

# MINI 30x30

A STUDENTS' WAVE FOR THE OCEAN

## Teachers' Guide

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# MINI 30X30 | A STUDENTS' WAVE FOR THE OCEAN

## Teachers' Guide

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# THE MINI 30X30 CHALLENGE | A STUDENTS' WAVE FOR THE OCEAN – A Teachers' Guide

This guide is designed to help you make the most of the PowerPoint provided in the Mini 30 x 30 toolkit.

## Introduction

### The Mini 30 x 30

SLIDE 2

Students' voices must be considered when critical decisions affecting their future are at stake.

The «Mini 30x30» is a global movement that empowers students to advocate for ocean protection, encouraging a stronger commitment of Member States towards a sustainable future.

The final goal is to deliver an open letter to the United Nations, enclosing a global and unified message from the young changemakers, urging Member States to commit to ocean protection, and ensuring that students' voices are heard at key-moments for the future of the ocean.

Students are encouraged to vote on whether they support the submission of the open letter to the UN and select the three benefits of marine protection they consider most important. To engage with the topic, students can learn about and discuss the importance of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Additionally, two practical activities are suggested to help improve understanding of the impact of marine protection and the need to engage all the interested parties when creating MPAs.

By taking part in «Mini 30x30», students will not only gain valuable knowledge about ocean conservation but will also actively contribute to a real, global movement for change. Their voices will help shape the future of ocean protection, inspiring world leaders to take decisive action!

Participation is made through the [online participation form](#), where votes are reported.

In brief, students will:

1. Vote on what they consider the top 3 benefits of MPAs;
2. Decide whether to support the delivery of the open letter to the UN;
3. The form is filled (either by students individually or by the teacher reporting the class voting results).

# 1. The Ocean

## The ocean is vital

SLIDE 4

The ocean is essential to the health of our planet and of all living beings. It is a dynamic and complex system that regulates climate, supports biodiversity, and sustains human life in countless ways, providing critical services, such as:

- | **Oxygen** – approximately half of the Earth oxygen is produced in the ocean.
- | **Climate regulation** – about 25% of the carbon dioxide produced by human activities and around 90% of the excess heat on our planet is absorbed by the ocean, helping to mitigate the effects of climate change and regulate global temperatures.
- | **Biodiversity** – the ocean covers about 71% of the Earth's surface and makes up 99% of the living space available on the planet.
- | **Traded goods** – around 90% of all global trades carried out by sea.

Around three billion people depend directly on the ocean for their livelihoods. Fish consumption—including freshwater species—provides more than 3.3 billion people with at least 20% of their animal protein intake. Yet, indirectly, **every single one of us depends on the ocean.**

## Ocean crisis

SLIDE 5

The health of the ocean is facing rapid decline due to human activities. The ocean is currently facing two major crises: the **climate crisis** and the **biodiversity crisis**, with species extinction at an unprecedented rate. Some of the biggest threats to marine ecosystems are:

- | **Global warming** – marine life and ecosystems are unable to adapt to the planet's rapidly changing climate, increased temperature, decreased oxygen, changes of current patterns, etc.
- | **Ocean acidification** – as ocean stores the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, the water is becoming more acidic, directly impacting marine species and ecosystems, and sometimes creating unliveable conditions.
- | **Overfishing** – Overfishing is leading to serious stock depletion, with top predators (such as sharks and tuna) critically affected. Moreover, some unsustainable fisheries are also causing other impacts such as habitat destruction, bycatch of non-commercial species, and leaving ghost nets.
- | **Coastal development** – increased human occupation of coastal areas is very damaging – it causes coastal habitats' destruction, coastal erosion, and pollution.
- | **Pollution** – from the tons of plastic that end up in the ocean every day, to oil spills, urban runoffs with excessive nutrient load leading to oxygen depletion (sometimes creating dead zones), chemical pollution, ocean noise from many sources (sonars, shipping, coastal construction and dredging, oil

and gas extraction, etc.) and bright lights, the ocean is suffering from the effects of all kinds of pollution.

| **Poaching** – some marine organisms are illegally captured.

| **Invasive species** – non-native species can be intentionally (or not) introduced to new habitats causing impacts by competing with native species.

| **Seabed mining** – the extraction of metals and minerals from the seabed is a highly destructive and polluting activity, which can have irrevocable effects on the deep-sea fragile ecosystems.

| **Oil and gas** – large-scale infrastructures are built on the ocean to extract these materials, releasing harmful pollutants, and creating intense noise.

## SDG 14: Life Below Water

SLIDE 6

In 2015, UN Member States agreed on a plan to make the planet a better and more sustainable place by 2030 – the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. This plan includes **17 major objectives**, the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, which aim to solve problems such as poverty, climate change, and pollution.

The **SDG 14** is about **protecting the seas and the ocean**. It is connected to all the other goals because if we don't take care of the ocean, many of the other goals will also be compromised.

## The Global 30 x 30 target

SLIDE 7

A healthy ocean is essential for the sustainability of the planet, and we urgently need to invest in its protection.

One of the defined targets by the UN Member States is the **protection of 30% of the ocean by 2030**.

This ambitious goal, widely known as the **30x30 Target**, is a crucial step towards protecting marine biodiversity, combating climate change, and securing a sustainable future for the ocean. This target calls for nations to *"Ensure and enable that, by 2030, at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of coastal and marine areas [...] are effectively conserved and managed [...] through protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures"*, while also ensuring the recognition and respect of Indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights, cultural heritage, and territories.

### Additional information:

In 2016, during the World Conservation Congress in Hawai'i, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) called on its members to **protect 30% of the ocean by 2030**.

This goal was reaffirmed and updated in 2022, during the United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in Canada, becoming **Target 3 of the 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework**.



## How much of the ocean is protected?

SLIDE 8

As of 2025, globally, only 8% of the ocean is under some sort of protection, but often with no adequate management rules. A much lower percentage of 2.9% is fully or highly protected, and well managed. Therefore, we are still a long way from reaching the 30% target!

## 2. Learning About Marine Protected Areas

### What are Marine Protected Areas?

SLIDE 10

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are defined geographical areas, below the tideline, with rules that limit human activities.

If well implemented and managed, MPAs are one of the most effective tools for recovering and preserving the ocean's natural values.

Creating MPAs in endangered areas under intense pressure allows **species and marine ecosystems to recover and thrive**. MPAs can also be established to **preserve the pristine state of healthy areas**, or to promote fisheries, among other reasons.

#### Additional information:

According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), MPAs are:

*«A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated, and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values».*

Some aspects that must be considered when creating Marine protected Areas are:

- | MPAs must be based on **bold scientific data** to inform the need and the natural values to protect.
- | **All the users (interested parts) must be engaged** in the discussion – when designing the implementation of MPAs, collaborative processes must involve scientists, politicians, fishers, tourism operators and businesses, NGOs, as well as local communities.
- | The implementation of MPAs must consider the **benefits across multiple dimensions**: the environment, but also people, culture, and businesses/economy.
- | **Rules and laws** must be defined, to limit human activities and ensure vigilance.
- | **Education** is key so that everyone understands the benefits of implementing MPAs.

- | The impact of the implementation of the protective measures needs to be **studied and monitored**.

## Which human activities can be regulated?

SLIDE 11

MPAs must have rules to limit several types of human activities. According to the *MPA Guide*, these activities can be:

- | **Mining, mineral oil and/or gas prospecting or exploitation** – extracting minerals, sand, oil or gas from the sea is extremely harmful to marine life and habitats.
- | **Dredging and dumping** – removing or dumping sediments and harmful substances in the ocean can damage ecosystems, spread invasive species and pollute the water.
- | **Anchoring** – dropping anchors, especially in sensitive areas such as coral or seagrass beds, can cause serious and lasting damage to the sea floor.
- | **Infrastructures** – human-made structures built in coastal or marine areas can **impact marine habitats**.
- | **Offshore aquaculture** – some types of offshore aquaculture can **destroy habitats, cause hypoxia or degrade water quality**.
- | **Fishing** – fishing impact depends on the type of fishing devices used and on the fishing pressure. Industrial fishing with large gears will have a much larger impact than, for instance, **small-scale fishing**.
- | **Non-extractive activities** – these include **snorkelling, swimming, SCUBA diving, tide pooling, cultural or ceremonial gatherings, cultural education, teaching, boating with non-extractive purposes** (e.g. whale watching), etc.

## What are the different levels of protection of Marine Protected Areas?

SLIDE 12

Different MPAs can include different levels of protection, with distinct rules applied to human activities depending on the location. The higher the level of protection, the more restrictions will exist. According to the *MPA Guide*, depending on the levels of protection, MPAs can be classified from **Minimum Protected** to **Fully Protected**, with intermediate levels being possible.

In areas with **minimum protection**, extractive and destructive impactful activities can be allowed, except for mining, prospecting, exploiting, and active pipelines with potential to leak. Despite this, the area may still have some benefits for conservation.

In areas with **full protection**, also known as “**no take zones**” or “**marine reserves**,” no extractive and destructive activities are allowed. Only some non-extractive activities may be allowed.

#### Additional information:

To consolidate the knowledge about the levels of protection you can access this *MPA Guide* interactive decision tree: <https://mpa-guide.protectedplanet.net/protection-level-decision-tree> .

You can also further explore the outcomes of each level of protection: <https://mpa-guide.protectedplanet.net/explore/outcomes> .

## What are the benefits of Marine Protected Areas?

SLIDES 13 TO 16

MPAs are extremely important to ensure that people can continue to benefit from everything the ocean has to offer, like food and many other services.

By restricting harmful human activities, **MPAs can provide multiple benefits**, such as an increase in:

1. **Protection of marine life and biodiversity:** in MPAs marine life can recover, grow, reproduce, and thrive. The number of fish in fully protected areas can increase four to five times, with individuals getting older and bigger. Larger organisms produce much more offspring and can disperse to surrounding areas. Over time, the number of species also increases, leading to an increase in biodiversity.
2. **Habitat recovery:** with the necessary time and conditions to regenerate, MPAs allow the restoration of vital habitats such as mangroves, coral or rocky reefs, seagrass beds, kelp forests which, in turn, allows marine life to recover.
3. **Fight climate change:** The ocean stores heat and atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, contributing to reduce the excess of this greenhouse gas and thus helping to regulate global temperature and to fight climate change. When protecting marine ecosystems that have high carbon sequestration ability, the **blue carbon ecosystems** such as mangroves, seagrass beds, coastal saltmarshes and macro-algae forests – the ocean increases this ability to combat climate change. One can say that **the ocean is the «Earth's firefighter»**.
4. **Benefits for fisheries:** when the number of marine animals increases due to protection inside MPAs, some can leave the MPA borders and move to surrounding areas (the “spillover effect”), potentially increasing stocks that can be captured by fishers. Therefore, fisheries (and food supply) outside of the protected area can benefit from the protection inside MPAs.



5. **Coastal protection:** when habitats like mangroves, saltmarshes and reefs are protected, they act more efficiently as barriers to protect coastal areas from storms, flooding, erosion, and currents (which are becoming more frequent due to climate change).
6. **Tourism and local economy:** a healthy ocean attracts visitors who appreciate nature. Sustainable tourism creates new job opportunities and higher income for local businesses and communities.
7. **Preservation of cultural heritage:** many MPAs include areas of cultural and historical significance to local communities, preserving traditional practices and heritage.
8. **Health and wellbeing:** nature in general is key to improve human health and wellbeing. The ocean contains important medicinal and aesthetic value, provides spiritual and mental wellbeing, and opportunities for sports and leisure activities.

### 3. The Mini 30x30 Challenge

#### Taking Action

SLIDES 18 TO 21

The «Mini 30x30 Challenge» is a global initiative that gives students a platform to speak up for ocean conservation, inspiring stronger action from Member States towards a more sustainable future. Its main goal is to present an open letter to the United Nations, carrying a unified message from young changemakers, calling on world leaders to protect the ocean and to take students' voices in consideration at critical decision-making moments.

Participation is made through the [online participation form](#), where votes are reported.

In brief, students:

1. Vote on what they consider the top 3 benefits of MPAs,
2. Decide whether to support the delivery of the open letter to the UN
3. The form is filled (either by students individually or by the teacher reporting the class voting results).

Students can also take a group photo with the certificate (available in the toolkit). Group photos will be added as pixels to the 30x30 mural.

#### Can students' voices be heard by world leaders?

SLIDES 22 TO 23

World leaders regularly meet at key international conferences to discuss and take action on subjects regarding the future of the planet.

Some examples are:

- **United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC)** – focused on ocean conservation and on the implementation of the SDG 14. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition took place in June 2025, in France.
- **Conference of the Parties (COP)** – focused on the climate and on the implementation of effective actions to fight climate change. COP30 will be held in November 2025, in Brazil.
- **Ocean Decade Conference** – focused on reviewing progress and set joint priorities for the future of the Ocean Decade, in order to accelerate the implementation of the SDG 14.

By uniting their voices, students around the world are showing that they can be powerful agents of change for the ocean and for our planet's future.

During UNOC3, in June 2025, in France, students had the opportunity to make their voices heard and to deliver the open letter to the United Nations. This letter represented the unified message of more than **9300 students, from 301 schools and 27 countries** who, united by the ocean, participated in the first two months of this initiative.

The Mini 30x30 Challenge continues and students can still join and make their voices heard in other key-moments, such as COP30.

## **4. Practical Activities for a deeper understanding of the importance of Marine Protected Areas and why all users must be involved**

SLIDES 24 TO 28

We suggest two practical activities to help students understand the importance of creating more MPAs and its impacts on both people and the environment. These activities will also allow students to develop skills such as problem-solving and critical thinking, while nurturing their connection to the ocean.

The activities can be found in Appendix A:

[Activity 1 | In my Marine Protected Area](#)

[Activity 2 | MPAs from everyone to everyone](#)

### **Know more:**

If you are interested in exploring some of the resources mentioned in this guide and deepen your knowledge about MPAs, here we present some websites to visit:

| <https://mpa-guide.protectedplanet.net/>

| <https://mpatlas.org/>

| <https://www.blueazores.org/areasmarinhasprotegidas>

| <https://www.protectedplanet.net/en>

Thank you for your participation!

If you have any questions, contact us at: [support@students4ocean.com](mailto:support@students4ocean.com)

# Appendices

## Appendix A | Activities

Concepts and definitions that useful for the activities:

**Fishing effort:** the total amount of fishing activity on the fishing grounds over a given period of time, often expressed for a specific gear type e.g. number of hours trawled per day, number of hooks set per day or number of hauls of a beach seine per day.

**Fish stock:** or fish resource means the living resources in the community or population, of one or more species, from which catches are taken in a fishery.

### Activity 1 | In my Marine Protected Area

SLIDES 25 & 26

This activity promotes a better understanding on the different protection levels in MPAs and the benefits for fisheries of higher protection and good management. Three different levels of difficulty are suggested so that the activity can be adapted to the context of the students.

#### Easy Level

##### Materials

- 1 package of pasta or beads (or any other small object) to represent the fish
- 2 A3 paper sheets (one paper sheet per group)
- 4 small containers (two per group) to represent the auction of each year
- Register sheet for each group with the following fields:

Group:	Number of fish			
	Beginning	Caught	Left	After reproduction
Round 1				
Round 2				

## Dynamics

1. Create 2 groups of students (A, B) and give one A3 sheet to each group. One will represent an area with no protection and the other an area fully protected.



2. Give 16 fish to each group that they must place on top of their sheets.
3. Play a total of 2 rounds, each representing one year after the implementation of the MPA:

### ROUND

#### Step 1 - Fishing

The groups must fish, taking fish into their auction recipient in the following amounts:

- Group A – capture 75% /  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the fish. (4 fish left)
- Group B – no fishing. (16 fish left)

#### Step 2 - Reproduction

Simulate the natural reproduction rate of fish, in the following amounts:

- Group A – triple the number of fish (result: 12 fish)
- Group B – increase five times the number of fish (result: 80 fish)

### ROUND 2

Repeat steps 1 and 2, placing the caught fish on the second auction container, showing the results of the second year, after the establishment of the MPAs.

(Group A finishes the round with 9 fish left; Group B with 400 fish left)

Finally, each group must compare their results in each year.

- | Which group has the most fish left on their sheet?
- | Why does one group have more fish left on their sheet?

- | Why did the fish in the protected area reproduce more?
- | If the group with less fish kept capturing 75% of their fish, could they run out of fish?
- | How could the group with less fish improve their numbers if there was a third round?

## Conclusion

Maintaining the fishing effort above the fish population ability to reproduce and replenish leads to decreased populations and overexploitation of fish stocks over time. Within the protected area, fishing activity is more regulated to ensure proper stock management and, when allowed the use of less destructive fishing gears. Good fish stock management is crucial for a healthy ocean, as it allows a sufficient number of individuals to remain in the population, with enough time to reproduce and for the offspring to develop.

## Middle Level

### Materials

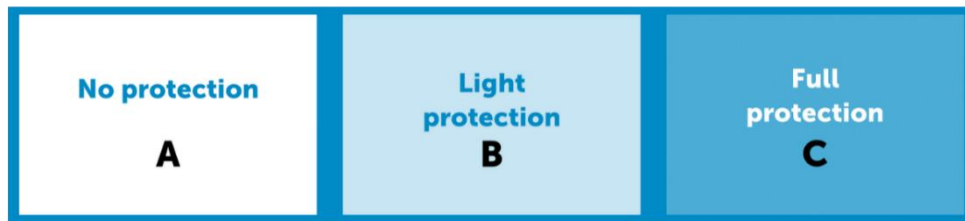
- 1 package of pasta or beads (or any other small object) to represent the fish
- 3 A3 paper sheets (one paper sheet per group)
- 6 small containers (two per group) to represent the auction of each year
- Register sheet for each group with the following fields:

Group:	Number of fish			
	Beginning	Caught	Left	After reproduction
Round 1				
Round 2				



## Dynamics

1. Create 3 groups of students (A, B, C) and give one A3 sheet to each group. These will represent areas with "No protection" (A), "Light protection" (B), "Full protection" (C)



2. Give 16 fish to each group that they must place on top of their sheets.
3. Play a total of 2 rounds, each representing one year after the implementation of the MPA.

### ROUND 1

#### Step 1 – Fishing

The groups must fish, taking fish into their auction recipient in the following amounts:

- Group A – capture 75% /  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the fish (4 fish left)
- Group B – capture 50% /  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the fish (8 fish left)
- Group C – no fishing (16 fish left)

#### Step 2 – Reproduction

Simulate the natural reproduction rate of fish, in the following amounts:

- Group A – triple the number of fish (result: 12 fish)
- Group B – increase four times the number of fish in the lightly protected area (result: 32 fish)
- Group C – increase five times the number of fish in the fully protected area (result: 80 fish)

### ROUND 2

Repeat steps 1 and 2, placing the caught fish on the second auction container, showing the results of the second year, after the establishment of the MPAs.

(Group A finishes the round with 9 fish left; Group B with 64 fish left and Group C with 400)

Finally, each group must compare their results in each year.

- | Which group has the most fish left on their sheet?
- | Why are the numbers of fish left so different between each group?
- | Why is the reproduction rate different between the different areas?
- | Did the number of captures improve for any of the groups? Why?
- | Could the group with the non-protected area keep capturing 75% of their fish?
- | What could be done to improve the number of fish in following rounds?

## Conclusion

Maintaining the fishing effort above the fish population ability to reproduce and replenish leads to decreased populations and overexploitation of fish stocks over time. Within the protected area, fishing activity is more regulated to ensure proper stock management and, when allowed the use of less destructive fishing gears. Good fish stock management is crucial for a healthy ocean, as it allows a sufficient number of individuals to remain in the population, with enough time to reproduce and for the offspring to develop. The higher the level of protection of a MPAs, the more significant its benefits will be, both for the ecosystem and for fishing activities.

## Hard Level

### Materials

- 1 package of pasta or beads (or any other small object) to represent the fish
- 3 A3 paper sheets (one paper sheet per group)
- 6 small containers (3 per group) to represent the auction of each year
- Register sheet for each group with the following fields, adjusting to each groups' conditions:

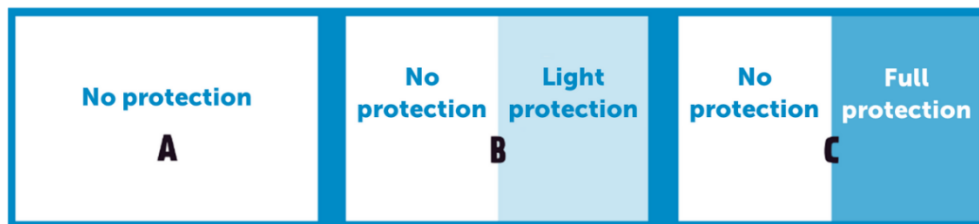
Group:	Number of fish									
	Beginning		Caught		Left		After reproduction		After Migration	
	NP*	LP/FP	NP*	LP/FP	NP*	LP/FP	NP*	LP/FP	NP*	LP/FP
Round 1										

Round 2										
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\*NP = No Protection; LP = Light Protection; FP = Full Protection

## Dynamics

1. Create 3 groups of students (A, B, C) and give one A3 sheet to each group. These will represent areas with "No protection" (A), "No protection + Light protection" (B), "No protection + Full protection" (C)



2. Give 16 fish to each group that they must place on top of their sheets. In this case, groups B and C place half of the "fish" on the no protection area and half on the protected area.
3. Play a total of 2 rounds, each representing one year after the implementation of the MPA:

## ROUND 1

### Step 1 – Fishing

The groups must fish, taking fish into their auction recipient in the following amounts:

- Group A – capture 75% /  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the fish (4 fish left)
- Group B – capture 50% /  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the fish inside the lightly-protected area and 75% /  $\frac{3}{4}$  in the non-protected area. (4 fish left inside the protected area; 2 fish left in the non-protected area)
- Group C – no fishing inside the protected area and capture 75% /  $\frac{3}{4}$  in the non-protected area. (8 fish left inside the protected area; 2 fish left in the non-protected area)

### Step 2 – Reproduction

Simulate the natural reproduction rate of fish, in the following amounts:

- Group A – triple the number of fish. (result: 12 fish)
- Group B – increase four times the number of fish inside the lightly-protected area and triple inside the non-protected area. (result: 16 fish in the protected area and 6 fish in the non-protected area)
- Group C – increase five times the number of fish inside the fully-protected area and triple inside the non-protected area. (result: 40 fish in the protected area and 6 fish in the non-protected area)

### Step 3 – Migration

In groups B and C, half of the fish present inside the protected area must move into the non-protected area, representing the spill-over effect. (Group B finishes the round with 14 fish in the non-protected area and 8 fish in the protected area; Group C finishes the round with 26 fish in the non-protected area and 20 fish in the protected area)

### ROUND 2

Repeat steps 1, 2 and 3, placing the caught fish on the second auction container, showing the results of the second year, after the establishment of the MPAs. Round up decimal numbers.

(Group A finishes the round with 9 fish left; Group B with 19 fish in the non-protected area and 8 fish in the protected area; Group C with 67 fish in the non-protected area and 48 fish in the protected area)

Finally, each group must compare their results in each year.

- | Which group has the most fish left on their sheet?
- | Why are the numbers of fish left so different between each group?
- | Why is the reproduction rate different between the differently protected areas?
- | Did the number of captures improve for any of the groups? Why?
- | Could the groups with the non-protected areas keep capturing 75% of their fish in there?
- | Under what level of protection did the fish stocks had more time to recover?
- | Why did fish migrate from protected areas to non-protected areas? What effect did that have in the number of fish left on these areas?
- | What could be done to improve the number of fish in following rounds?

### **Conclusion**

Maintaining the fishing effort above the fish population ability to reproduce and replenish leads to decreased populations and overexploitation of fish stocks over time. Within the protected area, fishing activity is more regulated to ensure proper stock management and, when allowed the use of less destructive fishing gears. Good fish stock management is crucial for a healthy ocean, as it allows a sufficient number of individuals to remain in the population, with enough time to reproduce and for the offspring to develop. The higher the level of protection of a MPAs, the more significant its benefits will be, both for the ecosystem and for fishing activities. The benefits of highly protected areas are not

limited to the areas under protection, for as the populations grow and the habitat recover, migration of species outside the boundaries of the MPA occurs, having a positive effect adjacent areas that may not be under protection.

## Activity 2 | Marine Protected Areas from everyone to everyone

SLIDES 27 & 28

The creation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) based on solid scientific knowledge is the most effective tool for reversing the loss of marine biodiversity, increasing ocean's resilience against the impacts of climate change, and contributing to a sustainable blue economy. However, to be effective, it depends on the acceptance of local communities and all stakeholders realizing the importance of the measures to be implemented. As such, the involvement and contribution of everyone in participatory discussion processes is crucial. **Students will take the different stakeholders' role and understand the implementation process of an MPA.**

**Materials:** character cards and their arguments/evidence (listed below).

For the character cards write on a piece of paper the role on one side and the arguments/evidence on the other, according to the following list:

***Scientific researchers*** - Rising global temperatures are melting ice, destroying coral reefs, and expanding dead zones in the ocean are critical impacts of human action. Additionally, ocean acidification is threatening many marine species. We urgently need to establish protected areas to restore ecosystems and preserve blue-carbon ecosystems that help fight climate change, and recover biodiversity, towards a sustainable planet. Moreover, MPAs increase the movement of fish to adjacent areas, benefiting fisheries.

***Fishers*** – Fish has been decreasing, but we have been fishing these waters for generations, and now we are being told we can't fish in our own territory. How are we supposed to feed our families? Closing off areas for protection means fewer fishing grounds and fewer job opportunities. How can the fisheries benefit from MPA?

***Politicians*** - While environmental protection is important, we cannot ignore the economic realities of our region. How can fisheries, tourism and local businesses benefit and create new jobs?

***Dive centre / Whale watching business*** – Nowadays it's more difficult to find the animals and sometimes when they appear, they are smaller, or they are sick and injured. We have seen dolphins with plastic and nets (which compromises our business) and birds with oil on their feathers. The dives are not as exciting as they used to be as habitats are being destroyed and there is less marine life to see.

***Ecotourism resort managers*** – the coastal area is polluted and disorganized. Local species are disappearing, and others appear to unbalance the ecosystem. The number of clients is decreasing (compromising the business).



*NGO* – We have been working to raise awareness among fishers and the local communities about sustainable practices, but fish stocks are still decreasing, and the ocean being polluted. Many species are being caught before they can reproduce, and marine animals are being removed for decorative and medicinal purposes. We need to protect areas to secure a viable future for the young generations. People need to understand the value of MPAs and to actively advocate for ocean conservation.

*Schools* – Environmental education is crucial to creating a new generation of conscious citizens. If we do not teach children about the importance of the ocean and to be active in its protection, the problems will only worsen. Marine protection must be a priority to ensure a better future for all.

### **Dynamics**

1. Divide the students into groups representing the different stakeholders/users that must be involved in the creation of an MPA. Give time for each group to familiarize themselves with their roles, arguments, and evidence.
2. Select a spokesperson in each group.
3. Set up a negotiation process, where stakeholders must discuss and justify their positions regarding the establishment of an MPA in a specific area. Each group should present their perspective, outlining potential benefits, concerns, and possible compromises.
4. The teacher will take on the role of the debate moderator, ensuring that all arguments are heard and guiding the discussion toward a final decision.
5. Encourage the stakeholders to reach a consensus on key aspects of the MPA, such as:
  - a. The size and location of the protected area.
  - b. The level of protection (e.g., no-take zones, regulated fishing, ecotourism guidelines).
  - c. Compensation or alternative solutions for affected sectors.
  - d. The role of enforcement and community involvement in managing the MPA.
6. In turn, each group will have the chance to present their arguments and evidence.

### **Conclusion**

At the end of the discussion, students should have reflected on the challenges of balancing ocean conservation with economic and social interests. Despite its environmental, social, and economic benefits, for a MPA to be successful it depends on the involvement of all potential users of the sea. At the end of the activity, students can propose final recommendations and design the official guidelines

for the newly created MPA, reflecting the perspectives of all stakeholders while prioritizing ocean protection.

To further consolidate learning students can discuss:

- | What compromises were necessary to implement the MPA?
- | What challenges did they face in reaching a decision?
- | How can different sectors work together to ensure the success of an MPA?
- | How do MPAs contribute to broader environmental goals such as biodiversity conservation and climate resilience?

**Suggestion:**

To decrease the difficulty for younger students you can:

- Set only 2 groups: scientists and fishers.

Schools located in coastal areas, can personalize some aspects of the debate to the local context.

## Appendix B | Participation Form

The Mini 30x30 Challenge – A students’ wave for the ocean is a global movement that empowers students to advocate for ocean protection, encouraging a stronger commitment of UN Member States to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030.

Young changemakers from around the world will learn, discuss, and take action on the need to implement Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Their collective voices will be reflected in an open letter to the United Nation.

To participate, students, or teachers with their classes, should:

- 1<sup>st</sup> - explore the toolkit materials (download it in [www.students4ocean.com](http://www.students4ocean.com)) or watch the video about the importance of MPAs (watch it [here](#)).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - express their agreement on the open letter to the United Nations.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - vote on the MPAs’ benefits they value the most.

**NOTE:** each student must **vote only once**, to avoid duplicating results (i.e., either individually or in a class poll).

Thank you for participating.

(\*Mandatory fields)

## Section 1

I declare to be aware that my personal data will be processed exclusively for the purposes of data analysis and result compilation, within the scope of my participation in the Mini30x30 Challenge initiative and assignment by Oceanário de Lisboa and Oceano Azul Foundation with the partner organisations (Directorate-General for Education of the Portuguese Ministry of Education Science and Innovation, Programme "Escola Azul" of the Directorate-General for Maritime Policy of the Portuguese Ministry of Economy, Ciência Viva, Portuguese Committee for Ocean Decade, Zoo Lisbon, Network of European Blue Schools, Blue Schools Global Network (IOC-UNESCO)) in their capacity as data controllers, and that, in accordance with GDPR and other applicable legislation, I may exercise my rights to information, access, rectification, erasure, opposition, limitation and portability, by requesting it, in writing, by e-mail to [dataprivacy@oceanario.pt](mailto:dataprivacy@oceanario.pt) or by post to Esplanada D. Carlos I, 1990-005 Lisboa, in which case I must provide proof of my identity and specify the right or rights I wish to exercise. I am also aware of the right to lodge a complaint with the competent supervisory authority for the protection of personal data, the Portuguese National Data Protection Commission: [www.cnpd.pt](http://www.cnpd.pt).

Your personal data will not be transferred to third parties, with the exception of those necessary to comply with legal obligations or if you have given your consent.

The data will be kept for the period necessary to perform this purpose and the respective applicable legal deadlines.

For more information, please refer to the regulation of this initiative.

☐ Yes, I am aware of the conditions detailed above \*

1. Country\*:
2. City/Location\*:
3. Choose the type of submission: \*
  - a. Class submission (by teacher) → **section 2**
  - b. Individual submission (by students) → **section 6**

## Section 2 - Class submission

This section is intended for submissions made by **teachers reporting the voting results of a class or group of students**.

1. Teacher's full name\*:
2. E-mail\*:
3. School name\*:
4. Age group (please consider the class average age) \*:
  - a. 4-5 years old
  - b. 6-7 years old
  - c. 8-9 years old
  - d. 10-11 years old
  - e. 12-13 years old
  - f. 14-15 years old
  - g. 16-17 years old
  - h. 18-19 years old
  - i. Other:
5. Class\*:
6. Number of students participating\*:

## Section 3 – Open letter to the UN on the 30x30 target

After reading and discussing the text of the letter (read it [here](#)), please indicate the number of students who agree, disagree, or abstain from supporting its content and its delivery to the UN. Ensure the total count aligns with the number of participating students.

1. How many students agree? \*
2. How many students disagree? \*
3. How many students abstain? \*

## Section 4 – TOP 3 most important benefits of MPAs

**Which benefits of Marine Protected Areas students value the most? \***

Students should **vote for the 3 MPAs benefits** (consult ballot [here](#)) they consider the most important. Indicate the number of votes from the class for each benefit. In the case of benefits that have not received any votes, please enter '0'.

**NOTE:** If the number of votes exceeds 3 x the number of participating students, the response will not be considered valid.

1. Protection of marine life and biodiversity \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
2. Habitat recovery \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
3. Fight climate change \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
4. Benefits for fisheries \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
5. Coastal protection \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
6. Tourism and local economy \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
7. Preservation of cultural heritage \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*
8. Health and wellbeing \_\_\_\_\_ (number of votes) \*

## Section 5 – Group photo for a unified and global message

Your group photo can be part of an amazing and huge graphic piece spelling "30x30", which will be showcased at UNOC3 and publicised on digital media. Each pixel of the picture will be one of the class photos, symbolising the union of students, from across the world, for ocean protection. We suggest you hold up your class participation certificate (see toolkit) for the photo.

**NOTE:** Please ensure that the students have authorisation for image disclosure.

I authorise the integration of the group photograph submitted in a graphic piece "Mini30x30", as mentioned above, and the dissemination of this piece for the purpose of publicising the initiative through institutional events or news, newsletters, information leaflets, institutional presentations and conferences, through written and electronic publications, websites, corporate social networks, blogs, public multimedia platforms or television channels, by Oceanário de Lisboa and Oceano Azul Foundation and by the Partner organisations (Directorate-General for Education of the Portuguese Ministry of Education Science and Innovation, Programme "Escola Azul" of the Directorate-General for Maritime Policy of the Portuguese Ministry of Economy, Ciência Viva, Portuguese Committee for



Ocean Decade, Zoo Lisbon, Network of European Blue Schools, Blue Schools Global Network (IOC-UNESCO)). \*

☐ Yes, I authorise the integration and use of the group photo as detailed above

☐ Yes, I authorise the integration and use of the group photo as detailed above and I also authorise its use by the promoter organisations (Aires Marines Éducatives, the EU4Ocean, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, the Irish School Sustainability Network, the Monitoramento Mirim Costeiro, the Ocean Conservation Trust, and the Portuguese Network of UNESCO Associated Schools)

☐ No, I do not authorise the integration and use of the group photo as detailed above

Send a copy via e-mail to [support@students4ocean.com](mailto:support@students4ocean.com) \* → section 8

### Section 6 - Individual submission

This section is intended for **students who opted to directly submit their vote.**

1. Full name\*:
2. E-mail\*:
3. School \*:
4. Age\*:
5. Class\*:

### Section 7 – Open letter to the UN and MPAs benefits

After reading and discussing the text of the letter and learning more about MPAs through the materials available on the website and in the toolkit, you can decide whether you **agree with its content and delivery to the UN and vote on the most important benefits of MPAs.**

1. Do you agree with the delivery of this open letter to the United Nations and with its content?\*
- a. Agree
- b. Disagree
- c. Abstain/ I don't know
2. Please select the 3 benefits of effective Marine Protected Areas that you consider to be the most important (Please select only 3, otherwise your answer will not be considered as valid).\*
1. Protection of marine life and biodiversity ☐
2. Habitat recovery ☐
3. Fight climate change ☐
4. Benefits for fisheries ☐

- 5. Coastal protection ☐
- 6. Tourism and local economy ☐
- 7. Preservation of cultural heritage ☐
- 8. Health and wellbeing ☐

## Section 8 – Communications

☐ I authorise my e-mail address to be used by Oceanário de Lisboa to disseminate information related to the Mini 30x30 Challenge initiative.

☐ I authorise my e-mail address to be used by Oceanário de Lisboa to disseminate information related to its activities in the field of ocean conservation, education, aquarium, and exhibitions.

**Thank you for your submission!**

Send it to your national coordinator for the initiative or post to the following address:

Oceanário de Lisboa

Esplanada D. Carlos I

1990-005 Lisboa, Portugal

Your input is crucial. The data will soon be analysed, and the results of the initiative will later be communicated to the e-mail address you indicated on this form.

Keep an eye on the website to follow up on the next steps of this initiative: [www.students4ocean.com](http://www.students4ocean.com)

Together, we are amplifying the voices of students worldwide and contributing to the Mini 30x30 Challenge, urging the UN Member States to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030.

**The Mini 30x30 Challenge | A student's wave for the ocean**