Strong demand for tuna brings economic benefits, food and jobs to millions of people, but also puts a lot of pressure on tuna stocks. The Common Oceans Tuna project aims to ensure that tunas are fished more sustainably by mobilizing a global partnership in support of responsible tuna fisheries management and the conservation of biodiversity in the ocean areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).
Every year, millions of tonnes of tuna are landed at ports worldwide, providing food and supporting the livelihoods of millions of people. However, strong demand, combined with overcapacity of fishing fleets, creates growing pressure on tuna, leading to a decrease of tuna stocks fished at sustainable levels.

The Tuna project aims to reverse this trend by promoting more responsible and sustainable tuna fishing. It works to ensure that all major tuna stocks are fished at sustainable levels, that compliance with management measures is improved and to preserve biodiversity by reducing negative impacts caused by tuna fisheries on marine ecosystems.

From 2014–2019, it helped reduce the number of major tuna stocks experiencing overfishing in collaboration with the world’s five tuna regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) and a large number of partners – including intergovernmental organizations, civil society and the private sector.

In the coming years, the Tuna project will step up efforts to support further reductions in catches from stocks that are subject to overfishing, including tackling illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, while enhancing its contribution to biodiversity conservation.

FACTS & FIGURES

5.3 million tonnes of tuna catches landed in 2019

724,000 tonnes of catches from stocks that are subject to overfishing

6 out of 23 major commercial tuna stocks experience overfishing

96 countries in five tuna RFMOs involved in the conservation and management of tuna species

Source: Status of the World Fisheries for Tuna (International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), 2021)