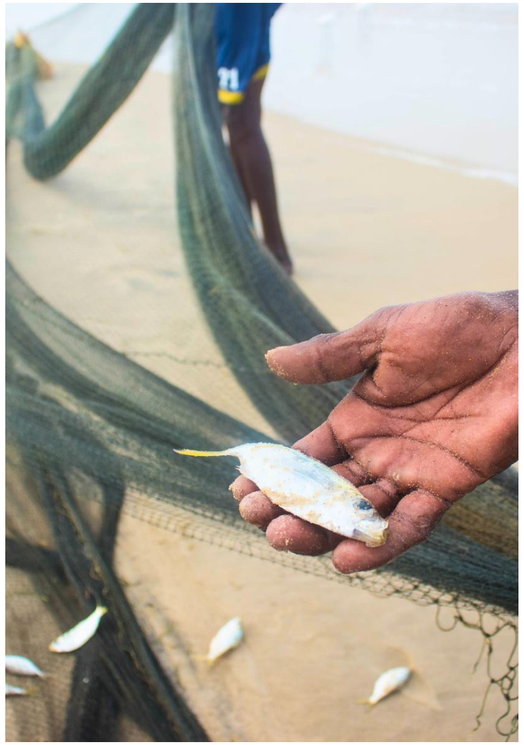


Ocean Justice and Community Power: Fisheries Community Glossary



This booklet explains important words used in



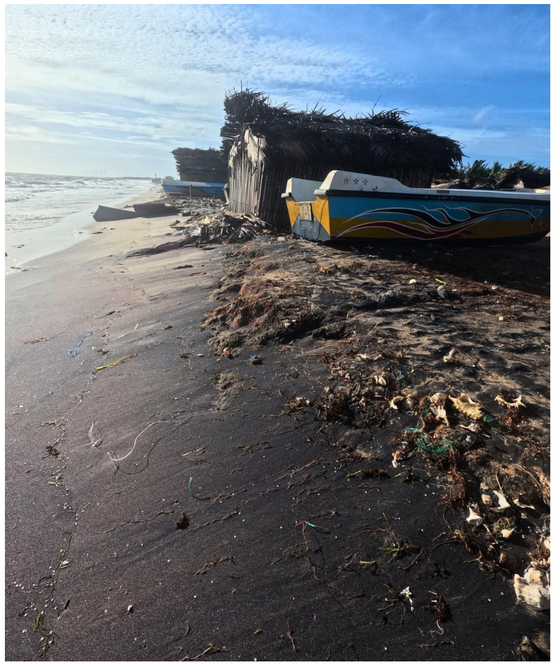
- Ocean conservation
- Fisheries
- Climate Change
- Biodiversity
- Community rights
- Coastal governance

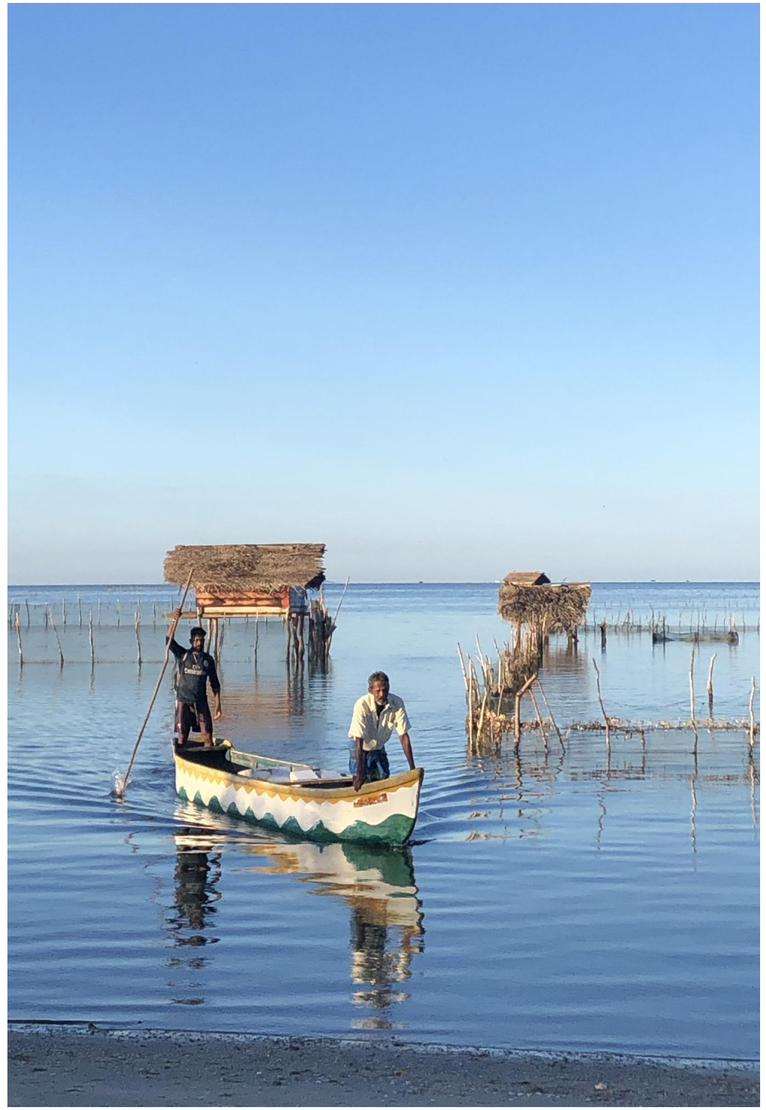
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The goal is to help community understand decisions affecting their sea, land, livelihoods, and future.

Climate Change:

The ocean is profoundly affected by climate change, absorbing vast amounts of heat and carbon dioxide. However, the impacts of ocean acidification, sea-level rise, and changing ocean currents are not felt equally. Vulnerable coastal communities, particularly in developing nations and small island states, are disproportionately affected, despite often contributing the least to greenhouse gas emissions. This highlights a clear injustice in the distribution of climate change impacts and the need for climate justice to be intrinsically linked to Ocean Justice.







Ocean Justice:

Ocean Justice is the fair and equitable distribution of both the benefits derived from ocean resources and the burdens of ocean conservation. It sits at the intersection of environmental protection, social equity, and human rights, ensuring that marginalized coastal communities are not disproportionately harmed by marine pollution, overfishing, or climate change.

Resource Equity:

This aspect addresses the fair distribution of ocean resources, such as fisheries, minerals, and even the potential benefits, risk and opportunities from marine resources.

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Corporate Accountability:

Duty of decision-makers to justify actions and face consequences. Multinational corporations play a significant role in ocean-related industries, from shipping and energy to fishing and tourism.

Right to Land, Livelihood and Life:

Communities have the right to continue living, fishing, working, and surviving safely in their traditional coastal areas.



Consultation vs Consent:

when authorities or organizations ask for your views before making decisions. Sometimes, consultation happens but decisions don’t change. Sometimes, decision is already made and consultation will only be a information sharing for the community.

True consent requires formal approval from traditional systems. Crucially, consent is an ongoing lease; if the developer violates marine boundaries or causes a spill, the community has the right to revoke consent.

Communities have the right to be properly informed and consulted early on, to ensure they can accept or reject decisions affecting them, such as conservation policies and rules impacting their land, sea, or livelihood.







FPIC is enforced in practice by written consent processes, community assemblies, documented agreements, right to withdraw consent this in order to protect Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' rights, traditional knowledge and livelihoods.

Free, Prior and Informed Consent(FPIC)

Free, Prior and Informed Consent means that communities have the right to decide, not just be informed. Basically, nothing should happen in your area without the agreement of local communities.

* Free → No coercion or pressure

* Prior → Before decisions are made

* Informed → Full, understandable information

* Consent → Right to say yes, no, or to negotiate

Participation:

According to CBD Principle participation means communities must be genuinely involved in decisions about oceans, land, and conservation; not just informed after decisions are made. It means: communities can speak and be heard, their views can change decisions, and they are part of planning from the beginning.

Real participation = Your voice is valued and has the power to influence or change decisions.

Fake participation = Decisions have already been made, and you are only informed about them afterward.

Governance & Ecosystem

Sustainable Fishing:

Sustainable fishing means catching fish in a way that does not destroy future fish stocks or marine ecosystems. It includes, not overfishing, allowing fish to reproduce, avoiding harmful gear, and protecting breeding areas.

Conservation:

protecting nature while using it carefully so it lasts for future generations. It support protecting fish habitats, restoring mangroves and reefs, reducing pollution, and managing resources responsibly.

Co-management:

Shared management of natural resources between government and local communities.

Community-led Conservation:

Conservation initiatives designed, implemented, and governed by local communities.

Traditional/ Local Knowledge:

Knowledge systems developed by communities over generations about environment, ecology, and resource use.

Governance:

Systems and processes of decision-making and authority over resources.





Monitoring:

Systematic tracking of environmental or social conditions over time in order to protect and predict future challengers and to monitor project implementation success over time.

Enforcement:

Implementation of rules and laws to ensure compliance.

Stakeholders vs Rights Holders:

- **Stakeholders:**

  Individuals/groups affected by or interested in a decision

- **Rights Holders:**

  Holders mean people who have legal or customary rights (e.g., Indigenous Peoples, coastal communities).



Coastal Erosion

Coastal erosion is the gradual loss of land caused by the continuous wearing away of the shoreline by waves, tides, currents, and storms. Over time, the sea advances inland, and land that was once dry becomes part of the ocean.

- **Natural Causes:** Strong waves and storms, Sea-level rise caused by climate change, The constant movement of tides and ocean currents
- **Human Causes:** Sand mining from beaches and rivers, destruction of protective ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrass beds, unplanned coastal development, including hotels, roads, and ports, structures that disrupt the natural movement of sand along the coast
- **Visible Signs on the Grouns:** Narrowing beaches, cracking or collapse of land near the shoreline, coconut trees and other vegetation falling into the sea, increased water depth close to the shore, loss of homes, roads, and agricultural land to the sea.
- Why Is It Important? Coastal erosion poses a direct threat to the safety, homes, and livelihoods of coastal communities. It can lead to the loss of fishing landing sites, contaminate freshwater wells with seawater, damage tourism, and weaken vital coastal ecosystems that provide protection and support local livelihoods.



Protected Area Categories in Sri Lanka

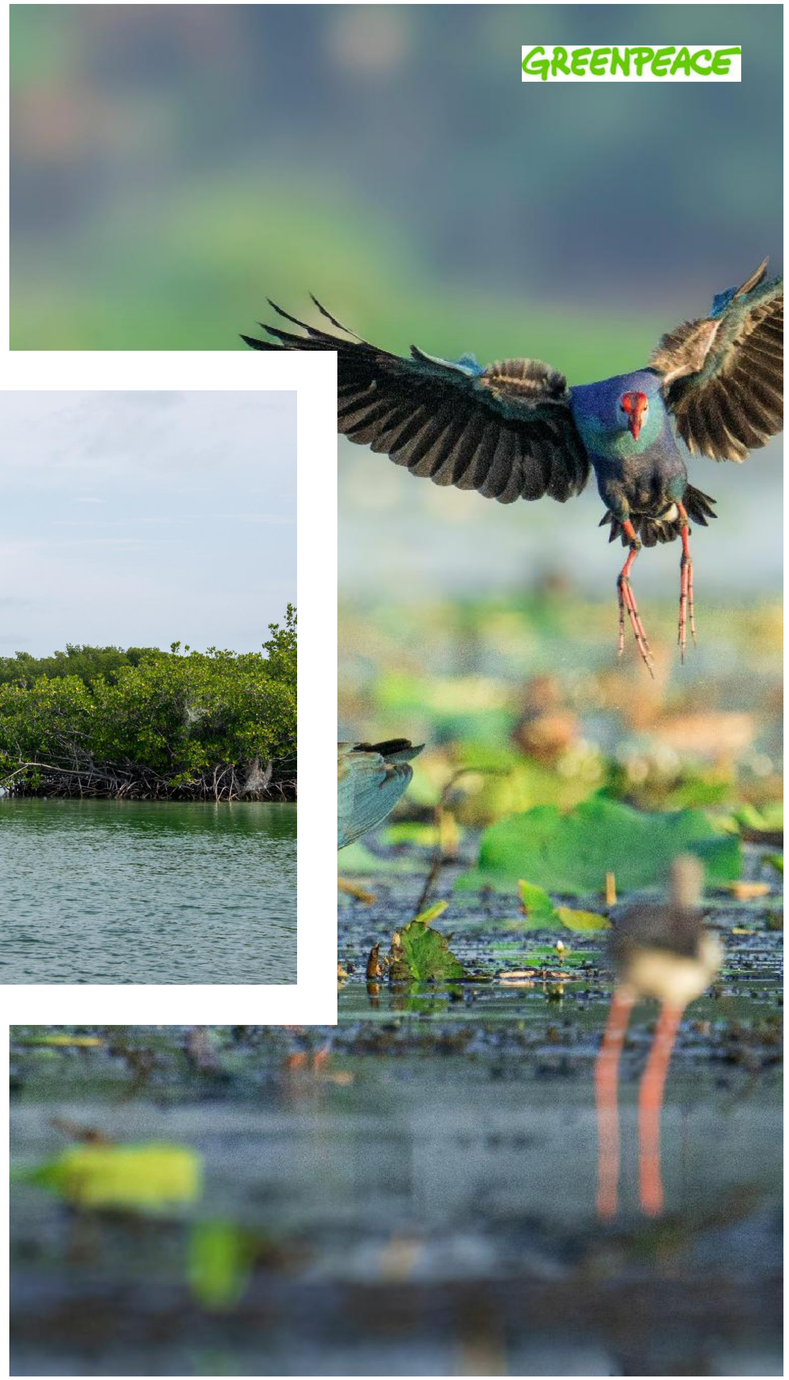
Protected Areas: These are land or marine areas that are managed under special legal regulations to protect wildlife and ecosystems. In these areas, fishing is restricted and development activities are controlled.

Marine Protected Areas: A sea area legally managed to conserve marine biodiversity and ecosystems. A sea area where human activities are controlled to protect marine life. But “justice” means: communities should not be unfairly removed, fishers should be consulted, livelihoods must be protected, and benefits should be shared fairly.

Ramsar Wetlands: Under the Ramsar Convention, a wide variety of natural and human-made habitat types ranging from rivers to coral reefs can be classified as wetlands. Wetlands include swamps, marshes, billabongs, lakes, salt marshes, mudflats, mangroves, coral reefs, fens, peat bogs, or bodies of water - whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary. Water within these areas can be static or flowing; fresh, brackish or saline; and can include inland rivers and coastal or marine water to a depth of six metres at low tide. There are even underground wetlands.

Strict Nature Reserves (SNR): have been declared under the provisions of Fauna & Flora Protection Ordinance. (Haggala, Yala and Ritigala). human visitation, use and impacts are strictly controlled and limited in these areas to ensure protection of the conservation values. These areas are reference areas for monitoring of changes in outside due to the human impact and create unique habitats for endemic species (Point endemic). Entering into the SNR is prohibited but it is not restricted for the purpose of discharging any official duty or authorized scientific research. Both purposes can be deployed along with the permission of the Director General of Department of Wildlife Conservation.





Special Management Areas (SMA):

Areas that need extra care and special rules because they are sensitive or important. They are not fully closed areas, but, fishing may be controlled, development may be limited, and conservation rules apply.

National Parks:

Twenty Eight (25) National Parks have scattered throughout the country by providing scientific, educational, recreational and aesthetic opportunities to visitors. These areas are declared under the provisions of Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance. Visitors are allowed to enter the national park with permits in accordance with the conditions, issued by prescribed officer of Department of Wildlife Conservation on the payment of the prescribed fee.

Marine National Parks:

Legal provisions of a Marine National Park are almost similar to National park declared under the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance. Visitors are allowed to enter marine national parks for the purpose of observing and studying the fauna and flora. But any activity that has been carried out by a law or custom or usage, or traditional practice before establishment of the Marine National Park are allowed by imposing conditions. Adam's bridge was declared as the 1st Marine National Park in Sri Lanka under the provisions of Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance.

Marine Reserves:

Marine reserve is a kind of marine protected area that has not been declared so far, under the provisions of the Fauna and Flora Protection ordinance.



Buffer zone:

Buffer zone has to be comprised with state owned lands; extend from the outer border of the national park. It provides better protection and minimized the human influence on National Park. No buffer zone has been declared so far. However the human influence on national park has curtailed, according the section 9A of Fauna and flora Protection Ordinance.

Fisheries Management Areas (FMA):

specific parts of the sea or coastal waters where fishing activities are managed with special rules to make sure fish populations are not overused and marine ecosystems remain healthy. These areas are designed so that fishing is controlled in a way that supports both nature conservation and long-term livelihoods of fishing communities.

Fisheries Management Areas, authorities may introduce rules such as:

- limiting how many fish can be caught,
- setting fishing seasons (open and closed periods),
- restricting harmful fishing gear (like destructive nets or methods),
- protecting breeding and nursery areas where fish grow,
- monitoring illegal or unreported fishing activities.

The goal is not to stop fishing, but to make fishing sustainable so fish are still available in the future.





Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM):

Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures - areas conserving biodiversity outside protected areas.

International Conventions & Frameworks

CBD - The Convention of Biological Diversity:

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a global agreement between countries to protect nature and biodiversity. It was created during the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Most countries in the world, including Sri Lanka, are members of the CBD.

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP):

An NBSAP is a country's national biodiversity plan created under the CBD. Each country develops its own plan for protecting biodiversity, restoring ecosystems, managing natural resources, and achieving global biodiversity goals. This includes protected area plans, mangrove restoration, marine conservation, fisheries management, climate adaptation, species protection, and community participation.

This report will influence government policies, funding, conservation projects, environmental laws, and future development plans. NBSAP can affect fishing rights, coastal access, tourism projects, conservation restrictions, and livelihood opportunities.

National Determined Contribution (NDC):

NDCs are climate action commitments made by countries under the Paris Agreement. Each country explains: how it will reduce climate pollution, adapt to climate change, and protect people from climate impacts.

These commitments shape national development priorities, climate funding, energy policies, conservation programs, and international support. Because NDCs directly influence how land, oceans, forests, and livelihoods are managed, they can significantly affect coastal communities, fisheries, and local resource use. For this reason, meaningful community participation is essential, as those most affected by climate change should have a voice in shaping the solutions.





Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMBGF):

The KMBGF is a global biodiversity action plan adopted in 2022 under the, Convention on Biological Diversity. It guides countries on how to protect biodiversity by 2030. The framework includes and tries to achieve 23 global biodiversity targets, protecting ecosystems, reducing pollution, restoring damaged environments, protecting Indigenous and community rights, and improving conservation.

30 by 30 Targets:

Global goal to protect 30% of land and 30% of ocean by 2030. This goal comes from the KMGB framework, that government support to stop biodiversity loss, protect ecosystems, restore oceans and forests, and reduce climate impa

Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMOs):

Regional Fisheries Management Organization; where countries work together to manage fish stocks that move across borders. They help to regulate fishing, set fishing quotas, protect fish populations and monitor illegal fishing.

Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMA):

A marine area managed mainly by local communities. In this community create rules for fishing, conservation, seasonal closures and resource protection. In this way it recognise local knowledge, community leadership and local stewardship.

National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP):

National Environmental Action Plan explaining environmental priorities, problems and government actions. It includes pollution control, biodiversity protection, climate adaptation and coastal management measures.



Environmental Assessments & Principles

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):

is a detailed study done before a large project begins. It examines whether a project could damage the environment, fisheries, water, forests, coastal areas or community livelihoods.

Environmental Social Impact Assessment(ESIA):

similar to an EIA but also studies how a project affects people and communities socially and economically by looking at environmental impacts, loss of fishing areas, impacts on livelihoods, relocation risks, cultural impacts, women and vulnerable groups and health and safety issues.

Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA):

This examines environmental impacts at the level of national plans, policies, programs or large development strategies. This will help identify problems early before many harmful projects are approved.

Initial Environmental Examination (IEE):

preliminary environmental study done before a project starts to identify possible environmental impacts and determine whether a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is needed or whether environmental risks are small.





Ecocide:

Every destruction of ecosystems; it refers to environmental damage so serious that, ecosystems collapse, species disappear, communities lose livelihoods, and long-term harm occurs. For example large oil spills, destroying coral reefs, illegal mining,
toxic pollution, massive deforestation, destroying mangroves, and severe ocean pollution.

Many activists and legal experts want ecocide recognized as an international crime similar to crimes against humanity. The idea is to people and companies causing massive environmental destruction should be legally responsible.

Polluters Pay Principle (PPP):

A principle saying the people or companies causing pollution must pay for clean-up, restoration, compensation and environmental damage.

Blue Carbon:

Carbon stored in coastal ecosystems such as in mangroves, seagrass, salt marshes. These ecosystems absorb carbon from the atmosphere. Blue carbon ecosystems help fight climate change, protect coastlines, support fisheries and reduce flooding.

Human Rights-Based Approaches (HRBAs):

An approach to ensuring environmental and conservation decisions respect human rights. This principle includes participation, transparency, accountability, non-discrimination, community consent and fairness. Conservation should not remove communities, violate rights, destroy livelihoods, or silence local voice.

















This booklet was developed by **Greenpeace South Asia** to support community centred discussions and strengthen the voices of coastal communities.

We invite you to use this resource to foster fair, informed, and participatory dialogue on coasts, oceans, livelihoods, and community rights.