

# GOAP in Brief

## Who we are

The Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) is multistakeholder partnership established to enable countries and other stakeholders to go *beyond GDP* to measure and manage progress towards ocean sustainable development. Co-Chaired by the [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific](#) and [Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#), GOAP brings together governments, international organizations and research institutions to build a global community of practice for ocean accounting.

## What we do

### Objectives

- Build a global community of practice for ocean accounting to ensure the diverse values of the ocean are recognised in all decision-making about social and economic development.
- Achieve globally recognised and standardised methods for ocean accounting.
- Support at least 30 countries by 2030 to build complete sequences of national ocean accounts.
- Facilitate the development, maintenance, and global uptake of ocean accounts in decision making, development planning, policies, laws, and other governance processes.

### Actions

- GOAP is an Action Group of the [High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy](#) (Ocean Panel). GOAP ensures its objectives accelerate, scale and implement the Ocean Panel's commitments, as well as [Sustainable Development Goal 14 \(life below water\)](#), [15.9 \(valuing nature in decision-making\)](#), [17.19 \(measurement of progress complementing GDP\)](#), and other relevant international agendas to measure and manage progress towards ocean sustainable development.
- GOAP assists in sourcing financial or in-kind support for the development and implementation of ocean accounting initiatives.
- GOAP catalyses and connects ocean accounts experts to establish a global Expert Panel and Technical Working Groups and to create knowledge products to advance the development and global uptake of ocean accounting.
- Provides a communication and collaboration platform for its members to engage in mutual capacity building and share knowledge on ocean accounting.

## What are ocean accounts?

Ocean accounts are integrated records of regularly compiled and comparable data concerning ocean environment conditions (e.g., extent/condition of mangroves), economic activity (e.g., sale of fish) and social conditions (e.g., coastal employment). They retain a similar structure as existing national accounts maintained by National Statistical Offices or Finance Ministries and are compatible with the [System of National Accounts](#), the [System of Environmental-Economic Accounting](#), the [Framework for Development of Environment Statistics](#) and the ten [Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics](#).

Ocean accounts integrate four key components:

- Macro-economic accounts from which economic measures such as GDP are derived, and from which legal, illegal, unreported, and unregulated activities can be accounted for.
- Environmental-economic accounts that explain assets and flows, wastes, expenditures, taxes, and subsidies.



- Ecosystem accounts which agree on a spatial framework or the extent, condition, biodiversity, services, and value of ecosystems.
- Structured data on ocean beneficiaries, technology, governance, and management.

## Why ocean accounts matter

Ocean accounts provide countries with the means to go [Beyond GDP](#) to measure and manage progress towards ocean sustainable development. They achieve this by:

- Enhancing the power of data by integrating multiple data sets from a range of sources, enabling countries to monitor three critical trends:
  - Changes in ocean wealth, including produced assets (e.g., ports) and non-produced assets (e.g., mangroves).
  - Ocean-related income and welfare (e.g., income from fisheries for local communities).
  - Ocean-based economic production (e.g., GDP from ocean-related sectors).
- Creating a common information infrastructure (especially important because many ocean policy shortcomings arise from isolated information) enabling evidence-based decision-making on ocean governance matters including:
  - Ocean policy development (e.g., Marine Spatial Planning and protection and integrated coastal zone management) and review of policy outcomes and effectiveness.
  - Ocean economy development planning – ocean accounts help progress with indicators beyond GDP to include environmental and social dimensions.
  - International reporting for the SDGs, Paris Agreement, and other relevant commitments.
  - Finance and investment – ocean accounts provide holistic data inputs into business cases to monitor progress, impact and benefit, as well as assist with evaluating sustainability certification.
- Supporting the derivation of indicators (e.g., the contribution of the ocean to an economy, as measured by GDP). If a common accounting structure is used, these indicators can be integrated, and international comparisons made.
- Organising and presenting information in manner that decision-makers can easily understand (e.g., as dashboards, scenarios, spatial plans, and indicators).

## Support available from GOAP

- In-kind advisory support and help to secure funding for ocean accounting pilot activities.
- Collaboration on development and implementation of ocean accounting initiatives.
- Policy development support for ocean resources and the ocean economy.
- Opportunities to provide methodological input for the Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting and development of related international statistical standards.
- Introduction to experts and consultants to host workshops and capacity building events to bridge knowledge gaps and build technical expertise in-country.
- Collaboration on development of demand-driven technical papers related to ocean accounting.
- Opportunities to share knowledge, challenges, and best practices on ocean accounting with global stakeholders.

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