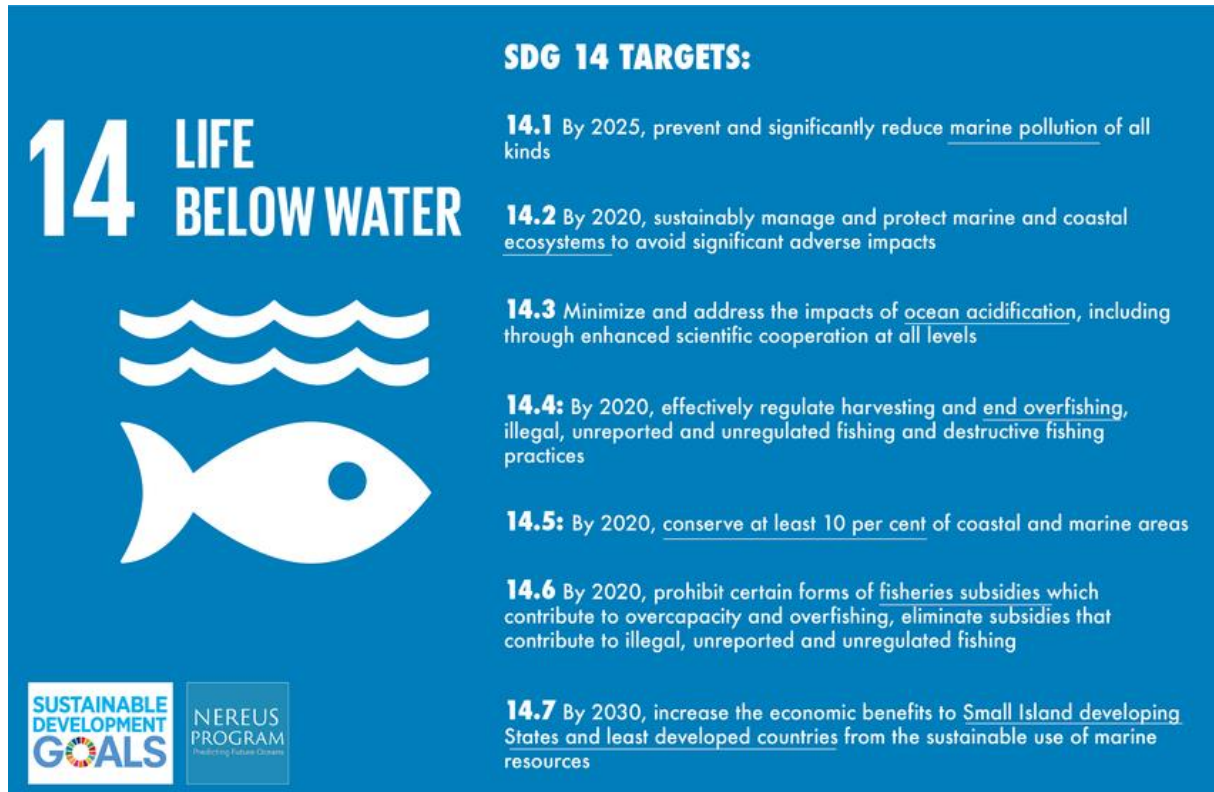
Fuel tax  
exemptions



Boat construction  
& modernisation

Harmful fishing subsidies are incompatible with and undermine the MSC’s vision of healthy and productive marine ecosystems with seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations.



The World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations on fishing subsidies began nearly two decades ago at the 2001 Ministerial Conference in Doha. Since then overfished stocks have increased from 27% to 34%, in part enabled by harmful subsidies.



**14 LIFE BELOW WATER**

**SDG 14 TARGETS:**

- 14.1** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds
- 14.2** By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts
- 14.3** Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels
- 14.4:** By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices
- 14.5:** By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas
- 14.6** By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
- 14.7** By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources

In 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by 193 nations and the WTO was tasked with the implementation of SDG 14.6. This specific target calls for the establishment by 2020 of a mechanism to eliminate subsidies that contribute to overfishing and overcapacity, including illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing.

As the end of 2020 approaches, the MSC adds its voice to calls made by Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for the Oceans and Co-Chair of Friends for Ocean Action, The Pew Charitable Trusts, The Environmental Justice Foundation, WWF International and more than 170 civil society organisations to urge WTO delegates to deliver on this mandate and not to postpone their decision.

The MSC's Chief Executive, Rupert Howes said, "Humanity is at a crossroads. Urgent and ambitious action is required now. As the world emerges from the global Covid

pandemic progress must be made to deliver the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The ending of harmful fishing subsidies will benefit the oceans, fishers and their communities and consumers. It will also release much needed funding to support sustainable fishing and the delivery of the remaining ocean-related targets in the SDGs, if redirected appropriately. We hope that the WTO will seize this enormous opportunity before them.”.

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