Growing threat of deep-sea mining

1.5 million square kilometres are under contract for deep sea exploration of minerals in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans. Deep-sea mining risks irreversible destruction of unique and fragile ecosystems that are rich in biodiversity. Toxic sediment plumes can spread over vast areas, smothering marine life.

Dramatic decline in marine biodiversity

36% decline in world marine biodiversity between 1970 and 2012. Only 9% of our seas are protected. Most marine protected areas exist only on paper. Those that are in place are not properly managed. Climate change threatens marine ecosystems: oceans are becoming more acidic and seas are getting warmer.

Shipping leads to pollution and climate change

Ships are responsible for 2-3% of global greenhouse gas emissions. This is forecasted to double or triple by 2050. Ships are often energy inefficient and use dirty fossil fuels. This results in dangerous levels of air pollution. Black carbon emissions settling on Arctic ice cause it to warm and melt more quickly. A significant amount of marine litter comes from ships.

Problems

Problems starting on land

Our throw-away economy produces huge amounts of waste and a growing demand for non-renewable resources. Every year in the EU, 100 million mobile phones go unused, and 100 million mobile phones go unsold. Rivers transport litter and chemical pollution from far inland to our seas. Industry and agriculture pollute the marine environment.

Overfishing depletes stock

Fish stocks are still overfished in all waters, reaching 90% in the Mediterranean. For some species, discard rates can be as high as 90%. It takes 17-24 years for fish stocks to recover from the passage of a single beam trawl.

Aquaculture pollutes and impacts wild fish

Nutrients from sewage and feed waste lead to eutrophication. Each year, hundreds of thousands of farmed Atlantic salmon escape Atlantic and English estuaries, genetically wiping wild fish. Production of feed based on fish meal and oil puts pressure on wild fish stocks. Medications used to treat fish diseases contaminate our seas.

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Who we are
Seas At Risk is an umbrella organisation for environmental NGOs across Europe. Established in 1986, we promote ambitious policies for marine protection at European and international level. Our member NGOs represent millions of EU citizens that care deeply about our seas and oceans.

Our vision
Healthy marine ecosystems whose benefits can be enjoyed now and into the future.

What we do
Seas At Risk participates in governance processes at international, EU and regional level. We focus on fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, marine litter, deep-sea mining and marine protected areas, among others.

Our member organisations play a key role in monitoring, assessing and putting forward policies and campaigns. Seas At Risk:
• Supports members to link their national campaigns to international and EU processes;
• Organises events to support members’ development, foster dialogue with stakeholders and further our policy objectives;
• Facilitates information exchange between members;
• Facilitates cooperation and best practice sharing among members, networks and the public.

Contact us
For more information, also on becoming a member at Seas at Risk, contact us at:
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Twitter: @SeasAtRisk

Solutions
Solutions starting on land
• Sustainable production and conservation reduce demand for zero sustainable and energy, minimising nutrient run-off.
• Marine litter and chemical pollution from land are blocked out.
• Conserved habitats and sea polution.

Zero impact aquaculture
• Sustainable production of aquaculture reduces pressure to marine ecosystems.
• Dependable on fish imported by use of
• Consumers’ preference shifted to lower fish stock.
• Alternatives methods used to treat fish diseases.

Abundant and healthy fish stocks
• Fishing quotas aligned with scientific advice.
• Selective fishing methods ensure only targeted fish are caught and discards are eliminated.
• All deployed fishing gear has minimal impact on the marine environment.
• Marine protected areas successfully help restoring habitats and depleted fish stocks.

Rich marine biodiversity
• Coordinated and integrated marine protected areas cover vast areas of our seas.
• Damaging activities are banned in marine protected areas.
• European seas are restored to good environmental status.

Clean shipping
• Slower, more efficient ships dramatically reduce emissions.
• Renewable technologies power fossil-free future fleet.
• Cleaner fuels reduce air pollution and black carbon emissions.
• Harmonised delivery systems for ship waste in ports prevents dumping at sea.

Minerals are kept in the seabed
• Sustainable consumption and production reduce demand for minerals. Least shipping is trawling unnecessary.

No waste entering the oceans
• Design solutions allow products to be long lasting, repairable, reusable and easily recyclable.
• Reduced reliance on plastic, with single-use plastics thing of the past.

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