

OCEANS AT RISK



Teacher resources - Lesson plan



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Image credit: Dmitry Bayer



Australian Curriculum Objectives

Years 5 & 6 (Stage 3) - HASS

- [AC9HS5K05](#)
The management of Australian environments, including managing severe weather events such as bushfires, floods, droughts or cyclones, and their consequences
- [AC9HS5K08](#)
Types of resources (natural, human, capital) and the ways societies use them to satisfy the needs and wants of present and future generations
- [AC9HS6K08](#)
Influences on consumer choices and methods that can be used to help make informed personal consumer and financial choices
- [AC9HS5S01](#) / [AC9HS6S01](#)
Develop questions to investigate people, events, developments, places and systems
- [AC9HS5S02](#) / [AC9HS6S02](#)
Locate, collect and organise information and data from primary and secondary sources in a range of formats
- [AC9HS5S03](#) / [AC9HS6S03](#)
Evaluate information and data in a range of formats to identify and describe patterns and trends, or to infer relationships
- [AC9HS5S05](#) / [AC9HS6S05](#)
Develop evidence-based conclusions





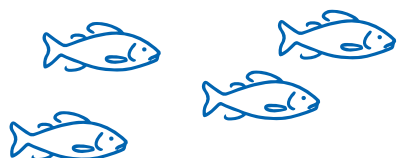
In this 40-60 minute lesson for learners aged 10+ students consider how the ocean is essential for life on earth. Learners discover how the oceans are at risk from overfishing, and discuss what they can do about it.

Key terms

- Overfishing
- Decline
- Livelihoods
- Ecosystem
- Species
- Marine populations
- Sustainable fishing
- Marine Stewardship Council

You will need

- Access to the clip [Overfishing](#)
- Printed or shared digital copies of the Oceans at Risk factsheet
- Access to the clip [Born Free. Caught Wild](#)
- Access to the [What is the MSC video](#)
- Printed or shared digital copies of the Supermarket Survey Sheet
- Access to the Kahoot quiz [Oceans at Risk](#)



Key questions

- What does the ocean mean to us?
- Why is the ocean essential to life on earth?
- What does 'overfishing' mean?
- What is sustainable fishing?
- How does the Marine Stewardship Council prevent overfishing?
- What can we all do to prevent overfishing and protect our oceans?

Class Activities

- Learners watch a video to understand the concept of Overfishing
- Learners read a factsheet about our Oceans at Risk and answer questions
- Learners watch a video of how science is used in a sustainable prawn fishery in Northern Australia
- Learners learn about the Marine Stewardship Council program for sustainable fishing, and consider what actions we can all take to protect the ocean





LESSON PLAN: OCEANS AT RISK

Starter (5-10 mins)

Introduce students to the concept of **Overfishing** by showing students the video clip [Overfishing](#) (2:55) from the short film [My Dad the Fisherman](#).

Discuss as a class

- *What does overfishing mean?*
- *What impact does overfishing have?*



Main activity (25-35 mins)

Ask students to read through Part 1. of the Oceans at Risk factsheet (pages 5 and 6) and work in pairs to answer the first set of questions.

After reading the factsheet, come up with a definition for overfishing as a class.

Here is an example:

When a certain species of fish (usually one which people like to eat most) are fished too much they are unable to reproduce their numbers and begin to decline.

Next, ask students to consider what **Sustainable Fishing** might mean?

Show students this 9-minute video [Born Free. Caught Wild](#) (8:40) about a sustainable prawn fishery in Northern Australia.

The Northern Prawn Fishery is an example of a sustainable fishery that is certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The MSC is an international non-profit organisation which works to prevent overfishing and encourage sustainable fishing.

Ask students to read through Part 2. of the Oceans at Risk factsheet, and work in pairs to answer the second set of questions.



Video Credit: Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries, FRDC and [Millstream Productions](#)

Discussion (10-15 mins)

Show students the short video [What is the MSC](#) (1:30) to explain what the MSC does to ensure sustainable seafood.

As a class, consider

- *What can we all do to prevent overfishing and protect our oceans?*
- *What might be the advantages or disadvantages of choosing MSC products?*



Review



Host a 5-minute Kahoot challenge on this topic at [Oceans at Risk](#)

Extension Activities



1. Work as a class to create a tally of the different types of seafood the class commonly eats.

For example,

Tuna - |||| ||

Squid (Calamari) - ||||

Sardines - ||

Then ask students to graph the results to visually represent the types of seafood most commonly eaten by the class. Students could draw a graph, or use an online tool such as [Canva graphmaker](#).





OCEANS AT RISK FACTSHEET

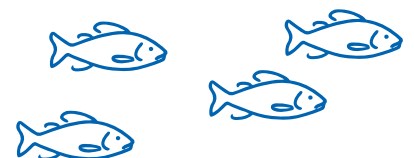


Map of the oceans

Source: Global fishing watch

Oceans are essential to life on Earth.

They cover more than 70% of the planet's surface. They regulate the climate, and supply more than half of the oxygen we need to survive. Every second breath we take comes from the ocean.





Oceans at Risk

1. The Problem of Overfishing

The oceans are home to a huge variety of life. We currently know of at least 226,400 different marine species that live in our oceans, however there are likely to be many more - perhaps millions - that we have not yet discovered. In fact, scientists believe that 95% of the ocean is still undiscovered today. This marine life is interconnected in an **ecosystem** and is essential both to life below the water and on land.

The marine ecosystem is important to sustaining people's **livelihoods** (jobs) and ensuring that people have food to eat. Millions of people around the world rely on fish as a main source of **protein**. Seafood is also our last major **wild** food source. The stakes are high when we consider how closely linked the health of our oceans is to our environmental, social and economic wellbeing. According to the United Nations, **33.1% of global fisheries have been fished beyond sustainable limits**. That's almost one third of fisheries that are being **overfished**. Between 1970 and 2012, the size of **marine populations declined by 49%** (that's almost half!) Key factors contributing the problem are overfishing, illegal and destructive fishing as well as climate change and pollution. It's not just the loss of marine creatures and environments, the problem has a serious impact on communities.

Questions

- *Why are the oceans so essential to life on Earth?*
- *The number of marine species has declined by almost half. Is overfishing the only reason?*

2. What is the Marine Stewardship Council doing?

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a Non-Profit Organisation that works with fisheries, scientists and industry to prevent overfishing, and make sure our oceans are fished sustainably. The MSC's vision is for oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies that are safeguarded for future generations! The MSC makes sure that it's easy for everyone to find and buy certified sustainable seafood. That means seafood that is caught in such a way that it can continue being caught for generations to come, without the fish populations being depleted. Fisheries that are certified as sustainable are given a blue fish tick label by the Marine Stewardship Council.

Questions

- *Who does the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) work with to make sure our oceans are fished sustainably?*
- *What does the MSC give to fisheries that are certified sustainable?*

Read more: Read [WWF's Living Blue Planet Report](#)

