

# Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative

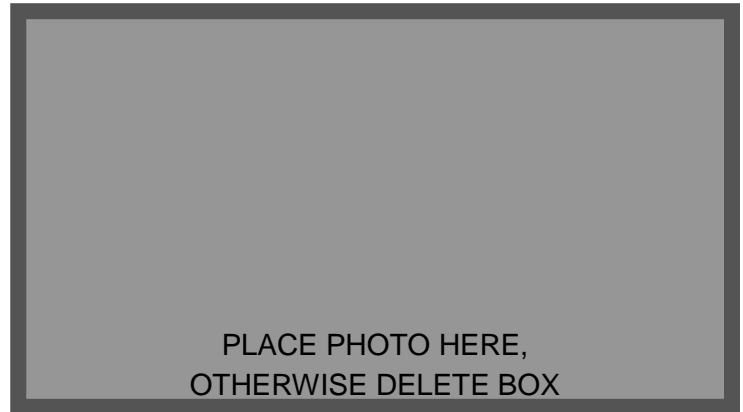
## Assisting High Seas Conservation

### High Seas in urgent need of international attention

The open oceans and deep seas represent 95 percent of the global biosphere in volume. They play an important regulating role in the Earth's climate and are home to a major part of the world's biodiversity, containing some of the most productive ecosystems, vast natural resources, unique habitats and globally rare species yet to be discovered. However, mounting pressures from intensifying human uses, climate change and ocean acidification threaten to undermine these ecosystems' biodiversity, balance and resilience. Due to their remoteness and the logistic difficulties linked to their exploration, the open oceans and deep seas remain the least known and least protected places on the planet. Currently, only about five percent has been explored, mostly near coastal areas where the continental shelf drops off abruptly into the deep sea. Open oceans and deep seas often fall outside of national jurisdiction and hence future conservation efforts in these areas will depend on international cooperation and coordination.

### The Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative

The Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI) is an international partnership advancing the scientific basis for conserving biological diversity in the deep seas and open oceans. It aims to help countries, as well as regional and global organisations, to use existing and develop new data, tools, and methodologies to identify ecologically significant areas in the oceans, with an initial focus on areas beyond national jurisdiction. This initiative began in late 2008 as a collaboration between the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), IUCN, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Marine Conservation Biology Institute, Census of Marine Life, Ocean Biogeographic Information System and the Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab of Duke University. The initiative continues to seek additional collaborators to help bring the best science and data to bear on the identification of ecologically significant areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction. GOBI is facilitated by IUCN with core support from the BfN.



Turtle  
Credit: John Weller, john@lastocean.com

### Initiative partners include:

German Federal Agency for  
Nature Conservation  
[www.bfn.de](http://www.bfn.de)

IUCN  
[www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

Convention on Biological  
Diversity  
[www.cbd.int/](http://www.cbd.int/)

Census of Marine Life  
[www.coml.org/](http://www.coml.org/)

Ocean Biogeographic Information  
System  
[www.iobis.org/](http://www.iobis.org/)

UNEP World Conservation  
Monitoring Centre  
[www.unep-wcmc.org/](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/)

Duke University Marine  
Geospatial Ecology Lab  
<http://mgel.env.duke.edu/>

Marine Conservation Biology  
Institute  
[www.mcbi.org/](http://www.mcbi.org/)

United Nations University  
Institute of Advanced Studies  
[www.ias.unu.edu](http://www.ias.unu.edu)

AquaMaps  
[www.aquamaps.org](http://www.aquamaps.org)

BirdLife International  
[www.birdlife.org](http://www.birdlife.org)

CSIRO  
[www.csiro.au](http://www.csiro.au)

CenSeam  
<http://censeam.niwa.co.nz>

Tagging of Pacific Predators  
[www.topp.org](http://www.topp.org)

Intergovernmental  
Oceanographic Commission of  
UNESCO  
<http://ioc-unesco.org>

Hermione  
[www.eu-hermione.net/](http://www.eu-hermione.net/)

## Activities

The work under this initiative builds on the scientific criteria adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2008 to identify ecologically and biologically significant areas (EBSAs) in the global marine realm. It ultimately aims to help countries meet the goals adopted under the CBD and at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. These global goals relate to reducing the rate of biodiversity loss, applying ecosystem approaches, and establishing representative marine protected area networks by 2012.