



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

BLUE TRANSFORMATION

FAO's work on aquatic food systems

A challenging reality

Food is a daily necessity and a fundamental human right.

Yet three billion people around the world cannot afford a healthy diet. Others eat too much and, too often, the wrong kind of food.

While hunger and malnutrition today affect the poorest and the most vulnerable in many parts of the world, obesity and micronutrient deficiencies are also widespread in developed countries.

Our food systems are fragile, and they are failing to deliver healthy, sustainable, and equitable diets for all.

Why is this?

The recent increase in the global population, greater wealth and urbanization have led to an increased demand for food and a shift in dietary preferences, based on more resource-intensive food systems.

Climate-related impacts, COVID-19 and environmental degradation, have exacerbated an already complex situation, putting food systems under further stress.

This failure to deliver comes at a cost to our health and the wellbeing of our planet: our food systems account for more than one-third of greenhouse gas emissions,



use up to 70 percent of the planet's freshwater, and are responsible for significant biodiversity loss.

There is growing public pressure for an urgent response, and the commitment by the UN Food Systems Summit to transform our food systems reflects this demand for a new approach.

We urgently need to change the way we produce, process, trade and consume our food. Sustainable food production is key to reversing current trends and needs to be a part of this transformation.

A powerful solution

Aquatic foods are already contributing to dietary improvements but more is expected from them not just as a source of protein, but as a unique provider of omega-3 fatty acids and bioavailable micronutrients.

Their large biological diversity, the greater efficiency of their production systems their lower environmental footprint and lower greenhouse gas emissions compared to land-based production systems, underpin these expectations.

Aquatic foods are also more accessible to many vulnerable communities, while supporting the lives and livelihoods of those communities that depend on fisheries and aquaculture.

But, if we want aquatic food production to contribute to nature-friendly and sustainable aquatic food systems, transformation is essential.

To create genuine transformation, what we call a Blue Transformation, we need appropriate technical solutions, adequate policies and innovative partnerships that will support and advance long-term sustainable development. Promising practices and techniques are already in place; these could be leveraged to end hunger and malnutrition while buffering the impacts of climate change and building equitable and resilient solutions.

Blue Transformation

A vision for the transformation of aquatic food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life for all.



The vision for Blue Transformation

Blue Transformation outlines a vision to expand aquatic food systems and increase their contribution to nutritious and affordable healthy diets for the most vulnerable, while fostering equitable growth, especially for those communities that depend on fisheries and aquaculture. Leaving no one behind.

Blue Transformation is



An equitable future

Sustainable aquatic food systems can respect the rights and incomes of dependent communities and ensure more equitable outcomes.



A pledge for resilience

Sustainable aquatic food systems help address human and environmental impacts on aquatic resources, such as the loss of biodiversity or the climate crisis.



A practical solution

Sustainable harvesting and production of aquatic foods provide people with affordable nutrition and healthy diets while maintaining a low environmental footprint.



Innovation & efficiency

Sustainable and efficient aquatic food systems can increase access to safe and nutritious food, reducing loss and waste across the entire value chain through innovative practices or novel technologies.





Making Blue Transformation a reality

Blue Transformation will be achieved by action in three major areas:

1. Promoting the sustainable intensification and expansion of aquaculture to respond to the growing global demand for aquatic foods.

Outcome

Sustainable aquaculture production grows by at least 35 percent by 2030, especially in food deficit regions.

2. Ensuring the sustainable management of all fisheries to deliver healthy stocks, restore ecosystems and secure equitable livelihoods for all.

Outcome

100 percent of marine and inland fisheries is under effective management and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing is eradicated.

3. Supporting the upgrading of aquatic value chains to improve the social, economic, and environmental outcomes of aquatic food systems.

Outcome

Food loss and waste are reduced by half by 2030, more transparency and traceability of value chains is ensured to improve access to markets and more inclusive and gender-equitable returns.





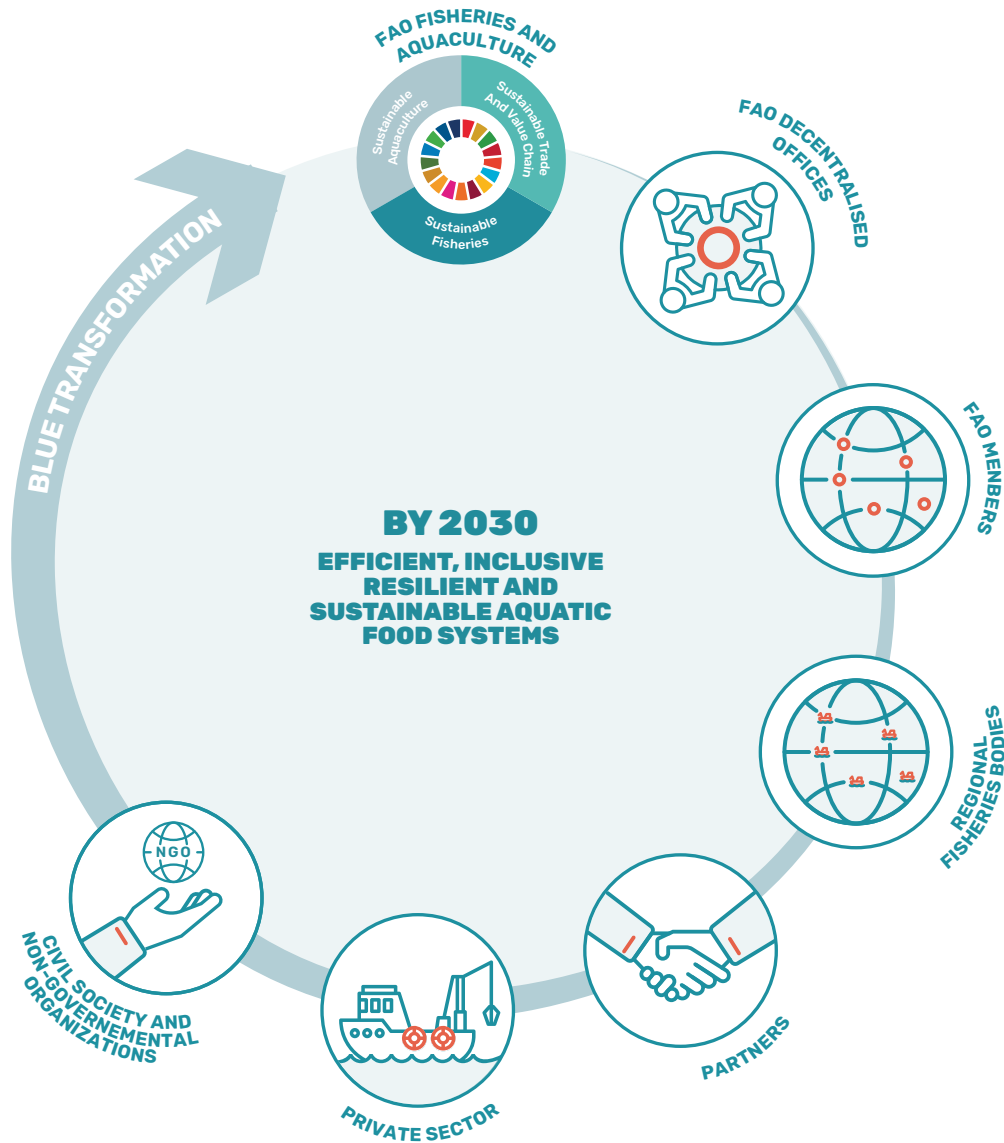
Implementation

Blue Transformation cannot be achieved without innovative partnerships.

It requires a commitment from international partners, national and local governments, local communities, and the private sector, to work together towards sustainable and more relevant aquatic food systems. With the right approach and united action we can make a meaningful difference.

FAO is in a prime position to drive Blue Transformation by harnessing science-based solutions and initiating policy dialogue on aquatic systems that will create a world in which responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources makes a genuine contribution to human well-being, food security and poverty alleviation.

Blue Transformation requires the collaboration and involvement of all key actors.





An aerial photograph of a coastal village with several outrigger canoes in the turquoise water. The text 'BLUE TRANSFORMATION begins today' is overlaid on the image in a stylized, brush-stroke font. The word 'BLUE' is in white on a blue background, 'TRANSFORMATION' is in white on a teal background, and 'begins today' is in white on a yellow background.

BLUE TRANSFORMATION begins today



© FAO/Max Valencia

Cover image © FAO/David Hogsholt



Some rights reserved. This work is available under a [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/) licence

© FAO, 2022
CC0458EN/106.22