



# PROTECTING THE BLUE ECONOMY

by Implementing the  
Copenhagen Declaration

## About Blue Justice

Blue Justice was launched in 2019 to assist government agencies in addressing organised crime and illegal trade in the global fisheries sector, implementing the Copenhagen Declaration of 2018. Supported financially since 2020 by the Norwegian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, the initiative aims to enhance sustainable marine resource management and assist Declaration countries in preventing organised crime in the fisheries sector. Key components include political awareness, knowledge-building and -sharing, inter-agency and cross-border cooperation, and capacity-building activities.

Blue Justice comprises of multiple projects, each designed to assist government agencies address different aspects of fisheries crime prevention. Overall, Blue Justice supports Declaration countries by strengthening their legal and institutional frameworks, improving inter-agency and cross-border cooperation, and developing necessary tools to address fisheries crime. This comprehensive approach aims to ensure the sustainable use of marine resources and contribute to a fair and sustainable blue economy.

The Blue Justice Secretariat is hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries.

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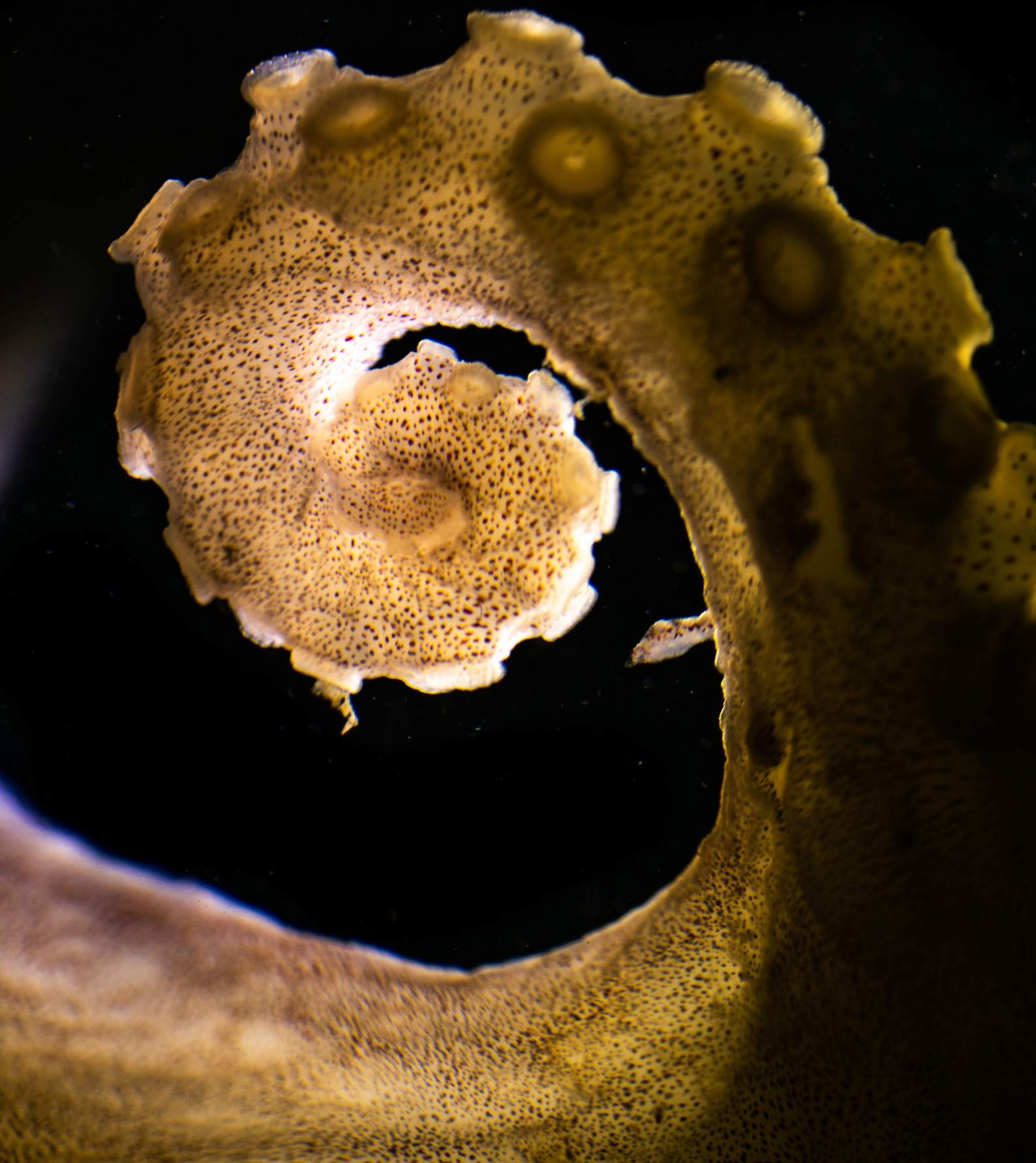


*Photo: Jørgen Ree Wiig/Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries*



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# Executive Summary

This report proudly presents the impact of five years of bringing together a broad spectrum of actors and what has become 60 Declaration countries under the umbrella of Blue Justice, supporting the operationalisation of the Copenhagen Declaration.

At the heart of Blue Justice is the blend of advanced technology and human interaction, which is vital for addressing fisheries crime. Rooted in the Copenhagen Declaration, the aim of Blue Justice is to strengthen government agencies' ability to address, and support each other to address, fisheries crime and thereby promote a sustainable blue economy.

## **Global Collaboration against Fisheries Crime**

Fisheries crime, which includes offences pertaining to illegal fishing, fraud, corruption, money laundering, and labour abuse, threatens the livelihoods of coastal communities and the global blue economy. Government agencies are tasked to tackle these challenges. Blue Justice aims to support government agencies in their efforts through garnering political support, facilitating cross-border and inter-agency cooperation, developing knowledge of crime prevention measures, facilitating capacity-building, and providing technological tools.

Fisheries crime is a global issue requiring international cooperation. The Copenhagen Declaration, joined by 60 countries to date, underscores the commitment to addressing transnational organised crime in the global fisheries sector. Blue Justice facilitates this cooperation through various activities and tools designed to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks, improve inter-agency cooperation, and implement necessary measures to prevent fisheries crime.

## **Empowering Practitioners**

The Blue Justice Community serves as the digital backbone of Blue Justice, empowering practitioners in government agencies to address fisheries crime. This platform offers digital tools for collaboration, communication, learning, and knowledge-sharing among a global network of like-minded professionals dedicated to protecting oceans, fisheries, and coastal communities.

## **Support and Coordination**

Supporting these efforts is the Blue Justice Secretariat, situated in Oslo, Norway, and hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries. The Secretariat supports Declaration countries by assisting them in the identification of tools and measures they may need to address fisheries crime, developing new projects to meet their needs, and coordinating with partners in both the public and private sectors, as well as academia. The Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø, established in 2021, enhances these capabilities by providing expert vessel tracking and analysis support.

Additionally, regional hubs like the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub, established in 2023, foster closer collaborations on geographical or thematic issues, while financial contributions from the Norwegian government and other entities sustain these initiatives.

### **Partnering with the UNDP**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) plays a crucial role in supporting Blue Justice through its Blue Resilience project. The aim of the Blue Resilience project is to assist developing countries in building resilient public administrations to address fisheries crime. UNDP administers the Blue Justice Community platform, facilitating many activities that support practitioners in developing Declaration countries. It provides capacity-building workshops, promotes inter-agency cooperation, and fosters personal relationships and trust among stakeholders.

The UNDP's involvement extends to organising workshops, supporting gender-inclusive initiatives, and collaborating with various technical partners to enhance the effectiveness of Blue Justice.

### **Integrating Technology with Human Interaction**

The Blue Justice Community, a digital platform, equips practitioners in government agencies with the tools needed for collaboration, communication, and knowledge-sharing. This platform facilitates real-time tracking and monitoring of illegal activities, enhancing enforcement capabilities. Simultaneously, the Blue Justice Secretariat and the International Tracking Centre in Vardø support these efforts by providing expertise and facilitating cooperation among Declaration countries. The human element is equally important, as the initiative fosters personal relationships and trust through workshops, training sessions, and direct interactions, ensuring that technology is effectively integrated with the human touch to protect marine resources and coastal communities.

### **Impact in Declaration countries**

#### ***South Africa: International Collaboration***

South Africa faces unique challenges with two Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and sophisticated international criminal networks engaging in fisheries crime. The digital platform, Blue Justice Community, facilitates information sharing, enabling successful international collaborations. Authorities have repeatedly thwarted illegal fishing by identifying and tracking vessels and intercepting illegal consignments through cross-border cooperation. Looking ahead, South Africa aims to enhance its enforcement capabilities and international collaboration to protect its marine resources.

#### ***Somalia: Fisheries Reform***

Somalia's engagement with Blue Justice has transformed its approach to addressing illegal fishing. The adoption of the Blue Justice Community platform allows for real-time tracking and monitoring, which is essential for enforcing maritime laws and protecting marine biodiversity. Somalia has reformed its fisheries legislation, overhauling the licensing system to increase transparency and reduce corruption. These reforms aim to attract responsible foreign investments, support local fishing communities, and prevent overfishing, ensuring a sustainable future for Somalia's fisheries sector.





### ***Jamaica: Country-Driven Regional Cooperation***

Jamaica has leveraged Blue Justice to address illegal fishing and promote sustainable practices. Achieving MSC certification for sustainable queen conch fishing, Jamaica's Multi-Agency Mechanism (MAM) enhances inter-agency collaboration, leading to significant enforcement actions. The establishment of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub aims to strengthen regional cooperation, involving island states like Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This regional collaboration promotes a unified response to fisheries crime, enhancing the effectiveness of enforcement measures.

### ***Cabo Verde: Preventing Maritime Crime***

Cabo Verde utilises the Blue Justice Community platform for ocean surveillance, identifying deviations in vessel activities. The platform helps prevent various maritime crimes, including illegal fishing, drug trafficking, and migrant smuggling. Cabo Verde's strategic location makes it a hot spot for maritime crime, and the platform's data sharing capabilities are key for monitoring and enforcing maritime laws.


### ***Sri Lanka and the Maldives: Advancing Women's Roles***

In Sri Lanka and the Maldives, specialised training for women law enforcers and fisheries officers, including leadership training and establishing mentorship schemes, has been instrumental in promoting women's empowerment in these traditionally male-dominated sectors. These efforts have led to increased understanding of fisheries crimes and improved interdisciplinary cooperation, resulting in successful seizures and enhanced enforcement capabilities.

By supporting Declaration countries with tools and knowledge, Blue Justice contributes to sustainable development and the protection of marine resources globally. Through continued collaboration and innovation, the initiative aims to enhance the resilience and effectiveness of global efforts to address fisheries crime, ensuring a sustainable and equitable blue economy for all.

*Every practitioner is an expert in their field within their agency and their country. Inter-agency collaboration harnesses this expertise in effectively preventing fisheries crime.*





# **Fisheries crime harms the ocean, the fight against poverty and undermines the future we seek.**

**Anne Beathe Tvinnereim**  
**Norwegian Minister of International Development**




*Photo: Jørgen Ree Wiig/Norwegian Directorate  
of Fisheries*









**One of the key challenges facing West African countries is the impact of transnational crime on local fishing communities. Many Gambians depend on artisenal fishing. This is what they know for generations. This is what they do.**

**Fatou Bensouda**  
Gambian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom



The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of numerous water droplets of various sizes on a blue surface. A bright, warm light source, likely the sun, is visible in the center, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the droplets from behind. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and yellows. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, semi-transparent blue geometric shape consisting of several parallel lines forming a stylized 'K' or a series of nested chevrons.

# ■ Introduction



# Foreword



**Marianne  
Sivertsen Næss**

**Minister of Fisheries and  
Ocean Policy,  
Norway**



As a guardian of the Copenhagen Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry, I believe that this report is important. It gives a valuable insight into how the declaration has been followed up.

As a guardian of the Copenhagen Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry, I believe that this report is important. It gives a valuable insight into how the declaration has been followed up.

Five years have now passed since we launched the Blue Justice Initiative, as a support to the Copenhagen Declaration.

Since then, we have increased from 9 to 60 countries supporting this important political declaration that recognises the existence of transnational organised crime in the global fishing industry, and the serious impact it has on the economy, markets, environment, and human rights.

Between us, we protect fish stocks, fishers, and fisheries in more than a third of the world's exclusive economic zones. The Copenhagen Declaration is the only global political declaration which clearly expresses the challenges we face with organised crime in the global fishing industry.

This is the reality and through Blue Justice we go from words to action. In this report, great emphasis is placed on Blue Justice as a community of colleagues who cooperate across borders with digital tools and in new interagency collaboration groups.

We also learn about how satellites can help us prevent fisheries crime. But technology and interagency structures will not create change alone. The human dimension is equally important. It is important that we meet and support each other as colleagues, that we are generous, compassionate and share successes; that we respect the limitations of our current circumstances and embrace new opportunities to improve where we can.

The human touch, which is so important, is remarkable throughout the report and that makes me optimistic. We are facing serious challenges, so we must learn from each other and make ourselves, as a community, more resilient, smarter, and adaptable in a changing world.

# Greeting from Somalia

The illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing poses a formidable threat to the sustainability of marine resources worldwide, particularly impacting small and economically vulnerable coastal states like Somalia. Our nation, endowed with a vast and rich marine territory, has historically struggled with the exploitation of these waters due to insufficient resources to enforce maritime laws effectively. This challenge not only threatens our marine biodiversity but also the economic stability and food security that our people need.

The Blue Justice Initiative, a vital intervention spearheaded by Norway through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), serves as a beacon of hope for countries grappling with similar predicaments. By joining this initiative and signing the Copenhagen Declaration on March 23, 2023, Somalia has taken a decisive step towards transforming its approach to marine resource management. This international cooperation framework is specifically designed to bolster the capabilities of small and weak coastal states, enabling them to combat IUU fishing through strengthened legal frameworks and enhanced collaborative measures.

Central to our efforts under the Blue Justice Initiative is the innovative Blue Justice Platform. This technology-driven platform is instrumental for Somalia, facilitating real-time tracking and monitoring of fishing activities within our territorial waters. It equips us with critical data and intelligence to preempt and combat IUU fishing effectively. Furthermore, the platform promotes an environment of transparency and information sharing among member countries, which is essential for fostering regional and global cooperation in the fight against transnational fisheries crimes.

The platform also serves as a hub for capacity building, offering training and resources that enhance the skills of our local authorities in maritime surveillance and enforcement. Through such collective wisdom and shared experiences, Somalia is better positioned to implement effective strategies for marine protection and to enforce regulations that deter illegal activities on our territory.

The Blue Justice Initiative, through its supportive network and the technological prowess of the Blue Justice Platform, has been transformative for Somalia. As we continue to collaborate with our international partners within this initiative, we are setting a course towards a more sustainable and secure maritime future for Somalia and other similar coastal nations.

Thank you.



**Ahmed  
Hassan Adan**

**Minister of Fisheries and  
Blue Economy,  
Federal Republic of Somalia**

“The Blue Justice Initiative, through its supportive network and the technological prowess of the Blue Justice Platform, has been transformative for Somalia.





# Q&A with Anne Beathe Tvinnereim

**Norwegian Minister of International Development**

**Norway hosts the secretariat for Blue Justice. What about this role makes you most proud?**

I am proud to see how we, through the Copenhagen Declaration and the Blue Justice Initiative, contribute to strengthen political support, enhance monitoring and control measures, and promote sustainable ocean governance in partner countries, for example through the Blue Justice Community, digital platform and the increased attention the initiative has given to this issue.

Norway is by many considered to be one of the countries that has come the furthest in the work against fisheries crime and illegal fishing in our own waters. We have a lot of experience and knowledge that we share with other countries. I am happy to see how our own experiences on interdisciplinary cooperation with the police, judicial and prosecuting authorities, and inspection agencies, is shared with partner countries through Blue Justice.

**In what way does Blue Justice contribute to the fulfilment of the SDGs?**

We rely on the ocean for food, jobs, energy, and many other essentials to achieve the SDGs. Fisheries crime harms the ocean and the fight against poverty, and it undermines the future we seek. One of the largest challenges in the world today is securing food and nutrition security for a growing world population. A few years ago, Norway launched a new strategy for food security, focusing on sub-Saharan Africa. The strategy promotes aquatic food as an important food source and contributing factor to sustainable food systems and food security.

The Blue Justice Initiative aims to promote sustainable ocean governance and combat fisheries crime, to ensure that communities around the world have access to sustainable seafood and can continue to rely on the ocean as a source of food and livelihoods. The initiative is thus an important contribution to the fulfillment of several of the SDGs.

**What is your personal experience with Blue Justice?**

In March 2023, I took part in the well attended Blue Justice Conference in Copenhagen. At the conference I met with representatives from a number of countries facing serious challenges due to fisheries crime and its nega-



tive impact on sustainable ocean governance. I was struck by the enormous losses: Hundreds of millions of dollars are lost in potential income. The conference clearly showed how sharing knowledge, promoting innovation and using digital tools is a great value and a crucial contribution to address fisheries crime and promote sustainable ocean governance today, and for generations to come.

**The Blue Justice Community has 260 operational users from 34 different countries working daily to combat fisheries crime. What is your message to them?**

Innovative thinking and use of digital tools is key. I encourage the many users of the Blue Justice Community to use the digital solutions and services available to an even greater extent. In our fight against fisheries crime we need to work smarter, across sectors, across government agencies, and across borders. Interaction internationally, regionally and nationally is important. It is great to see how Blue Justice contributes to these efforts. Only by working together can we achieve a sustainable and fair blue economy!

“I encourage the many users of the Blue Justice Community to use the digital solutions and services available to an even greater extent. In our fight against fisheries crime we need to work smarter, across sectors, across government agencies and across borders.

**Anne Beathe Tvinnereim**  
Norwegian Minister of  
International Development

















 **Coming  
Together**





Photo: Jørgen Ree Wiig/Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries





# What We are Facing

The global fishing industry, crucial for providing daily sustenance and income to around 600 million people worldwide and significantly contributing to our global protein intake, is currently facing serious threats from transnational organised fisheries crime.

Fisheries crime encompasses not just illegal and harmful fishing practices but also economic crimes, corruption, and even modern slavery, undermining human dignity and respect. Fisheries crime not only damages the oceans, it also exacerbates poverty, corruption, and food insecurity, particularly in vulnerable coastal states.

The primary goal of development policy globally is to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the earth's population grows, sustainable ocean management becomes vital for fisheries protection, production, and prosperity. Recognising the ocean's untapped potential is crucial in this endeavour, as it offers solutions for hunger, health, green energy, employment, and more.

However, the progress towards the SDGs is hindered by fisheries crime. In particular that which qualifies as transnational and organised crime not only jeopardises the livelihoods of coastal communities but also escalate poverty, while depriving nations of essential revenues from the blue economy.

These challenges underscore the importance of initiatives like Blue Justice, established to address fisheries crime and promote a sustainable and equitable blue economy.

Blue Justice's commitment to addressing fisheries crime, founded on the Declaration against Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry adopted in Copenhagen in 2018, is an important step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It aims to tackle the challenges posed by transnational fisheries crime head-on, ensuring a future where the global fishing industry is not only sustainable, but also free from the shackles of crime and exploitation.

The organised and transnational character of fisheries crime calls for joint forces, innovative technology and knowledge-sharing across agencies and borders. Blue Justice aims to do just that, following a six-pronged approach:





- Build political support for the Copenhagen Declaration
- Ensure that measures to address fisheries crime are knowledge-based
- Establish and coordinate inter-agency and cross-border cooperation
- Build capacity among government practitioners in Declaration countries
- Develop technological, educational, legal, and policy tools to address fisheries crime
- Coordinate and support Declaration countries in assisting and supporting each other in addressing organised crime and illegal trade in fisheries

By way of example, today vessel tracking data from Norwegian ocean surveillance satellites are shared through the Glistrup vessel tracking tool which is part of the Blue Justice Community. The Blue Justice Community is a secure digital platform developed by BarentsWatch, a unit under the Norwegian Coastal Administration, and administered by the United Nations through UNDP. The Blue Justice Community platform is designed to enable secure state-to-state cooperation in addressing fisheries crime, highlighting Norway's commitment to protecting the world's oceans.

This report proudly presents the impact of five years of bringing together a broad spectrum of actors and what has become 60 Declaration countries under the umbrella of Blue Justice, supporting the operationalisation of the Copenhagen Declaration.





“UNDP, through the Blue Resilience Project, is committed to facilitating support to national partners to enable them to address fisheries crime more effectively.

*The fisheries sector has a proud tradition of securing nutrition and livelihoods to millions of people across the world. Fisheries law enforcement agencies protect the fisheries sector and the resources they rely on from the harm caused by transnational organised crime.  
Photo: Jørgen Ree Wiig/Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries*

**Henrik Fredborg Larsen**  
**Director of UNDP's Nordic Representation Office**  
**Blue Crime Dialogue Forum in Norway in 2022**





## Coming Together

In 2017, leveraging its leadership within the Nordic Council of Ministers, Norway introduced a Nordic ministerial declaration aimed at combatting fisheries crime, marking the first step in a broader regional commitment.

The following year, in 2018, Norway expanded its efforts globally by initiating an international declaration against fisheries crime. On 15 October 2018, the International Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry was adopted by nine ministers from large ocean nations representing four continents.

The Copenhagen Declaration takes its name from the city where it was adopted and continues to garner increasing support globally. In five years, the number of signatories has reached a remarkable 60 ocean nations.

*In 2021, twelve CARICOM Members (The Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, The Turks and Caicos Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago) deposited signed instruments with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat in Belize City, Belize.*





# The Copenhagen Declaration

As of 1 June 2024

We, the Ministers of Angola, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Ecuador, Faroe Islands, Fiji, Ghana, Greenland, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kiribati, Liberia, Madagascar, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Montserrat, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, São Tomé and Príncipe, Scotland, Senegal, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, The Gambia, Timor Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Tuvalu, and Uruguay

*Encourage* other Ministers to support this non-legally binding declaration.

*Note* the recommendations and the outcome of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Fisheries Crime held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia 10–11 October 2016 which was published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime at the occasion of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice during its twenty-sixth session in Vienna 22–26 May 2017.

*Recognize* that our countries are dependent on the sea and its resources and the opportunities it holds for the economy, food and well-being of our populations and we are determined to support a healthy and thriving fishing industry that is based on fair competition and the sustainable use of the ocean.

*Are committed* to work towards the fulfillment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals particularly in relation to Goal 14 on “Life Below Water” and Goal 16 on “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”.

*Are convinced* that there is a need for the world community to recognize the existence of transnational organized crime in the global fishing industry and that this activity has a serious effect on the economy, distorts markets, harms the environment and undermines human rights.



It makes us recognise that the very nature of organised crime can penetrate fisheries industries and with advanced technology it could pose an even more complex threat.

**Tofinga Tarakabu**  
Minister of Justice  
of Kiribati  
Blue Justice Conference  
2023



The signature and Brazil's commitment to the Copenhagen Declaration is an important decision and milestone and will be one of our guides to combat crimes in the fisheries sector.

**Carlos Mello**  
Vice-Minister of Fisheries  
and Aquaculture of Brazil  
Blue Justice Conference  
2023





We as member states of the region are well aware that we cannot address these issues alone. With this understanding the promotion and support of inter-agency cooperation at national and sub-national level is instrumental in abolishing transnational fisheries crime.

**Emma Metieh-Glassco**  
**Director General of Liberian**  
**the National Fisheries and**  
**Aquaculture Authority**  
**Blue Justice Conference 2023**



*Norwegian Deputy Minister of Development Bjørg Sandkjær and former Senegalese Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy Papa Sagna Mbaye met at the Norwegian research vessel «Dr. Fridtjof Nansen» after the signing of the Copenhagen Declaration in Dakar in 2022. (Photo: Norwegian Embassy Accra)*

*Recognize* that this transnational activity includes crimes committed through the whole fisheries supply and value chain which includes illegal fishing, corruption, tax and customs fraud, money laundering, embezzlement, document fraud, and human trafficking.

*Recognize further* the inter-continental flow of illegal fish products, illicit money, and human trafficking victims in transnational organized crime cases in the global fishing industry and that all regions of the world need to cooperate when investigating such acts.

*Are convinced* that inter-agency cooperation between relevant governmental agencies is essential at a national, regional, and international level in order to prevent, combat, and eradicate transnational organized crime in the global fishing industry.

*Are also convinced* that there is a need for international cooperation and that developing countries are particularly affected.

*Recognize* the particular vulnerability of small-island developing states and other large ocean nations of the impact of transnational organized crime in the global fishing industry.

*Are also convinced* of the need for continuous support on the highest level and the necessity for awareness raising on these issues through events such as the International FishCrime Symposium.



We welcome technical assistance for law enforcement activities for the benefit of eradicating all forms of fisheries crimes in the Marshall Islands and the region as a whole.

**Casten N. Nemra**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
**and Trade of the Republic**  
**of Marshall Islands**  
**Blue Justice Conference**  
**2020**





*As of 2024, 60 countries have adopted the Copenhagen Declaration. Senegal, Nigeria, Suriname and The Gambia signed the Copenhagen Declaration in 2022, 2021, 2022 and 2023, respectively.*



“A representative of a great ocean state with almost 400 000 square kilometers to manage. Cabo Verde demands that this conference is not just another conference. That we have concrete measures and that we will engage and that we will take care of our people and human kind.



**Abraão Aníbal Barbosa  
Vicente**  
**Minister for Culture, Creative  
Industries & the Sea of Cabo  
Verde**  
**Blue Justice Conference  
2023**



# International Declaration of Crime in the Global (Copenhagen



60 Declaration countries as of June 2024



# on Transnational Organized al Fishing Industry

(Declaration)

31







# Blue Highlights

2015

## October 2015: The 1<sup>st</sup> FishCrime Symposium is Held

The 1st FishCrime symposium is held in Cape Town, South Africa, in October 2015, and thereby started the process that led to the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration in 2018.

2016

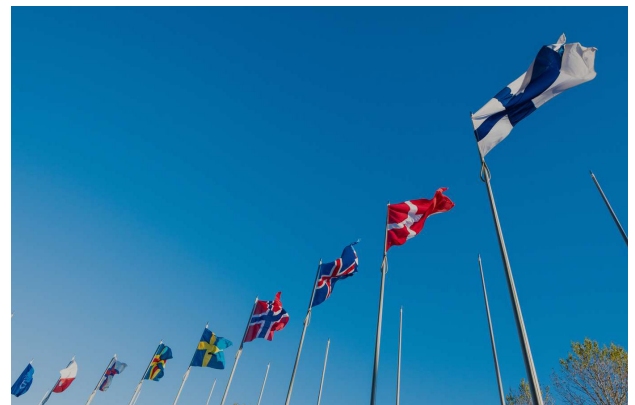
## October 2016: Adoption of the Technical Yogyakarta Recommendation

The Yogyakarta recommendation is adopted in October 2016 on the occasion of the 2nd FishCrime symposium held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The Yogyakarta recommendation is later referenced in the Copenhagen Declaration of 2018.

2017

## June 2017: Adoption of The Nordic Minister Declaration on Fisheries Crime

The Nordic Minister Declaration on Fisheries Crime is adopted at the meeting of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Fisheries, Aquaculture, Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MR-FJLS) in Ålesund, Norway on 28 June 2017. Ministers from Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Norway, Sweden, and Åland give their support to this declaration.



2018

## October 2018: Adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration

The International Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry is adopted during the 4<sup>th</sup> FishCrime Symposium in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Faroe Islands, Ghana, Indonesia, Kiribati, Namibia, Norway, Palau, Solomon Islands, and Sri Lanka are the initial nine Declaration countries. The countries agree that the Norwegian Minister of Fisheries and Seafood will be the custodian of the Copenhagen Declaration. Timor Leste also joins the Declaration later that year.

2019

## October 2019: Blue Justice is Launched

Norway launches Blue Justice during the Our Ocean Conference in Oslo, Norway, 23-24 October 2019. The aim of Blue Justice is to support Declaration countries in implementing the political aspirations contained in the Copenhagen Declaration. The Blue Justice Secretariat is established and is hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries.



2020

### 2019: 15 New Declaration countries

Benin, Chile, Costa Rica, Fiji, Greenland, Iceland, Liberia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mozambique, Nauru, Philippines, São Tomé and Príncipe, Scotland, and South Africa join the Copenhagen Declaration.

### December 2020: The 1<sup>st</sup> Blue Justice Conference

The first high-level Blue Justice Conference is held digitally amidst the Covid pandemic. Following the conference, in depth webinars on the prevention of fisheries crime are hosted in collaboration with UNDP, UNODC, and the North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group (NA-FIG).



### 2020: Five New Declaration countries

Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Seychelles, and Uruguay join the Copenhagen Declaration.

2021

### May 2021: CRFM Ministerial Council Adopts Resolution Regarding the Copenhagen Declaration and Blue Justice

The CRFM Resolution No. MC 15(6) of 2021 expressing support for the Copenhagen Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry and the Blue Justice Initiative is adopted in May 2021. A number of new Caribbean countries join the Copenhagen Declaration and the resolution lays the foundation for the creation of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub launched in 2023.



### May 2021: First Blue Enforcement Training Course

As part of the Blue Justice funded Blue Enforcement project, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conducts a Fishing Vessel Boarding Operations course at the maritime law enforcement training centre in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka, between 10 and 20 May 2021. The two-week course has a total of twenty participants from different maritime law enforcement agencies from the Maldives and Sri Lanka.







2021

### 2021: Blue Justice International Tracking Centre Is Established

Located in one of the northernmost towns of Norway, the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre at the Vardø Vessel Tracking Centre is established in 2021. The Centre is staffed with world leading experts on vessel tracking. The task of the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre is to assist and collaborate with government agencies in Declaration countries in joint efforts to address fisheries crime worldwide.

### 2021: 14 New Declaration countries

Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Colombia, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname join the Copenhagen Declaration.

2022

### February to June 2022: Blue Crime Dialogue Forum

Blue Justice, in collaboration with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), hosts a series of eight webinars and a half day seminar to explore what is known and what remains unknown about the prevention of fisheries crime. The seminars are tailored to bring together experts from government agencies and academia to share knowledge and expertise – a well attended and fruitful model that Blue Justice will develop further moving forward.

### February 2022: Event During the One Ocean Expedition

The Norwegian tall ship, Statsraad Lehmkuhl, calls at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 23-26 February, as part of its One Ocean Expedition, sailing under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The UNDP Blue Resilience project provides a platform for Brazilian and Norwegian stakeholders, including government and industry, to come together to discuss and share knowledge on promoting a sustainable ocean economy.





2023

### June 2022: Blue Justice official side-event at the UN Ocean Conference 2022

As part of the UN Ocean Conference 2022 in Lisbon, Portugal, Blue Justice, along with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), UNDP, Jamaica, Belize, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Norway, host a high-level side-event on international and Caribbean efforts to address organised crime in the fishing industry, on 9 June 2022. The event sees many engaging ministers and high-level speakers who speak of their commitment in addressing fisheries crime. The side-event highlights the importance of working together to build capacity to address crime in the fisheries sector.



### 2022: Two New Declaration countries

Nigeria and Senegal join the Copenhagen Declaration.

### March 2023: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Blue Justice Conference 2023

On 23 March 2023, the world's largest conference on fisheries crime, the Blue Justice Conference, is held at UN City, Copenhagen, Denmark. The conference, co-hosted by UNDP, the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), brings together more than 140 ministers, governmental representatives, operational experts, and civil society attendees from around the world for in-person discussions on fisheries crime and to plan coordinated action that will ensure a sustainable and fair blue economy for all.



The conference is organised by the Blue Justice Secretariat and UNDP, with additional contributions from the Norwegian Space Agency. The event is live-streamed as web TV. A total of 752 participants attends digitally. By February 2024, the conference has been viewed by 8 187 unique users from 100 countries, of which 55 were developing countries.





2023

### **March 2023: First Blue Justice Community Gathering (COMG23)**

Following on from the Blue Justice Conference, on 24 March 2023, 71 practitioners representing 42 government agencies in 27 countries meet in Copenhagen for a full-day TableTop Exercise. The exercise was developed by an organising committee comprising of representatives from Mauritius, Jamaica, Norway, UNDP, NA-FIG, and the Blue Justice Secretariat. During the exercise, practitioners discuss challenges and opportunities pertaining to inter-agency and cross-border cooperation in cases of stateless vessels and transshipments using dark vessels. The exercise results in action points for addressing challenges associated with stateless fishing vessels and vessels turning off their AIS transceivers, with participants confirming that the problem is seen world-wide.



### **May 2023: First Blue Action Jamaica TableTop Exercise (TTX) – “TTX Conched out”**

With the participation of representatives from 15 Jamaican ministries, departments, and agencies involved in fisheries crime law enforcement, the Blue Action Jamaica workshop and TTX demonstrates that with unity and understanding we can address organised crime in the Fisheries sector. “This was one big step in removing silos and developing a holistic solution. The support of UNDP Blue Resilience and the BJI Secretariat contributed to the event’s success,” said Gavin Bellamy, Chief Executive Officer, National Fisheries Authority, Jamaica.

### **September 2023: Launch of the Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme**

On 8 September 2023, the Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme is launched at the Norwegian Space Agency’s offices in Oslo, Norway, with representatives of Declaration countries and Norwegian government agencies in attendance. During the launch, the Norwegian government commits to making Norwegian satellite vessel tracking data available to Declaration countries through the Blue Justice Community, free of charge.

### **September 2023: Secondments at the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre, Vardø**

Government representatives from Jamaica and Cabo Verde takes part in a two-week secondment at the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre at the Vardø Vessel Traffic Centre. Lessons learned from the secondment is captured during a workshop hosted at the Norwegian Space Agency on 9 September 2023.



2024

### **November 2023: Regional Launch of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub**

Originally launched in Copenhagen in March 2023, the regional launch of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub takes place in Kingston, Jamaica on 18 November 2023. With the Jamaica National Fisheries Authority as its secretariat, the hub is established to promote regional cooperation on the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration in the Caribbean and to follow up on the regional ministerial resolution on the Copenhagen Declaration and Blue Justice. Among the participants at the regional launch are ministers from Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

### **2023: Nine New Declaration countries**

Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, The Gambia, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritania, Somalia, and Tuvalu join the Copenhagen Declaration.

### **April 2024: First Regional Community Gathering of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub**

The Secretariat of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, with the support of UNDP and the Blue Justice Secretariat, hosts a two-day Regional Blue Justice Community Gathering in Kingstown, St Vincent on 23 and 24 April 2024. With participants from nine countries and territories in the Caribbean region, as well as CRFM, CARICOM and the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre, the meeting agreed on a work plan and action points taking the regional collaboration forward.



### **June 2024: Launch of Glistrup During Anniversary Celebration at Oscarsborg**

The 2024 Blue Justice anniversary celebration and Community Gathering (COMG24) at Oscarsborg Fortress, Norway, brought together international stakeholders to strengthen global efforts against transnational organised crime in the fisheries sector. The two events focused on enhancing inter-agency cooperation, sharing best practices, and leveraging digital tools like the upgraded Blue Justice Community platform and the Glistrup vessel tracking and analysis tool.





# Celebrating Five Years of Global Cooperation

Blue Justice marks five years of global cooperation to protect the blue economy through implementing the Copenhagen Declaration. The pinnacle of the event was the launch of Glistrup, a cutting-edge secure digital platform to monitor and share vessel tracking data.

In June 2024, fisheries law enforcement practitioners, diplomats, and donors from around the world converged at Norway's historic Oscarsborg Fortress. What brought them all together was the celebration of the five year anniversary of Blue Justice, followed by a Blue Justice Community Gathering (COMG24) to share experiences and receive training on fisheries crime prevention. The four-day event highlighted progress in international cooperation against transnational organised fisheries crime.

## **Building Networks and Trust**

The celebration began with delegates boarding the SS Christiania, setting the stage for what would become a landmark event in fisheries law enforcement





cooperation. In brisk breeze, participants were able to spend time together, exchange good stories and build trust across borders and agencies. Upon arrival at Oscarsborg, participants delved into keynote speeches on the various challenges and solutions faced by the states represented at the gathering.

The highlight of the event was the unveiling of Glistrup, a cutting-edge digital tool designed to track and analyse vessel movements on a global scale. Glistrup, which stands for GLobal Investigative Ship TRacking User Portal, is more than just an acronym; it is also a tribute to Tor Glistrup, a retired fisheries inspector who pioneered vessel tracking and analysis. This innovative platform represents an enhanced version of the Blue Justice Community platform, developed by BarentsWatch, a unit of the Norwegian Coastal Administration.

Accompanied by Norwegian folk music and Norwegian folk dance by the traditional dancing group Frikar, the Norwegian Deputy Minister of Development Bjørg Sandkjær cut a symbolic ribbon before two screens emerged displaying the new features and frontend of Glistrup.

### **Regional Challenges: From West Africa to the Indian Ocean**

Representatives from three regions highlighted distinct challenges in addressing fisheries crime:

*Accompanied by Norwegian folk music and dance by Frikar, Norwegian Deputy Minister of Development Bjørg Sandkjær cut a symbolic ribbon before two screens emerged displaying the new features and frontend of the Glistrup vessel tracking and analysis tool.*





*Fisheries law enforcement officials, diplomats, and international partners gather at Norway's historic Oscarsborg Fortress to commemorate Blue Justice's 5th anniversary and participate in the Blue Justice Community Gathering (COMG24), June 2024. (Photo: George Kurian)*

In Nigeria, limited space technology integration complicate maritime surveillance efforts. “The unfortunate issue is we have oil which has complicated part of our surveillance issues in the West African region. It makes us prone to piracy,” explained Adeyemi Olusumbo Abraham, a Scientific Officer of Nigeria’s National Space Research and Development Agency. He noted that while Nigeria has multiple surveillance systems, “there is limited integration amongst the stakeholders.”

The Maldives, strategically located along major international sea routes, faces unique vulnerabilities. Prosecutor Maryam Naazleen from the Maldives Prosecutor General’s Office explained: “Our nation holds access to major international sea routes, making us susceptible to various criminal activities which occur in the sea, including IUU fishing, illicit fish products, human trafficking, customs fraud and money laundering.”

For The Gambia, the newest member of the Blue Justice Community, recognising the scope of the problem was crucial. “We in The Gambia understand and lament the scourge of illegal fishing activities that on numerous occasions have been conducted in our maritime boundaries,” stated Fatou Bensouda, Gambian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and former prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC). She went on to describe a sting operation in March 2024, where the Gambian Navy in a coordinated effort with a multilateral partner netted eight industrial trawlers for serious offenses ranging from fishing inside designated protected waters, as well as using undersized mesh sizes and misreporting their catches.





“The financial losses that we are incurring as a result of these crimes is not only alarming, but deeply disheartening,” she stated and referred to a report by Amnesty International that estimates that The Gambia along with Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone lose collectively 2 billion US dollars annually to illegal fishing. She emphasised that The Gambia welcomes the availability of innovative technology and the role the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø will play in this regard.


### **New Tools, New Hope**

The gathering at Oscarsborg Fortress marked not just a celebration of Blue Justice’s five-year milestone, but also signaled a new chapter in the global efforts to address fisheries crime. With the launch of Glistrup, enhanced regional cooperation, and growing international commitment, participants left with renewed determination to address illegal fishing activities.

As nations continue to integrate these new technological tools with existing systems and strengthen their collaborative networks, there is genuine optimism that the next five years will see even greater progress in protecting our oceans’ resources and ensuring sustainable fisheries for future generations.

*The celebration began with participants boarding the SS Christiania, setting the stage for what would become a landmark event in fisheries law enforcement cooperation. (Photo: George Kurian)*



An underwater photograph with a teal tint. A large, dense school of small fish swims in the upper half of the frame. In the lower right, the tail and dorsal fin of a shark are visible, swimming towards the bottom right corner.

**Let us forge ahead in  
our collective pursuit of  
our thriving, resilient,  
and well protected  
marine environment  
for our children and our  
grandchildren.**

**Milton Haughton**

**Executive Director of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism  
Regional Launch of the Caribbean Hub in 2023**









Photo: Jørgen Ree Wiig/Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries





# Get to Know Blue Justice





## This is Blue Justice

In 2019 Norway officially launched the Blue Justice initiative as a concerted effort to assist nations worldwide in their efforts to address transnational fisheries crime. The initiative's development-focused activities are primarily overseen by the Nordic Representation Office of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), based in Copenhagen and Oslo. Collaboration efforts are facilitated through the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre.

Established in 2021, the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre is situated in Vardø at the Norwegian Vessel Tracking Centre jointly operated by the Norwegian Fisheries Authority and the Norwegian Coastal Administration. Today, vessel tracking data from Norwegian ocean surveillance satellites are shared through the Glistrup vessel tracking and analysis tool. The vessel tracking tool is part of the Blue Justice Community, a secure digital platform





developed by BarentsWatch, a unit under the Norwegian Coastal Administration, and administered by the United Nations through UNDP. Blue Justice Community is designed to enable secure state-to-state cooperation in addressing fisheries crime, highlighting Norway's commitment to protecting the world's oceans.

The overarching goal of Blue Justice is to bolster the capacities of practitioners within government agencies to address organised crime and illegal trade in the fisheries sector, thereby contributing to sustainable development goals such as promoting the rule of law, reducing illicit financial flows, combating corruption, and enhancing marine conservation. The initiative aligns with various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, and SDG 14 on life below water. By enhancing countries' responses to organised crime and illegal trade in fisheries resources, Blue Justice seeks to improve governance, ensure more efficient use of marine resources, and foster international cooperation and capacity building, thereby ultimately supporting sustainable development and poverty reduction.

*By facilitating interpersonal relations through physical Community Gatherings and digital platforms, Blue Justice contributes to effective communication and decision-making across public agencies.*





Thematically, the outputs of Blue Justice are organised to address specific outcomes. For instance, to increase political support for efforts to address fisheries crime, the initiative aims to enhance international backing for the Copenhagen Declaration and promote the adoption of supportive instruments.

To ensure that measures are knowledge-based, the initiative conducts and disseminates studies on addressing organised crime in fisheries and evaluates the effectiveness of these measures. Cooperation is bolstered through the establishment of inter-agency and cross-border networks and hubs, while capacity building is achieved through targeted training and technical support for government agencies. Furthermore, the development and maintenance of necessary tools, including technological, educational, and legal resources, are prioritised to effectively combat illegal activities in the fisheries sector. Lastly, efficient coordination of efforts is maintained through strategic administration and partnership development by the Blue Justice Secretariat.





The reasoning behind Blue Justice is that every practitioner is an expert in their field within their agency and their country. Blue Justice is built on the principles of collegial collaboration guided by the needs and priorities of the Declaration countries.

Today, the Copenhagen Declaration has garnered support from 60 large ocean nations, between them responsible for fish stocks and fisheries in more than a third of the world's exclusive economic zones. The majority of the Declaration countries are developing large ocean nations that are particularly dependent on their fisheries resources for food, livelihoods and prosperity.

*The Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø, Norway, supports Declaration countries with vessel tracking and analysis through the Blue Justice Community.*





# The Structure of Blue Justice

## Declaration countries

As of May 2024, 60 countries have joined the Copenhagen Declaration. Top-level political support from governments is what makes international collaboration possible. Blue Justice contributes to maintaining and anchoring political support for the implementation of the Declaration through regular party meetings during the Blue Justice Conferences. These conferences constitute an arena for Declaration countries' political leaders and public servants to discuss and agree on common challenges and opportunities in joint efforts to address fisheries crime.

*Blue Justice ends and begins with its Declaration countries, here gathered at the Blue Justice Conference in 2023.*



## Blue Justice Community

At the heart of Blue Justice are the practitioners in government agencies tasked to address fisheries crime. Blue Justice Community is the name of a digital platform designed to give practitioners the digital tools they need to collaborate, communicate, learn, and share knowledge about fisheries crime. However, Blue Justice Community is also a network of like-minded practitioners in government agencies across the globe working towards the common goal of protecting our oceans, fisheries, and coastal communities from fisheries crime.

## Blue Justice Secretariat

The Blue Justice Secretariat is situated in Oslo, Norway, and hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries. The primary role of the secretariat is to assist Declaration countries in identifying tools and measures they may need in their efforts to address fisheries crime. In cooperation with Declaration countries, the Secretariat helps develop new projects and identifies relevant partners in the private and public sectors as well as research institutions and academia. The Secretariat also works continuously to garner political support for the Copenhagen Declaration and engages in dialogues with existing and potentially new Declaration countries to this end.

## Blue Justice International Tracking Centre

The Blue Justice International Tracking Centre was established in 2021 and is located within the Norwegian Vessel Tracking Centre in Vardø, one of the northernmost towns of Norway. The centre is staffed with world-leading experts in vessel tracking and analysis from the Norwegian Fisheries Administration and the Norwegian Coastal Administration. The vessel tracking analysts at the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre collaborate with and assist members of the Blue Justice Community with issues pertaining to vessel tracking and analysis.

## Blue Justice Hubs

Addressing fisheries crime is a joint effort and there is often a need to form closer collaboration on particular issues of geographical or thematic interests. To this end, Blue Justice facilitates the establishment of Blue Justice Hubs. In 2023, the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub was established with its secretariat in Jamaica's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Mining. As Blue Justice continues to grow and evolve, more regional and thematic hubs will be established at the initiative of Declaration countries.

## BLUE JUSTICE COLLABORATORS

Blue Justice's partners consist of beneficiaries, technical partners and financial contributors. Each have an important role in the development and implementation of the various components of Blue Justice. Where there are obligations in the form of deliveries, payments, and/or reporting, we often establish «Blue» projects.

### Technical Partners

The most important technical partners are the experts within government agencies in Declaration countries. In addition, Blue Justice is supported by key UN agencies and knowledge and research institutions.

### UN Agencies

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

### Knowledge Institutions

The Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)

The Norwegian Police University College (PHS)

### Regional Partners

Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)

North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group (NA-FIG)

### The Space Industry

Kongsberg Satellite Services (KSAT)

### Norwegian Agencies

Norwegian Coastal Administration

Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries

Norwegian Space Agency

The Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime



### Financial Contributors

The Norwegian government has been the main financial contributor during the establishment of Blue Justice. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides funding for projects and activities that benefit developing Declaration countries, whereas the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries contributes financially to activities and projects that benefit all Declaration countries. In addition, some activities among the Nordic countries are funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Declaration countries provide in-kind contributions in the form of access to expertise within their public administration and data. For instance, the Jamaican government has a cooperation agreement with Blue Justice regarding the administration of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub and the Norwegian government provides free access to vessel tracking data from Norwegian satellites.

### The Blue Projects

#### *Blue Resilience*

The Blue Resilience project is a main pillar of Blue Justice's development assistance activities. Established in 2020, the Blue Resilience project assists developing Declaration countries build resilient public administrations through capacity building and technological support for inter-agency cooperation to address fisheries crime. The Blue Resilience project supports the realisation of sustainable development goal 16 of Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions in organised crime prevention and substantially reducing corruption and bribery in all its forms. Technical partner: UNDP

#### *Blue Footprints*

In 2021, the Police University College (PHS) initiated a pilot project aimed at enhancing the competence and capacity of developing Declaration countries to effectively utilise electronic traces for uncovering, investigating, and prosecuting fisheries crime. In 2022, PHS conducted an analysis of the challenges associated with identifying digital traces in the fisheries sector and how such evidence is utilised in investigations. The analyses were based on interviews and a survey among users of the Blue Justice Community platform. The cooperation is expected to continue and develop. Technical partner: PHS

#### *Blue Enforcement*

The Blue Enforcement project was led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with the aim to develop learning material for the use of Sri Lanka and the Maldives to combat organised fisheries crime. At UNODC, the Blue Enforcement project was carried out by UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) and the Container Control Programme (CCP). The project is phased out pending new funding. In 2023, the Blue Enforcement project was selected for the UNV/UNODC Gender Award. Technical partner: UNODC

#### *Blue Watch*

The Blue Watch project is a collaboration with the Norwegian Coastal Administration/BarentsWatch on the development, maintenance, and operation of the Blue Justice Community. The Norwegian Coastal Administration has more than a decade of expertise with the development of digital inter-agency collaboration and vessel tracking platforms. The Blue Watch project also facili-





tates collaboration with the space industry and research communities to enhance data sources in the Blue Justice Community. Technical partner: The Norwegian Coastal Administration/BarentsWatch

### **Blue Fairness**

Through the Blue Fairness project, Blue Justice has developed an analytical tool to assist developing Declaration countries in identifying their vulnerability to forced labour and human trafficking in their fishing industries. The project also included expert workshops in developing countries to validate the tools and develop recommendations for their operationalisation. The tool will be made available to Declaration countries through the Blue Justice Community and is a significant step towards supporting developing countries in prioritising and addressing the challenges posed by forced labour within the fishing industry. Technical partners: UNODC, ILO, and IOM

### **Blue Crime**

Researchers and practitioners sit on unique knowledge and understanding of how fisheries crime can be prevented yet these two communities seldom engage and interact. The Blue Crime project was led by the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) with the purpose of engaging researchers and practitioners on what is known and what still needs to be known about the prevention of fisheries crime. During 2022, NMBU hosted eight digital tutorials and a hybrid seminar, engaging nearly 100 practitioners and academics in dialogue on the prevention of fisheries crime. The collaboration is expected to continue and develop. Technical partner: NMBU

### **Blue Justice Nordic**

Established in 2023, the Blue Justice Nordic project facilitates cross-border and inter-agency collaboration between the Nordic countries implementing the Nordic Ministers' Statement on Transnational Organised Fisheries Crime (the Ålesund Declaration) of 2017. The project also facilitates collaboration with other regional Blue Justice activities. Technical partner: North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group (NA-FIG)

*To the left, Gunnar Stølsvik and Eve de Coning of the Blue Justice Secretariat. To the right, high seas boarding can be challenging and requires specialised training (Photo: UNODC)*



## **Measures to Promote Collaboration and Sharing**

### ***Blue Justice Conferences***

At the core of Blue Justice is the clear political commitment expressed in the Copenhagen Declaration. To support the process of political commitment, Blue Justice organises high-level meetings in cooperation with Declaration countries – the Blue Justice Conferences – and also facilitates continuous dialogue with Declaration countries between these events. The next Blue Justice Conference is scheduled for December 2025 at UN City in Copenhagen, Denmark. The number of Declaration countries keeps growing and potential new Declaration countries are on the agenda at the time of writing. Technical partner: UNDP

### ***Blue Justice Community***

The digital Blue Justice Community platform is the most important tool in the Blue Justice toolbox. Blue Justice Community is a secure digital platform that integrates a variety of tools to support inter-agency and cross-border collaboration and coordination. It offers vessel tracking and analysis tools, a chat function, project support software, and networking opportunities. In addition, Blue Justice Community features collections of resources and relevant topics as well as learning modules. Technical partners: The Norwegian Coastal Administration/BarentsWatch, UNDP, Blue Justice International Vessel Tracking Centre and academic and research institutions

### ***Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme***

The Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme is set to provide an important contribution to the global efforts to address fisheries crime, leveraging state-of-the-art satellite technology. The heart of the Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme is the provision of satellite-based vessel tracking data gathered from Norwegian microsatellites to the users of the Blue Justice Community and facilitation of their ability to use the data in their daily operational work. The Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme facilitates strategic cooperation on fisheries monitoring between public agencies and the space industry in Norway and around the world. The programme accommodates the specific needs of developing Declaration countries for access to information on fishing activity in their own maritime areas. Technical partners: The Norwegian Space Agency and Coastal Administration, and KSAT





## Capturing Knowledge

CAPTURE = CAPacity building and Training Uniting Research and Experience. In the future, Blue Justice is working towards consolidating its knowledge-based components into one single framework.

A key goal for Blue Justice is to ensure that efforts to address fisheries crime are knowledge-based. The fisheries sector is diverse, involving different actors, species, methods, and geographic locations. Similarly, crime in the fisheries sector is a complex phenomenon and preventing it requires a high degree of interdisciplinary collaboration and expertise, often crossing national borders. In order to develop effective measures against fisheries crime, government agencies need knowledge about both crime risks and crime prevention.

Knowledge of what is happening at sea, whether it is criminal activity or not, and an understanding of maritime patterns of life are essential to identifying and preventing threats, and to inform decision makers in law enforcement and public management.

*By providing trainings and exercises, Blue Justice aims to provide a foundation of knowledge and capacity in fisheries crime prevention.*





*Field knowledge is of the essence to ensure targeted action against fisheries crime to the benefit of those who live by the sea, and those who enjoy the produce.*

### **Multiple Challenges**

Yet, the risk of detection is low as fisheries crimes often take place at sea and frequently involve multiple jurisdictions. Many legal regimes are not well suited for the identification, investigation and enforcement of ordinary economic crime in the fishing industry. Detecting economic offences committed in the fisheries sector requires legal provisions facilitating information sharing and cooperation with other countries' authorities, as well as specialised expertise in administration, police, and prosecution that understand the fishing industry and can identify crime within it. Consequently, several components of Blue Justice aim to build, broaden, and exchange knowledge across borders and government agencies.

CAPTURE merges theory and experience, practice and research, the coal face and cutting edge innovation – to develop capacity building, training, tools, and practices that best assist practitioners in their efforts to address fisheries crime. Some of the activities are already in full swing, while others are still on the whiteboard.




**POLITI HØGSKOLEN**

## Blue Footprints: Digital Evidence in Fisheries Crime

**Dr. Fergus Toolan & Dr. Georgina Humphries**  
**Norwegian Police University College**

### Blue Justice Dialogue Forums

The Blue Justice Dialogue Forums aim to engage researchers and practitioners in a dialogue on what is known and what remains unknown about fisheries crime and fisheries crime prevention; what ambition we should have in this field; and how research may assist in reaching our goals. A significant output from the Blue Justice Dialogue Forums is the development of online courses and seminars that members of the Blue Justice Community can attend at their convenience. Technical partners: NMBU and UNDP

*The Norwegian Police University College is one of many partners that provide technical expertise to enable effective investigation and prosecution of fisheries crime.*

### Blue Justice Expert Groups

Members of the Blue Justice Community are experts in their fields. In order to harness their expertise and share it within the community, Blue Justice supports the establishment of thematic expert groups at the initiative of members of the community. In 2023, members of the Maldives prosecution authority took the initiative to form an expert group on digital forensics. Members include prosecutors from Jamaica, Mauritius, and São Tomé and Príncipe. In 2024, the Expert Group on Digital Forensics is developing a training programme on digital forensics in collaboration with the Norwegian Police University College, as well as undertaking a study into how prosecutors use digital evidence in the prosecution of fisheries crime cases. Technical partner: UNDP

In order to fully develop CAPTURE, Blue Justice is in dialogue with Declaration countries and education and research institutions to consolidate training needs and develop more comprehensive learning packages.





# Catalyst in Action

Blue Justice aims to be a catalyst in action. Through activities in the catalyst programme, government agencies are inspired to take action using their tools and knowledge on fisheries crime and crime prevention.

Blue Justice has developed three activities with the aim to move Declaration countries from political aspirations, tools, and skills, to concrete results. One is Blue Justice Action, which is currently being tested by Jamaica. Another is the Blue Justice Community Gatherings – an arena for members of the Blue Justice Community to meet at regular intervals. In addition, a mentoring programme for members of the Blue Justice Community is also in the offering, providing opportunities for peer-to-peer mentoring and secondments across government agencies, borders, and regions. Together we take Blue Justice from words to action.

## Blue Action

Blue Action is a set of five exercises developed to assist interagency collaboration. Each exercise introduces a work methodology that is designed to facilitate agency interaction both within a country and between countries in a region or even globally. Blue Action Exercise 1 was held in Jamaica in May 2023 with Jamaica's Multi-agency Mechanism (MAM) as a pilot and consisted of a scenario-based TableTop Exercise (TTX) developed by the Jamaican National Fisheries Authority and inspired by the methodology of the North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group (NA-FIG).

TableTop Exercises are an effective method for strengthening interagency collaboration. The exercises are carefully adapted in collaboration with government agencies to address local needs. In 2024 and 2025, Jamaica will pilot Blue Action Exercises 2-5 in collaboration with amongst others the Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime (Økokrim). As a co-developer of the pilot, the National Fisheries Authority of Jamaica has also agreed to assist other Declaration countries in undertaking Blue Action exercises. Technical partners: NMBU, UNDP and Jamaican National Fisheries Authority.

## Community Gatherings

A key activity in Blue Justice is the Community Gatherings, where members of the Blue Justice Community platform come together in person, share experiences, and address common issues. The Community Gatherings are essential platforms for building trust and collaboration across agencies and international borders. Additionally, these





gatherings serve as valuable forums for exchanging lessons learned about the opportunities and challenges in preventing fisheries crime. They also provide an opportunity for the Blue Justice Secretariat to receive input and advice from practitioners in Declaration countries on the development and adaptation of activities under Blue Justice that suit their needs. This interactive and consultative approach helps to ensure that the measures developed are well-informed and tailored to the specific needs and contexts of Declaration countries and government agencies. Community Gatherings have been held in regularly. Technical partner: UNDP

### **Blue Justice Mentors**

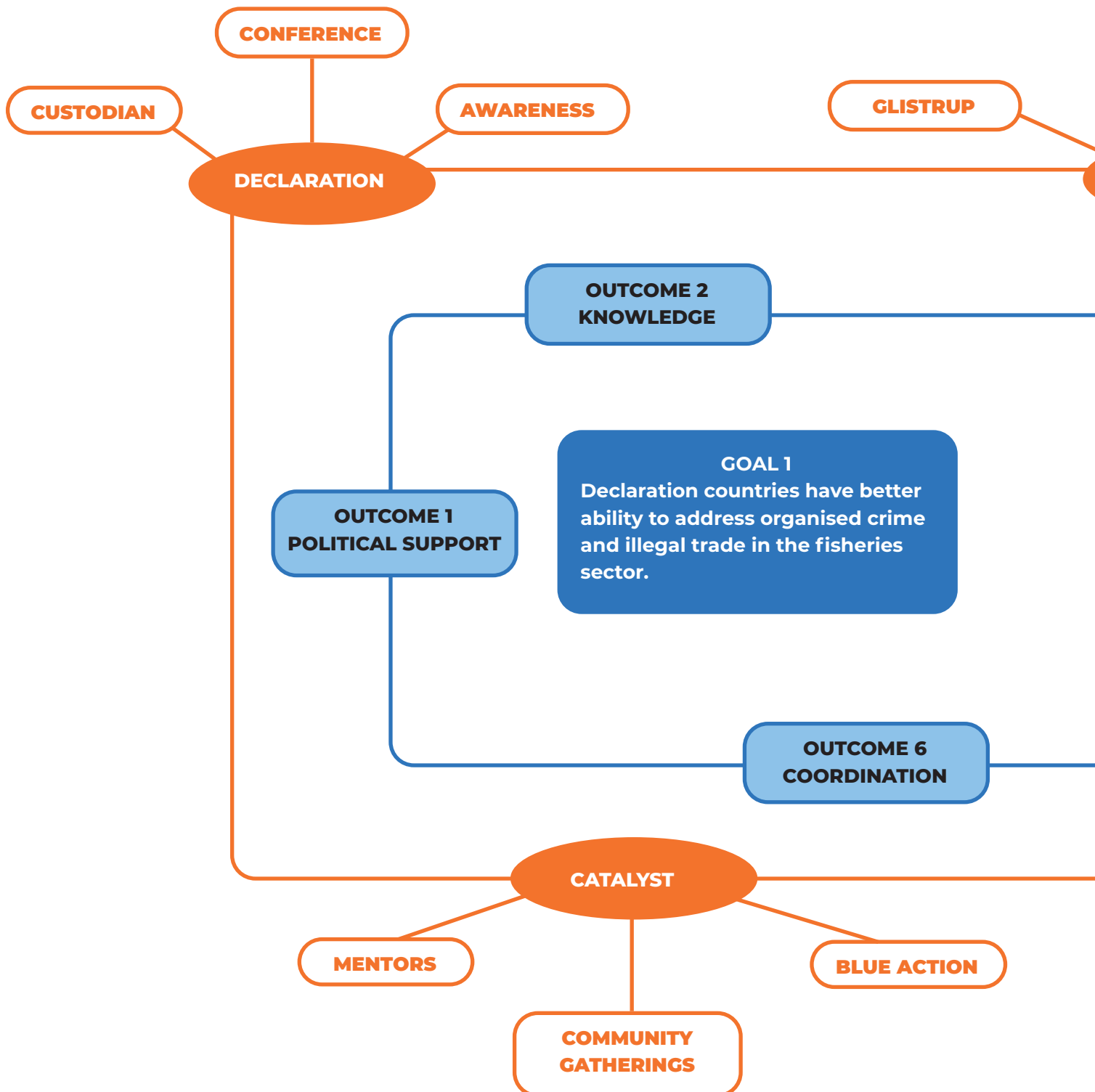
Blue Justice Mentors is an initiative to facilitate the development of professional networks and knowledge environments for practitioners through mentorships and secondments. To date, Blue Justice has facilitated secondments of experts on vessel tracking from Jamaica and Cabo Verde to the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø. Among others, the secondees provided invaluable input to the design of the vessel tracking tool currently integrated in the Blue Justice Community platform. In addition, through Blue Justice partners at UNODC, mentorship activities specifically aimed at women in fisheries enforcement have also been held. Blue Justice aims to consolidate these activities in a mentorship programme to provide continuity and expand to other areas of expertise. Technical partner: UNDP and UNODC

*Blue Justice also aims to garner experience and learning from its own activities. Here journalist Ian Henderson in action to capture real-life experiences in Jamaica.*



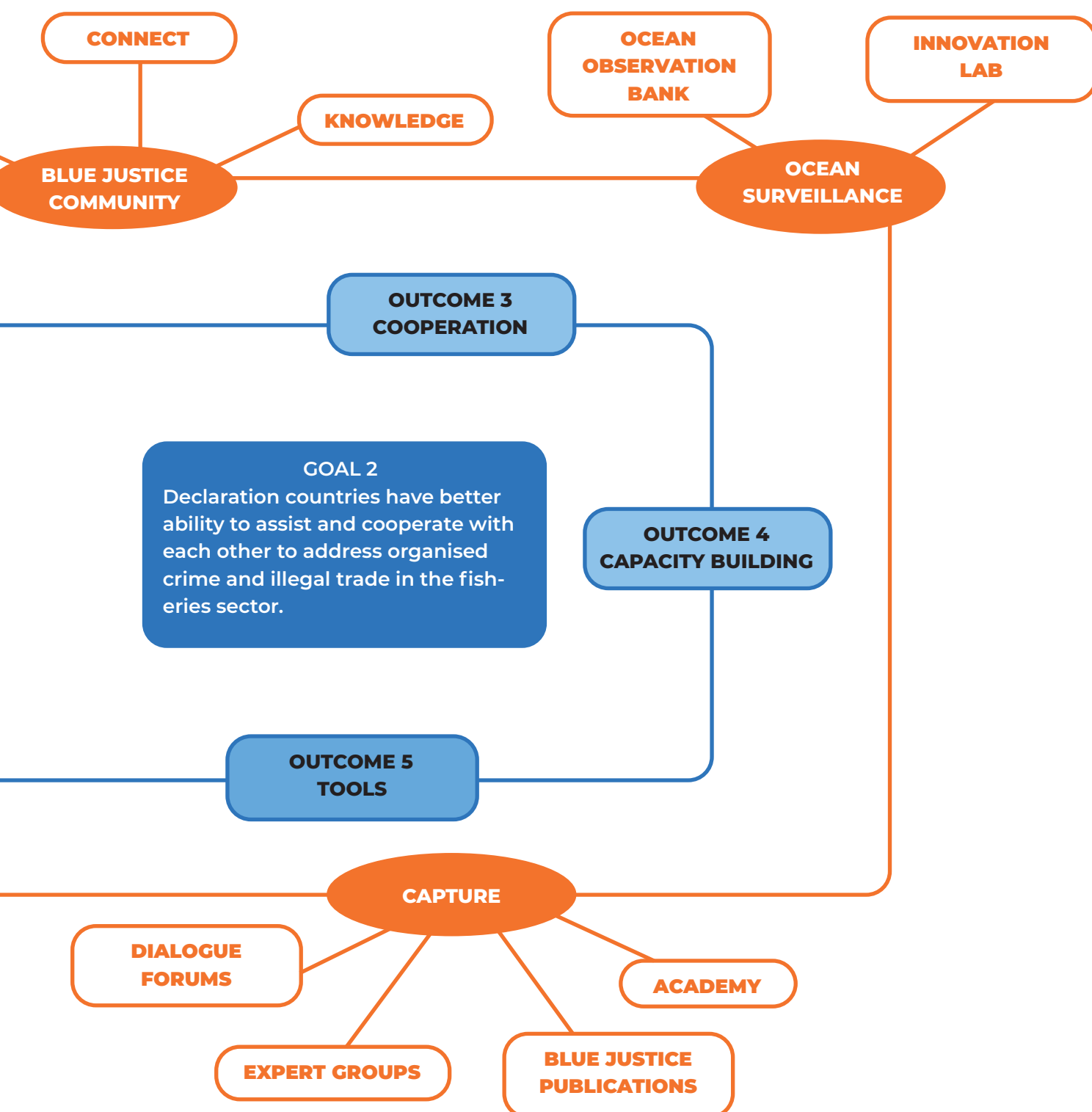


# The Blue Justice Results Framework





The Blue Justice framework comprises various interconnected tools and components working together. The framework aims to improve the ability of Declaration countries to cooperate with each other to better address organised crime in global fisheries. The illustration shows how all the parts come together to achieve the goals of the Copenhagen Declaration.







# Q & A with Gunnar Stølsvik

Head of the Blue Justice Secretariat



**When Blue Justice was launched in 2019, did you anticipate the challenges that lay ahead?**

When Norway launched the Blue Justice initiative in 2019, we had no idea what was coming. The past five years have been incredibly challenging, particularly with the Covid-19 pandemic that struck the world in 2020 and has had ripple effects until quite recently. Also the fantastic growth of countries supporting the Copenhagen Declaration was not expected from my side but I see it as a clear sign that we are on the right track!

**What role do you see digital tools playing in future solutions?**

I believe that cross-border cooperation using digital tools is part of the solution for the future. It is cost-effective and more inclusive, providing opportunities for many rather than just a few. However, for these tools to be effective, we need to see and interact with our colleagues. Building a collegial sense of trust and support is essential in our efforts to address fisheries crimes.

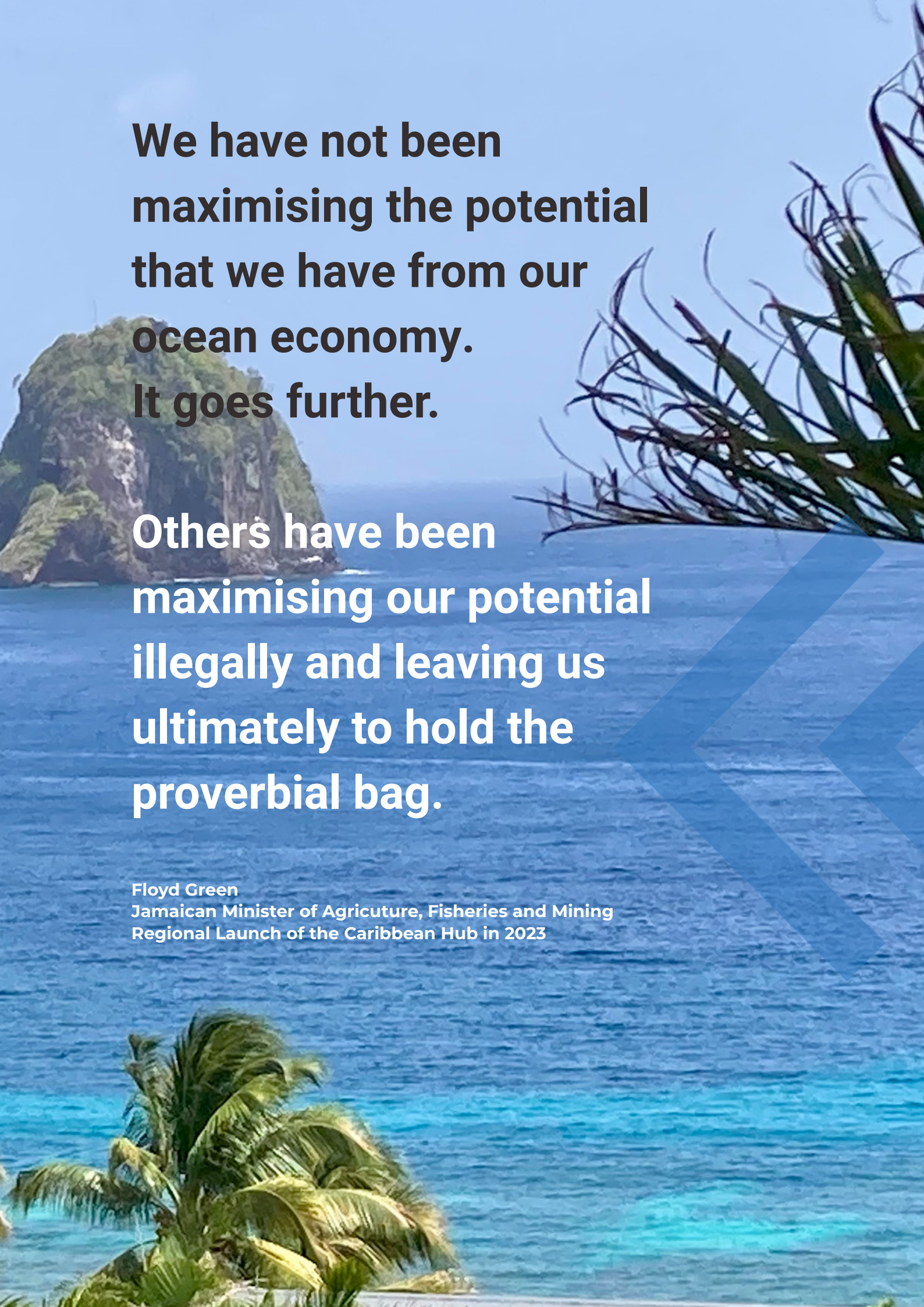
**What does being colleagues in this context mean to you?**

Being colleagues in this context means fostering a spirit of mutual respect, compassion, and understanding. It involves recognizing the shared responsibility we have in protecting our oceans and supporting the communities that rely on them. This collaborative approach allows for more efficient and coordinated efforts against fisheries crime. It was very moving to me to see how colleagues from all over the world paid their sincere condolences when two of our dear colleagues recently passed away.

**Now that five years have passed, how do you view the future of Blue Justice?**

Five years have passed, and we are still at the beginning of the Blue Justice journey. Let's continue to build the Blue Justice Community as a community of colleagues. I look forward to the journey ahead with all of you. What a journey we have before us!





**We have not been  
maximising the potential  
that we have from our  
ocean economy.  
It goes further.**

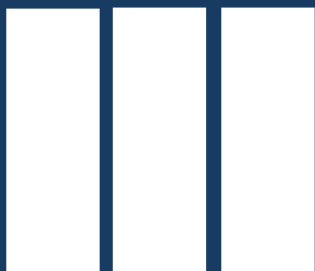
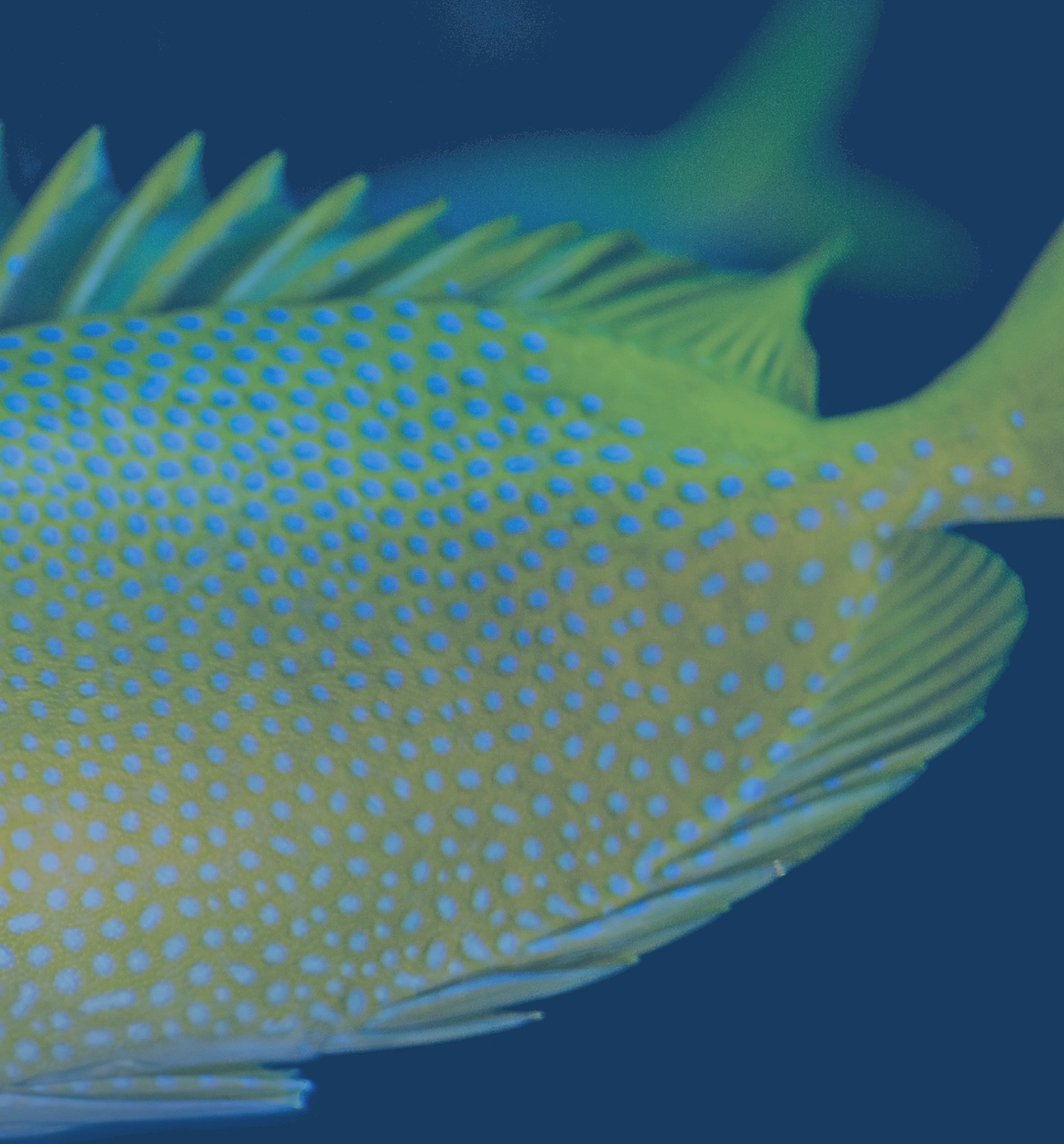
**Others have been  
maximising our potential  
illegally and leaving us  
ultimately to hold the  
proverbial bag.**

Floyd Green  
Jamaican Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining  
Regional Launch of the Caribbean Hub in 2023









**The Blue Justice  
Way**





THE BLUE JUSTICE COMMUNITY



# Safeguarding South Africa's Waters

Through the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Blue Justice Community platform, South Africa is enhancing its capabilities to address sophisticated illegal fishing networks.

The South African fisheries administration was among the first to engage proactively across government agencies to address fisheries crime, having gained experience with successfully prosecuting a high profile transnational organised fisheries crime network in the 1990s. The information collected was





crucial for coordinating with various law enforcement agencies within the marine environment to address these crimes effectively.

Blue Justice is inspired by years of strong collaboration between South Africa, Norway, and a number of other countries dating back to 2013 . The concept of fisheries crime was relatively new at that time, and the collaboration aimed to establish a multi-agency approach to address transnational organised fisheries crime. This involved gathering information in multiple jurisdictions on known suspects, their operations, and real-time activities. The information collected was crucial for coordinating with various law enforcement agencies within the larger marine environment to address these crimes effectively.

### **Establishing the FishCrime Symposium**

The first regional inter-agency gathering of fisheries law enforcement officers took place in Cape Town in 2013. This gathering eventually led to South Africa hosting the first International FishCrime symposium in Cape Town in 2015. The following years, the FishCrime Symposium became an essential platform to bring together political leaders, law and policy makers, practitioners, and civil society with the joint ambition to address fisheries crime.

*A coast line rich in high value species like rock lobster and abalone has made South African coastal regions vulnerable to organised crime syndicates. As a result, South African authorities have pioneered global efforts to address transnational organised fisheries crime. (Photo: Dan Grinwis/Unsplash)*





At the 4th FishCrime Symposium hosted in Copenhagen, Denmark, in October 2018, high-level delegates representing the governments of the Faroe Islands, Ghana, Indonesia, Kiribati, Namibia, Norway, Palau, Solomon Islands, and Sri Lanka adopted the International Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry (the Copenhagen Declaration). During the meeting it was also agreed that Norway would be the custodian and host the Secretariat of the Declaration, which brought about Blue Justice and the Blue Justice Secretariat.

### **Early Collaboration**

South Africa faces unique challenges in preventing illegal fishing. South Africa has two exclusive economic zones – one along its coastline and another around the Prince Edward Islands. These vast areas pose significant enforcement challenges, with sophisticated international criminal networks involved in illegal fishing operations. Internally, the challenges are mainly related to illegal fishing practices by South African citizens but linked to international networks for transportation and processing. These networks operate primarily in foreign countries, complicating enforcement efforts.

### **Leveraging the Blue Justice Community Platform**

Blue Justice provides a platform for information sharing. South Africa aims to leverage this platform to gather, analyse, and respond to intelligence on illegal operators collectively. “This collaborative approach has been instrumental in several successful operations,” says Bernard Liedemann, Acting Director Monitoring and Surveillance at the South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. He shares two examples showcasing successful international collaboration.

In one example, South Africa joined a group of countries to target a well-known syndicate harvesting Patagonian toothfish in contravention of the regional management regulations of the Southern Oceans. When a vessel belonging to the syndicate was spotted near the Antarctic, experts from the countries were capable of receiving information and maintain continuous surveillance of the vessel.





“We were hoping that the vessel would come into the South African exclusive economic zone where we have jurisdiction, but they were clever and remained on the high seas and navigated in the direction of the country where the vessel was flagged and registered,” Liedemann explains. They also tried to burn their nets and they engaged in evasive manoeuvres for more than three months.

As the vessel neared its home waters, the authorities there had been alerted. At this point, the crew deliberately sank their vessel, “presumably to destroy evidence and compel a rescue operation,” he says. In a twist of poetic justice, they were charged with pollution by the very act of sinking their vessel. “The owners of that vessel were fined more than 8 million Euros,” says Liedemann.

### Successful Return

In the realm of international collaboration, another notable example involved receiving information that a consignment related to illegal harvest of a South African abalone had been landed in a foreign port. Through cross-border networks, contact was made with the authorities abroad and it was immediately communicated that the consignment could not be legal, as the product was taken in violation of South African law. The perpetrators claimed to have permits, but cross-border cooperation proved that those permits were false. South African authorities were requested to testify abroad, but the perpetrators pleaded guilty on the day of the trial. The case resulted in fines, and the consignment was successfully returned to South Africa.

This is one of many similar consignments mainly involving South African abalone, a highly prized commodity in East Asia. Numerous such consignments have been intercepted and returned through international information-sharing and collaboration.

Liedemann is excited to explore the possibilities that comes with the enhanced version of the Blue Justice Community and emphasises the central role of forensic evidence and collaboration in this process. The next step will be to expand capabilities within pursuit and apprehension of perpetrators.

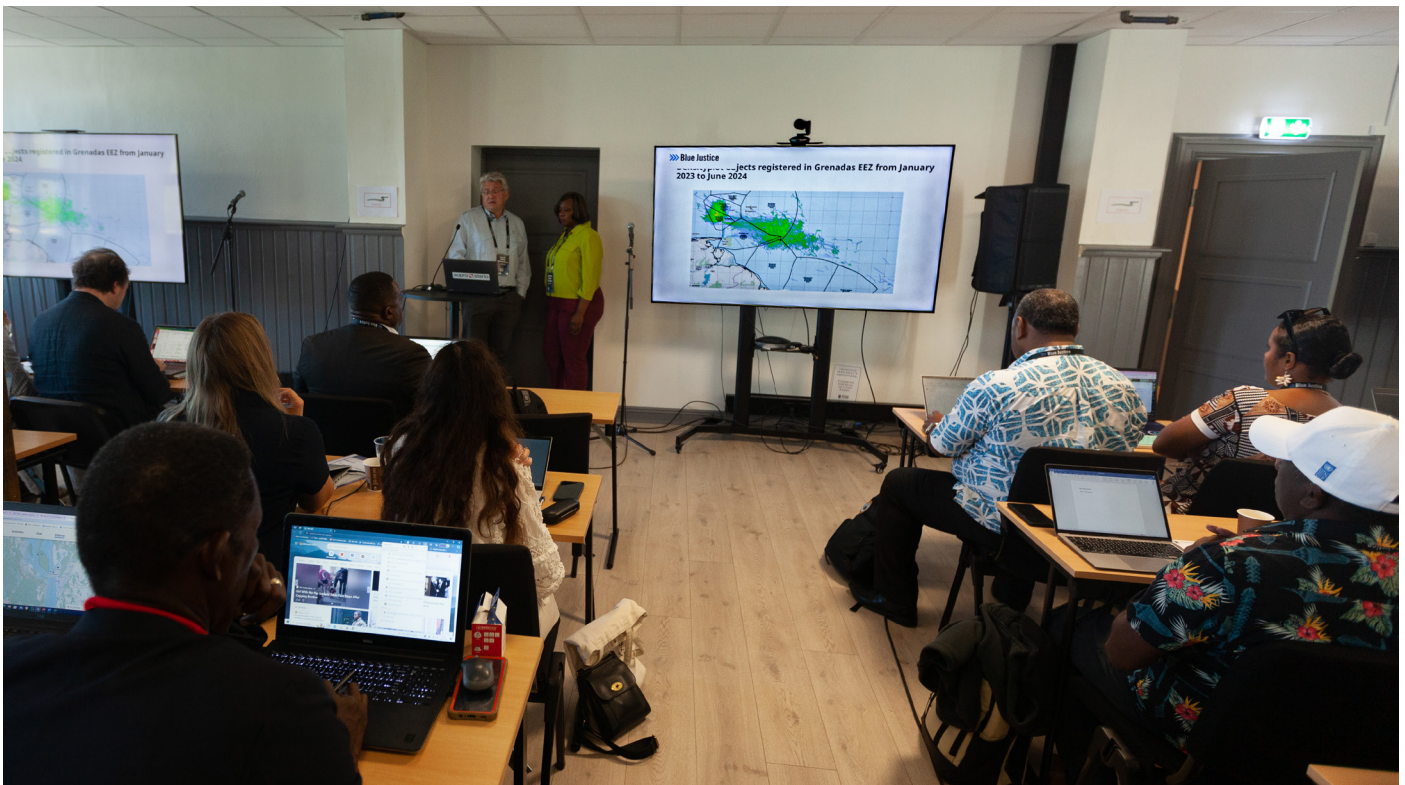
*Colourful local fishing vessels in Kalk Bay, Cape Town. Cape Town is also a port of call for foreign long-distance fishing vessels.*



This collaborative approach has been instrumental in several successful operations.

**Bernard Liedemann**  
Acting Director Monitoring and Surveillance, South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment





GLISTRUP



# A New Era in Maritime Surveillance

At the heart of Blue Justice is the Blue Justice Community, a secure digital platform for exchange of information, experience and advice.

The platform is under continuous development by BarentsWatch, a unit of the Norwegian Coastal Administration that promotes collaboration and data sharing for all Norwegian actors working with the coast and the ocean. BarentsWatch has also been tasked by the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries to develop the Blue Justice Community platform.

## Collaboration through Data-Sharing

Fiji was the first Declaration country to test the Blue Justice Community platform during a 2021 workshop held in collaboration between the Blue Justice Secretariat, UNDP's Nordic Representative Office, and UNDP's local office in Fiji. Since then, the platform has been continuously developed to meet the



specific needs of the Declaration countries. Identifying what those needs are is a major priority of the various actors developing, managing, and feeding into the platform. Based on input from the various Blue Justice Community workshops, secondments and gatherings, an upgraded version of the platform has been developed for launch during Blue Justice's 2nd Global Community Gathering at Oscarsborg in 2024 (COMG24).

The driving idea behind Blue Justice is to promote collaboration through data-sharing and technology. The platform is inspired by the services already created by BarentsWatch at the national level to facilitate cooperation between various agencies both within a country and between countries.

### New Tools Being Added

Since its launch in 2021, the platform has been continuously developed to meet the specific needs of the Declaration countries. Identifying what those needs are is a major priority of the various actors developing, managing, and feeding into the platform. Based on input from the various Blue Justice Community workshops, secondments and gatherings, an upgraded version of the platform has been developed for launch during Blue Justice's 2nd Global Community Gathering at Oscarsborg in 2024 (COMG24).

Part of the upgrade version is Glistrup, a cutting-edge technological tool designed to track and analyse vessel movements on a global scale. Glistrup, stands for GLObal Investigative Ship TRacking User Portal and is more than just an acronym; it's a tribute to Tor Glistrup, a retired fisheries inspector who pioneered vessel tracking and analysis.

### Developing Services for the Future

As manager of BarentsWatch, Nina Buvang Vaaja coordinates among Norwegian agencies and users of digital services for ocean and coastal management. She is excited about the possibilities.

"The platform that we offer will enable the various countries involved in the Blue Justice cooperation to have a better overview of their maritime areas and to be able to interact with other relevant actors," says Buvang Vaaja.

Glistrup features state-of-the-art vessel tracking and analysis functionalities, accessible on various devices. Efforts are underway to support multiple languages, making it more user-friendly for non-English-speaking countries.

The platform's versatility allows countries to integrate their national data, combining local knowledge with satellite data provided by other actors, such as Norwegian microsatellites.

### Enhanced Technology for Developing Declaration Countries

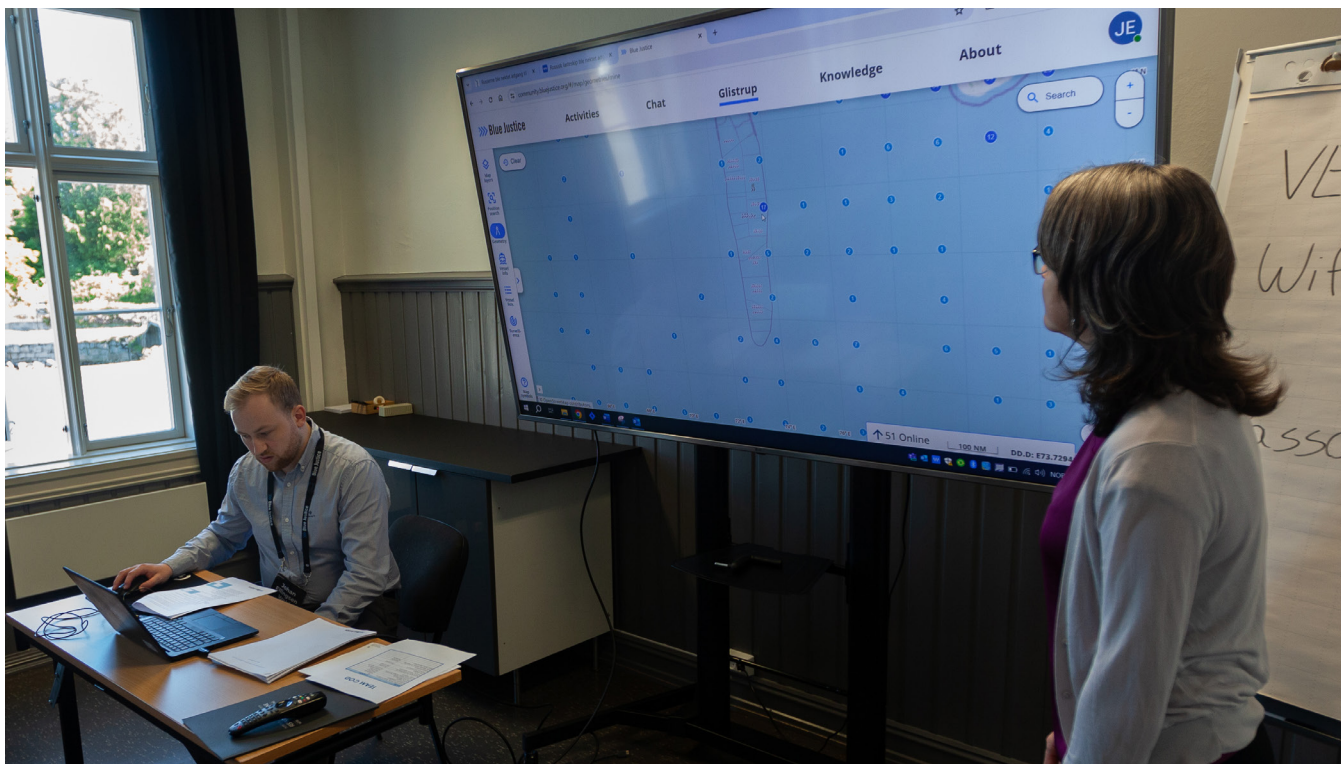
For developing countries like Nigeria, Glistrup represents a significant technological leap. Adeyemi Olusumbo Abraham is a Scientific Officer at Nigeria's National Space Research and Development Agency. He explains that while Nigeria has made strides in monitoring its waters, Glistrup offers advanced technology and real-time satellite imagery to bolster these efforts.

*Where there is organised illegal fishing, you can also expect to find other forms of criminal activities, such as smuggling of narcotics, child labour and human trafficking. Blue Justice's tools are used by a variety of public servants whose daily job is detecting, preventing and prosecuting crime in the fisheries sector. (Photos: Blue Justice)*

**“The platform that we offer will enable the various countries involved in the Blue Justice cooperation to have a better overview of their maritime areas and to be able to interact with other relevant actors.”**

**Nina Buvang Vaaja**  
**Manager of Barents-**  
**Watch**





Diplomats, politicians and public servants gathered at Oscarsborg to celebrate five years of inter-agency and cross-border cooperation through Blue Justice (Photo: George Kurian)

The collaboration through Blue Justice grants Nigeria access to additional data sources, such as the EU's Copernicus program, complementing existing resources. This increased data access strengthens Nigeria's position to address fisheries crime, enabling more effective monitoring and enforcement in its coastal waters.

### Cost-Effective Solutions for Global Challenges

One of Glistrup's most significant advantages is its cost-effectiveness, crucial for developing countries. This accessibility levels the playing field, allowing countries with limited resources to implement advanced monitoring technologies and coordinate efforts.





Sri Lanka, for instance, is already sharing information on fishing vessels with the Maldives. Dr. Nuwan Gunawaradane, Director of IT in the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, expects that Glistrup will streamline this process addressing the data privacy requirements, supporting quick information sharing.

"We were very happy to see Maldives in the Community because we already share information and are always meeting in different forums and meetings. Straight away, we started discussing the advantage of the Blue Justice Community and the digital platform," he says.

### **Real-World Impact**

Glistrup's real-time data capabilities have already proven invaluable in the field. Djibril Toure, Deputy Managing Director of the National Center for Surveillance and Fisheries Police in Guinea, shared a compelling example of how the platform allowed them to track a suspicious shrimp vessel's movements for six months, providing crucial evidence for a successful capture.

### **Future Expectations and Ongoing Development**

Users have high expectations for Glistrup's continued evolution, including faster data retrieval and the integration of satellite imagery. BarentsWatch is continuously refining and expanding its features, strengthening the platform's community aspect.

Nina Buvang Vaaja emphasises the platform's flexible and innovative approach: "If we try to look into the future, technological development is progressing so fast that it is difficult to envision the possibilities in one or five years, other than that we know that it will happen very quickly. That is why we aim to have a sufficiently open-minded approach to build the system in such a way that it can integrate future opportunities," she states and goes on to highlight the ambitious nature of the project:

"It is actually quite a bold goal to present 60 Declaration countries with a platform where they can log in and be sure that only government officials are there, and where they are able to track activities not only in their own areas, but also in their neighbouring areas, regionally and globally."

This level of ambition permeates all Blue Justice initiatives, positioning Glistrup as a game-changer in the global effort against illegal fishing.







## SOMALIA



# Reforming the Fisheries Sector

Active use of the Blue Justice Community platform bolsters an ongoing effort to reform and strengthen Somalia's fisheries sector.

Kalaay Abdullahi Muhammad Ali, head of the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) department in the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy of the Federal Government of Somalia, expresses great satisfaction with the Blue Justice Community platform.

### Benefits of Blue Justice

"As a developing country, we find support in the Blue Justice Community. It provides a platform for effective communication, building trust, providing access to knowledge, networks and technical support," he says, highlighting the biweekly reports Somalia receives from the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø.



“Blue Justice provides us with trusted data in real-time, better tracking, and data. It is well known that Somalia is facing illegal fishing, and we have the longest coast in Africa. Through the data made accessible through the community platform, we can identify which vessels are in the Somali exclusive economic zone and who are fishing illegally,” he says.

### Somalia's Vast Maritime Potential

The Somali coastline, stretching 3 300 km, is Africa's longest, and the country's exclusive economic zone spans more than a million square kilometres, brimming with tuna and tuna-like species. Somalia's blue economy has the potential to boost the country's economy significantly through activities including fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, shipping, and offshore oil and gas extraction.

Since the early 1990s, however, the country has been marred by illegal fishing by foreign fleets. The Somali government is dedicated to taking the necessary steps to draw greater benefits from its ocean wealth and has adopted several reforms to combat illegal fishing. This has resulted in significant reforms of Somalia's fisheries legislation.

Reforms include stricter enforcement mechanisms, enhanced monitoring and surveillance systems, and the implementation of penalties for fisheries offences. The legislative changes are designed to protect Somalia's marine biodiversity, promote sustainable fishing practices, and strengthen the capacity of local authorities to manage and conserve marine resources effectively.

### Licensing System Overhaul

A key aspect of the fisheries legislation reforms has been the overhaul of the licensing system. The new licensing framework aims to increase transparency, reduce corruption, and ensure that fishing licences are granted based on sustainable and equitable criteria. The process now involves rigorous vetting of applicants, clear guidelines for licence issuance, and regular audits to ensure compliance with regulations. Data from the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre was instrumental in this reform.

Recent measures taken by Somalia are intended to attract responsible foreign investments, support local fishing communities, and prevent overfishing. By implementing these reforms, Somalia seeks to create a more sustainable and economically viable fisheries sector that benefits both the environment and its people. An additional step was joining the Copenhagen Declaration in 2023.

In order to fully make use of the technology offered by Blue Justice, however, training is key. This is something he hopes to see more of in the future.

*Somalia joined the Copenhagen Declaration on 23 March 2023. Here, Ahmed Hassan Adam, Somali Minister of Fisheries and Blue Economy shares the podium with the Norwegian Minister of Fisheries and Ocean Policy, Bjørnar Skjæran, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Blue Justice Conference.*

“As a developing country, we find support in the Blue Justice Community. It provides a platform for effective communication, building trust, providing access to knowledge, networks, and technical support.

**Kalaay Abdullahi Muhammad Ali**  
**Head of MCS at the Federal Government of Somalia Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy**



## BLUE RESILIENCE



# The Human Touch

The combination of political support, expertise, digitalisation and knowledge sharing is the unique approach of Blue Justice. What makes it all tick, however, is the human element.

Practitioners in government agencies are at the coalface of fisheries crime prevention and are entrusted by society to address the complexities of fisheries offences in an integrated supply and value chain with a global reach. The Blue Resilience project at UNDP assists practitioners in government agencies in accessing networks, tools, and support services to effectively protect the fisheries sector from crime.

## Blue Resilience and UNDP

“UNDP supports countries in reaching the sustainable development goals. There are 17 goals, and they are inherently cross-cutting. In that way, UNDP is a good choice of partner,” explains Emma Witbooi, project manager of the Blue Resilience project.

The Blue Resilience project’s role in Blue Justice is to support developing countries in strengthening interagency cooperation. More specifically, UNDP administers the Blue Justice Community platform and facilitates many of the Blue Justice activities that support practitioners in developing countries. Witbooi places great importance on building trust and fostering personal relationships.

## Building Trust and Cooperation

“We work at the human level, facilitating countries to express what they want and need, and to feel comfortable asking for it,” she says. An important trust-building tool is regular capacity-building workshops where it is possible to take a step back, discuss progress, and revisit ideas.

“With each workshop, you get a sense of whether the agencies are cooperating and sharing information optimally,” says Witbooi. The informality of the workshops provides a safe space to openly discuss sensitive issues and potential improvements in cooperation approaches and the role of the Blue Justice Community therein.

“If I see participants talking and jumping up to grab the microphone, that, for me, is success. We can also see a huge increase in the number of registered users on the Community and the amount of available information as users start to upload material and engage in the conversation.”





*Inter-agency collaboration starts with good colleagues and a sense of humour.*

### Human-Level Interaction

“Our job, and again at a very human level, is to nurture that feeling that users can easily contact their colleagues in a different country and ask for information or advice,” explains Witbooi. All this, however, needs to be anchored at the political level of Declaration countries.

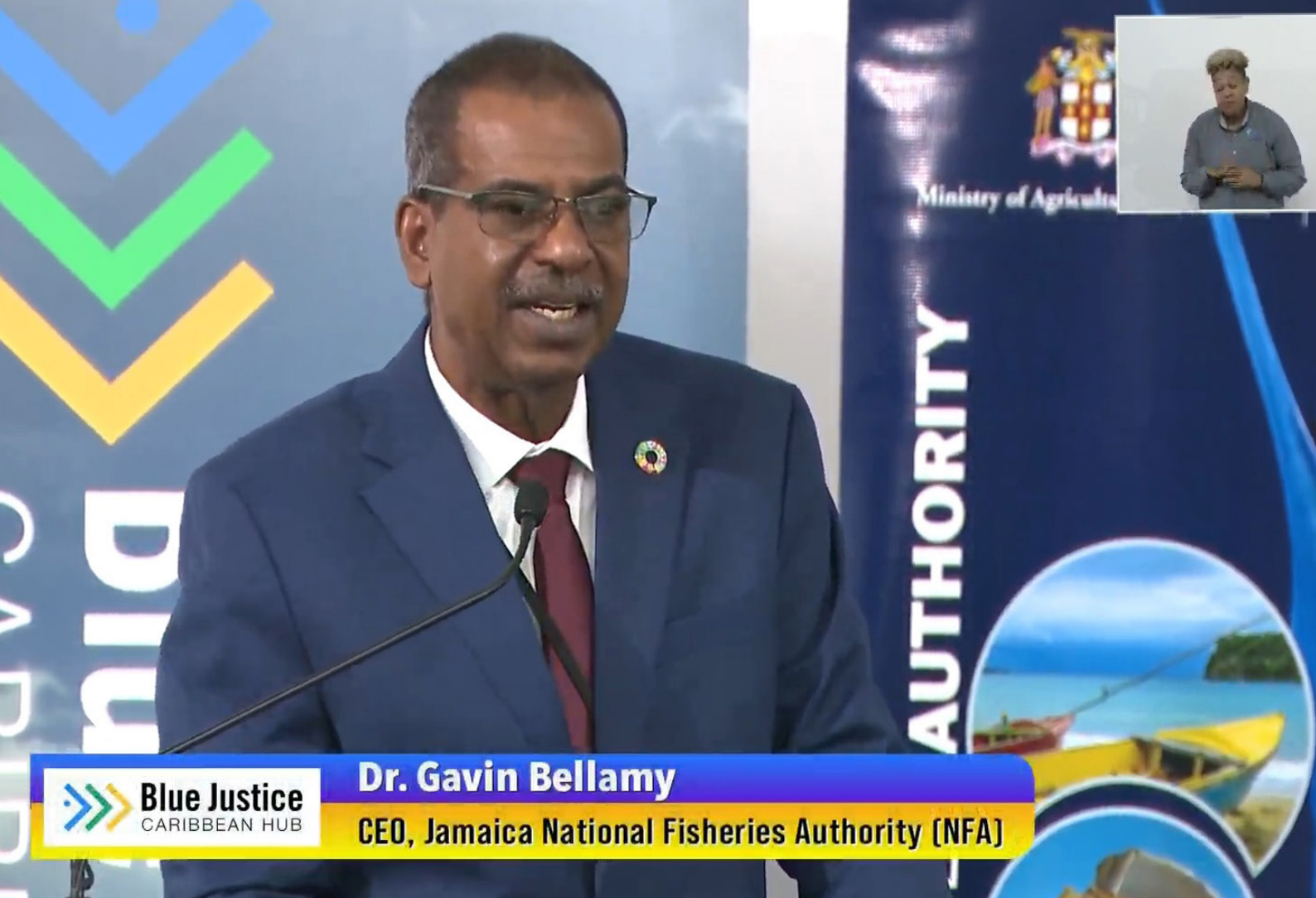
“Teaching people how to use a technical tool on the portal may not necessarily lead to much, unless they can change the way they work,” says Witbooi. “Everyone needs to be on the same page.” High-level support is a condition for delivering effective on-the-ground assistance, and Witbooi listens keenly to what ministers say when they sign up to the Copenhagen Declaration and speak during the biennial Blue Justice Conferences at UN City in Copenhagen.

“At the end of the day, everything comes down to people. The Blue Justice Community platform will continue to grow. Where there is a need for communication and fostering this kind of trust and collaboration, there is always a role for the type of work that we do.”

“Our job, and again at a very human level, is to nurture that feeling that users can easily contact their colleagues in a different country and ask for information or advice.”

**Emma Witbooi**  
Manager of the Blue Resilience project, UNDP





## THE BLUE JUSTICE CARIBBEAN HUB



# Jamaica Goes Regional

By embracing the opportunities offered by its Blue Justice membership, Jamaica is making full steam ahead in turning the illicit economy to blue both nationally and regionally.

“When I first heard of Blue Justice, I was intellectually excited. Here was a very practical solution and functional way of working.” These are the words of Dr Gavin Bellamy, Chief Executive Officer of the National Fisheries Authority in Jamaica.

In March 2024, Jamaica achieved the extraordinary feat of obtaining Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification for sustainable fishing of queen conch. This was the first conch fishery in the world to achieve MSC certification and it was also the first Jamaican fishery to enter the MSC programme. This is the result of systematic work by the Jamaican government. Blue Justice also played a role as a structured programme for enforcement and compliance, Bellamy explains.





### Targeted Action

Fisheries represent a great opportunity for growth in Jamaica, but the sector is ridden by economic losses of up to 200 million USD due to illegal fishing, particularly in the illicit conch and lobster trade. Jamaica's waters are 25 times greater than its land-mass, and that is a difficult area to monitor.

"With the help of the Blue Justice Community and the vessel tracking data provided there, we can identify vessels that are potentially coming towards us in a timely manner that allows for more targeted law enforcement operations," says Bellamy.

He goes on to describe how Jamaica is working on the entire value chain, from intercepting dark vessels to identifying owners, exposing tax fraud, ensuring proper reporting and preventing child labour, and where the money is eventually ending up. "The starting point is satellite information. From that, you can roll out all kinds of actions," says Bellamy.

### An Innovative Approach

In 2022, Jamaica established the national Multi-Agency Mechanism (MAM) to address fisheries crime by bringing fisheries, customs, tax, immigration, police, coast guard, and the prosecution authorities together in one single institutional framework.

*Jamaica was the first country in the world to achieve a Marine Stewardship Council certification for sustainable fishing of Queen Conch. Photo: Jamaica National Authority of Fisheries.*



It is nice to send a letter or some information when you have focal points who have been working together intimately. You can pick up the phone and get things moving much faster.

**Gavin Bellamy**  
**CEO Jamaica National Fisheries Authority**





We have 50 ministries, departments and agencies working together under a memorandum of understanding. This has helped us understand each other's roles and responsibilities and avoid duplicating efforts and make the most of the dollars spent.

**Gavin Bellamy**  
CEO Jamaica National  
Fisheries Authority

"We have 15 ministries, departments and agencies working together under a memorandum of understanding. This has helped us understand each other's roles and responsibilities and avoid duplicating efforts and make the most of the dollars spent," says Bellamy.

For instance, the customs agency can help to identify illegal exports, but they need capacity building and awareness about illegal fishing. Bellamy exemplifies this by sharing how customs enforcement personnel were not aware that sea cucumbers were protected and what they looked like until they received training. "Within a week, there were three enforcement activities where smugglers were arrested and significant fines were levied," he says.

### Unexpected Liaisons

Last year, Jamaica added an additional layer to MAM, initiating a three-day TableTop Exercise (TTX) in Kingston. The TTX was a joint effort between the Jamaica National Fisheries Authority and the Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard with support from the Blue Justice Secretariat and UNDP. The TTX is becoming an established concept in Blue Justice, aiming at fostering mutual understanding of roles, powers, and responsibilities between the various agencies. The concept has in turn become a model for other countries in the region to come together and build inter-agency capacities on the national and regional level.

However, government agencies do not always realise how crucial their contribution can be, and it requires trust-building to create an understanding of the benefits of inter-agency cooperation. Bellamy tells the story of a particular ministry where early scepticism turned into active participation upon a demonstration of how the various systems can work together.

"It has become such a fruitful relationship. Just a week ago we were laughing at how the first encounter was so uncomfortable, and now we have become the best of friends. This is a real plus. It is nice to send a letter or some information when you have focal points who have been working together closely. You can now pick up the phone and get things moving much faster," Bellamy says.

### Initiating Regional Collaboration

2023 saw the establishment of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub to strengthen regional inter-agency and cross-border capacity in dealing with fisheries crime. The Hub was established at the initiative of Jamaica in collaboration with the Blue Justice Secretariat and with the support of UNDP.

Illegal fishing and other organised crime in the fisheries sector affect the whole region, involving other island states like Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. "Uniting forces, we can provide a more efficient response. This was our initial motivation for involving other island states and showing the benefits of working together," says Bellamy. His ambition is for other countries to





adopt multi-agency mechanisms of their own. "It is more efficient, it saves money, and you get better results," he says. Best practices and lessons learned will be shared on the Blue Justice Community platform to promote digital learning between physical events.

### Future Expansion

The Blue Justice Caribbean Hub is the first of its kind within the Blue Justice framework. From a Blue Justice perspective, the government agencies are in the driver's seat when it comes to initiating hubs based on regional needs as defined by the Declaration countries. Blue Justice activities like Community Gatherings and TableTop Exercises tend to inspire future cooperation, and there is a clear expectation within Blue Justice that more hubs will be established.

"The question is always: What does your country need? How can we assist you and your country in getting what you need to achieve your goals to combat the problems that you have locally and regionally," says Bellamy. "The support from UNDP and the Blue Justice Secretariat has been fantastic. Even when you are down, the energy you can pick up from the project and its project manager will keep you going forever."

*Poaching and smuggling of lobster subverts Jamaica's blue economy. Photo: Jamaica National Authority of Fisheries.*

“Even when you are down, the energy you can pick up from the project and its project manager will keep you going forever.

**Gavin Bellamy**  
**CEO Jamaica National Fisheries Authority**



## SPACE TECHNOLOGY



# A Sky of Opportunities

Zippering along about 600 kilometres above the Earth's surface, satellites orbit the globe every 90 minutes, continuously collecting signals from ships.

“Norway is a relatively small space nation but has a clear ambition to stand shoulder to shoulder with other actors who work with combatting fisheries crime.

**Christian Hauglie-Hanssen**  
**Director General of the Norwegian Space Agency**

The Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme provides coastal states representing more than a third of the world's exclusive economic zones with access to satellite data and digital vessel tracking and analysis tools. It all starts with a satellite picture.

## Small Gadgets, Big Data

"People are surprised by how small they are," says Christian Hauglie-Hanssen, Director General of the Norwegian Space Agency. He is referring to the Norwegian owned AIS microsatellites that bring world class surveillance capacity to Norwegian government agencies. These satellites help monitor the speed, location, and movement patterns of vessels by picking up the AIS signals they transmit. In 2023, the Norwegian government decided to share these satellite data with Declaration countries through the Blue Justice Community, a secure digital platform for state-to-state cooperation. Part of the Norwegian Space Agency's task is to explore how space capacities can be used to prevent fisheries crime as part of Blue Justice.

## Joint Space Ambitions

"Norway is a relatively small space nation but has a clear ambition to stand shoulder to shoulder with other actors who work with combatting fisheries crime. The benefits are mutual as Norway is in a position to develop its own capacities and further develop the space industry," says Hauglie-Hanssen. "It is really important to us that the space industry is in a position to provide services that meet the needs of those in public administrations tasked to prevent fisheries crime."

## Sharing is Cost-Effective

While large ocean nations benefit greatly from ocean surveillance with the use of satellite data, purchasing satellite-based information is generally expensive. It is not feasible for all countries to pay large sums to access daily surveillance data covering their maritime areas. While quite a few states have satellite programmes, very few have sufficient number of satellites to fully meet the ocean surveillance needs of government agencies. For instance, the Norwegian NorSat satellites provide good data coverage near the polar regions, yet they have less coverage around the equator.

*NorSat-3 carries an AIS receiver and an experimental navigation radar detector. (Photo: [www.romsenter.no](http://www.romsenter.no))*









### FACTS ABOUT AIS

- AIS stands for Automatic Identification System.
- Vessels equipped with an AIS transponder on board send out dynamic information about their own identity, speed, and course to nearby ships via the VHF band and receive similar information from ships in the vicinity.
- It was initially established as an anti-collision tool for shipping.
- For ships, AIS information is a supplement to radar-based information.
- The world's first microsatellite with AIS receiver technology was developed in Norway and was launched from India in 2010.
- Today, Norway has several microsatellites orbiting the earth, and new ones are under development.
- The Norwegian satellites collect approximately 2.1 billion AIS tracking signals from around the world every year.

[www.kystverket.no](http://www.kystverket.no)

*The Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme was officially launched on 7 September 2023, at the Norwegian Space Agency in Skøyen, with representatives from Declaration countries in attendance. (Photo: Norwegian Space Agency)*

*AIS signals from ships can be received by land-based stations and satellite receivers. (Illustration: European Space Agency)*

"Through cooperation and information sharing, the Blue Justice Community platform offers a cost-effective model," says Hauglie-Hanssen. He believes the collaboration through Blue Justice will also open up opportunities to engage with satellite data providers abroad. "The platform can integrate a large variety of data from different sensors and can be adapted to meet the particular needs of a country," explains Hauglie-Hanssen.

"By integrating satellite data in one platform, end users in government agencies have access to a larger variety of ocean surveillance data. And the data comes in a format and with functionalities that are specifically tailored to their needs."

"With the Blue Justice Ocean Surveillance Programme there is a possibility to build an infrastructure for surveillance data throughout the industrial value chain and right through to the end user."

### Adapting Technology

While still a very useful source of vessel tracking information, AIS signals alone are not ideally suited for ocean surveillance purposes.





AIS is first and foremost a navigational aid, but the AIS transceiver can be turned off allowing the vessel to sail as a so-called “dark vessel”. In 2023, a collaborative effort was initiated between Jamaica, Cabo Verde, the Norwegian Coastal Administration/BarentsWatch, UNDP, Blue Justice International Tracking Centre, Kongsberg Satellite Services (KSAT), and Vake. The aim is to map and test the usability of different types of satellite data, in addition to AIS, that can help complement existing vessel tracking data in areas where vessels tend to turn off their AIS.

The director of the Norwegian Space Agency is optimistic about new technologies developed in the near future. “At the moment Norway is testing satellites that pick up different data sources beyond AIS signals and we are developing AI technology to help us read these data and collate them with the more traditional AIS-signals we have,” says an excited Hauglie-Hanssen. “I have a mandate that is absolutely fantastic!”

“Through cooperation and image sharing, the Blue Justice Community platform offers a cost-effective model.

**Christian Hauglie-Hanssen**  
Director General of  
the Norwegian Space  
Agency





THE BLUE JUSTICE INTERNATIONAL  
TRACKING CENTRE



## One Ocean Only

Oceans may go by different names, but the attitude at the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø is that we only have one ocean, and that the challenges that exist are the same around the world.

Camilla Riise, team leader of the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries and the Norwegian Coastal Administration's Joint Section of Analysis and the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø, emphasises the global nature of maritime challenges.

"One of my colleagues always says that we only have one ocean, and that the challenges we earlier faced in the Barents Sea, are the same as those in other oceans around the world today. This moves me deeply," Riise says.





*Oceans connect us. (Photo: Jørgen Ree Wiig/Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries)*

### Close Follow-Up

"We use innovative technology to achieve the best results; the way we work is unique and forward-looking," Riise notes. Through Blue Justice, the unit also supports Declaration countries with regular and specialised reports on fisheries-related activities in their exclusive economic zones. These reports, delivered via the secure Blue Justice Community platform, include data and analysis relevant for government agencies to gain an overview of fisheries activities in their waters.

Riise highlights the importance of close cooperation beyond digital exchanges. "To ensure the success of each project, we cooperate closely using different means of communication with users. This ensures good results," she says. This contact is essential for efficient decision-making and addressing issues during projects. In-person Blue Justice Community Gatherings complement digital meetings, ensuring dynamic collaboration.

“One of my colleagues always says that we only have one ocean, and that the challenges we earlier faced in the Barents Sea, are the same as those in other oceans around the world today. This moves me deeply.

**Camilla Riise**  
**Team leader Blue Justice**  
**International Tracking**  
**Centre**





*Analysts from Jamaica and Cabo Verde during their secondment to the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in 2023 to exchange experience with Norwegian colleagues. (Photo: BarentsWatch)*

### Positivity in the Face of Hard Crime

The Blue Justice International Tracking Centre also hosts expert analysts from relevant government agencies for short secondments in Vardø. In September 2023, four expert analysts from the fisheries authority and the coast guards in Jamaica and Cabo Verde participated in a two-week program combining theory with practical case studies.

### Gathering Experts

"The purpose of the visit was to exchange the expertise we have between the analysts at the tracking centre and the colleagues from each country, which is very important for our own understanding of illegal fishing across the globe and how to combat it," Riise says.

Demonstrating the collegial spirit of Blue Justice, she emphasises the strong connections with colleagues in the Blue Justice Community. "We have formed a close relationship with those who sit in Jamaica and Cabo Verde. The collaboration we have with our colleagues and what we can achieve together makes me very proud," she says, appreciating the positive and solution-oriented attitude of her colleagues.

**Camilla Riise**  
Team leader Blue  
Justice International  
Tracking Centre

"Each country has their own specific needs, and together we are striving towards the same goal of eradicating illegal fishing. To achieve this goal, we need collaboration."



We are colleagues with those who sit in Jamaica and Cabo Verde. These people and the collaboration we achieve make me very proud.





*Sea turtles are a threatened species in Cabo Verde and other countries. (Photo: Josh Miller on Unsplash)*





## THE GAMBIA

Fatou Bensouda, High Commissioner of The Gambia to United Kingdom, on her way to the Blue Justice anniversary celebration at Oscarsbog in June 2024. (Photo: George Kurian)

# Taking on Fisheries Crime in the West African Region

In 2023, The Gambia was the 60th country to join the Copenhagen Declaration. The move is part of a broader commitment to address fisheries crime and protect livelihoods in West Africa.

Blue Justice, spearheaded by Norway, has quickly become a key platform in global efforts to address fisheries crime. Launched in 2019, the initiative has grown exponentially. "I want to thank Blue Justice and the Norwegian government for taking this initiative of the Blue Justice Initiative program," says Fatou Bensouda, the Gambian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. "Today, five years later, we are talking about 60 countries. This rapid growth underscores the pressing need for international cooperation in addressing illegal fishing and related crimes," Bensouda points out.

Bensouda visited Norway during the anniversary celebration of Blue Justice at the historical island of Oscarsborg in June 2024. The anniversary marked



five years of international collaboration to identify, pursue and prevent fisheries crime. As the most recent country to sign the Copenhagen Declaration, Bensouda is impressed by the rapid growth Blue Justice has undergone.

### **A Critical Step for West African Fisheries**

In addition to The Gambia, the West African region comprises countries such as Cabo Verde, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. Blue Justice offers Declaration countries a platform for regional cooperation and knowledge exchange. The Gambia's participation in Blue Justice comes at a crucial time for West African fisheries, and Bensouda is eager to push forward.

"One of the key challenges facing West African countries is the impact of transnational crime on local fishing communities. Many Gambians depend on artisanal fishing. This is what they know for generations. This is what they do," says Bensouda emphatically. "These small-scale fishermen are often at a disadvantage when competing with large, illegal fishing operations."

"Not having the sophistication of these big trawlers and these big boats, of course, they are disadvantaged. And when this illegal fishing is taking place, obviously, the chances that they would have had to be able to also do their normal fishing and sell or live and eat are drastically reduced," she continues.

### **Addressing Broader Socio-Economic Issues**

Preventing fisheries crime is not just about protecting marine resources; it's also about addressing broader socio-economic challenges. Bensouda draws a direct link between fisheries crime and illegal migration.

"When people lose their livelihood, they find a way of trying to gain their livelihood back, or at least to do something else. And you see that we are right now at the moment, and The Gambia is one of the countries that is suffering from this illegal migration," she says.

As The Gambia takes its place in Blue Justice, the country is poised to play a significant role in addressing fisheries crime in West Africa. Bensouda finishes off with a call to action:

"I will encourage my government to really take this initiative on board, to make use of the trainings, to make use of the fact that others are more advanced than us perhaps. We can exchange information and learn lessons from them," she states, expressing The Gambia's motivation to take a leading role in the fight against illegal fishing.

"Why not?" She asks rhetorically. "Maybe the discussions can be taken further, and we will see what we are able to get out of it. I think it will be very, very beneficial to the sub-region, especially not just The Gambia."

“Small-scale fishermen are often at a disadvantage when competing with large, illegal fishing operations.

**Fatou Bensouda**  
**High Commissioner of**  
**The Gambia to the United**  
**Kingdom**

“When people lose their livelihood, they find a way of trying to gain their livelihood back, or at least to do something else. And you see that we are right now at the moment, and The Gambia is one of the countries that is suffering from this illegal migration.

**Fatou Bensouda**  
**High Commissioner**  
**of The Gambia to the**  
**United Kingdom**



## CABO VERDE



# Vessel Tracking from the Green to the North Cape

With a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and limited resources, one of Cabo Verde's maritime security strategies is to guarantee security with partner nations' cooperation and advanced technology to monitor its waters.

Ricardo Yannick Cabral Lopes Dias, Director of COSMAR, the Maritime Security Operations Center in Cabo Verde, recently interned in Vardø, a Norwegian town near the North Cape, the northernmost point on the European continent. Reflecting on his stay in Norway, Dias says, "It was a great experience. Firstly, because we came from our tropical country to a place where the temperatures were around 9°C. We enjoyed the view, we enjoyed climbing, and we enjoyed the team in Vardø."

## Exchanging and Building Knowledge

COSMAR is an inter-agency centre responsible for monitoring the sea and conducting maritime operations in the Cabo Verde EEZ, functioning under the command of the Coast Guard. Dias, who has worked at COSMAR for nearly five years, found the visit to Vardø particularly valuable. "This was the first time I had a chance to visit a centre like my own to see how they work and share experiences," he notes.

During his secondment at the Blue Justice International Tracking Centre in Vardø, Dias analysed vessel behaviour patterns together with colleagues from Jamaica and Norway, distinguishing between different fishing vessels' patterns and identifying cargo vessels used as fishing reefers. Through tracking data, he identified behavioural patterns of vessels from different states and even detected a foreign fishing vessel that avoided transiting through the Cabo Verde EEZ.

## The Face behind the Screen

Dias also places emphasis on the importance of community and trust in addressing maritime crime. "In order to fight maritime crime, we have to have a community where we can trust each other and share information."





*Illegal fishing undermines the sustainability of local fisheries, ultimately depriving the population of a major source of food and revenue to provide public services. (Photo: Kriztian Tabori/Unsplash)*

“Now we know them, and it will be easier to get information from them. When you know who is behind the screens, you have a human connection, and then it is easier to share information. That trust is very important.”

**Ricardo Yannick Cabral Lopes Dias**

**Director of the Cabo Verde Maritime Security Operations Center (COSMAR)**

“If I see a ship that is coming towards us from Jamaica, I can ask Jamaica whether they have any information about that ship,” he says. Dias expects that the enhanced platform will attract more countries to participate and contribute, and notes that meeting counterparts physically in Vardø strengthens relationships and communication.

“Now we know them, and it will be easier to get information from them. When you know who is behind the screens, you have a human connection, and then it is easier to share information. That trust is very important,” he concludes.



## SRI LANKA AND THE MALDIVES



# Sticky Floors and Glass Ceilings

After three years of dedicated efforts to enhance the careers and personal growth of women in the fisheries sector, the Blue Enforcement project has turned Sri Lanka and the Maldives into exemplary models of best practices.

In 2023, the Blue Enforcement project with UNODC received the UNOV/UNODC Gender Award for its comprehensive training programmes, strategic sea operations, and fostering of cross-agency coordination and regional cooperation through a gender-inclusive lens. In the words of the jury, “the project made significant strides towards gender equality and the empowerment of women in these professions.”

## Women-Only

“It is incredibly rewarding to see women who were initially uncomfortable speaking in groups, who had not taken the floor, and who were cautious, encouraged to participate and then achieve new results,” says Anne Linn Jensen. As Programme Officer in the Border Management Branch at UNODC, she was responsible for implementing parts of the Blue Enforcement project.

The project promoted women’s empowerment through regular contact and initiatives like a side event at the Blue Justice Conference in Copenhagen in 2023. It provided specialised training for women law enforcers and fisheries officers, including leadership training, building connections, establishing mentorship schemes, and creating global and regional networks to support their career progression.

“When you have workshops for women-only, you can have a targeted curriculum that addresses specific challenges they identify and want to work on. It also creates a completely different room for discussion. The atmosphere is different, and women talk more openly about challenges and opportunities than they might with men present.”

## Bravery Needed

“Professions in fisheries, customs, police, navy, and coast guard are generally male-dominated worldwide. Cultural stereotypes about professions can influence the recruitment process even before it starts,” says Jensen.

*Breaking into male-dominated professions in fisheries law enforcement is challenging, but targeted and well-funded projects yield results.  
(Photo: UNODC)*





### About Blue Enforcement

Phased out in 2023, Blue Enforcement, a collaboration between the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP) and the Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), provided support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Both countries are two of the earliest supporters of the Copenhagen Declaration and have played an important role in the Blue Justice initiative. The CCP aims to enhance risk management, supply chain security, and trade facilitation at seaports, airports, and land border crossings to prevent the cross-border movement of illicit goods.

Within the CCP, the Women's Network promotes women's roles, leadership, and empowerment, fostering an inclusive environment in a traditionally male-dominated sector. The Global Maritime Crime Programme targets the coast guard, police, and navy, addressing a wide range of maritime crimes across six ocean spaces globally. This programme assists governments in tackling challenges related to drugs, crime, justice services, health, and terrorism.



Enforcement officers face numerous hazards while tackling organised crime in the fisheries sector. They might encounter hostile crew members who resist or become aggressive, potentially leading to violence. Working conditions on ships can be unsafe, with slippery decks, poorly maintained equipment, and cramped spaces, increasing the risk of accidents.

Operational risks involve dealing with complex and unfamiliar ship layouts and possibly being outnumbered or without immediate support. Circumstances are stressful, and one needs to stay on the alert.

“There is often an over-focus on physical strength. Yes, the work can be physically demanding, but many women are in better shape than men, so that argument doesn’t hold,” Jensen points out.

### Fewer Prospects

“Once hired, women often find that their career prospects are not the same as the men’s, and access to promotions is unequal. It’s demotivating for women to be in positions where it takes a long time to move up or jobs with little chance of success.”

“These are real challenges. We hear again and again that family commitments can be difficult to reconcile with these types of jobs. Sexual harassment can also be a problem, though many women don’t talk much about this.”

### Funding With a Horizon

To develop the project design, a thorough analysis of the challenges in Sri Lanka and the Maldives was conducted. “Since we had people on the ground, we knew the context quite well. Through that process, we were able to identify a specific outcome with specific outputs and activities. We focused on equality, and funding was allocated to train female officers. We also included an element of repetition to prevent the project from becoming a once-off,” says Jensen.

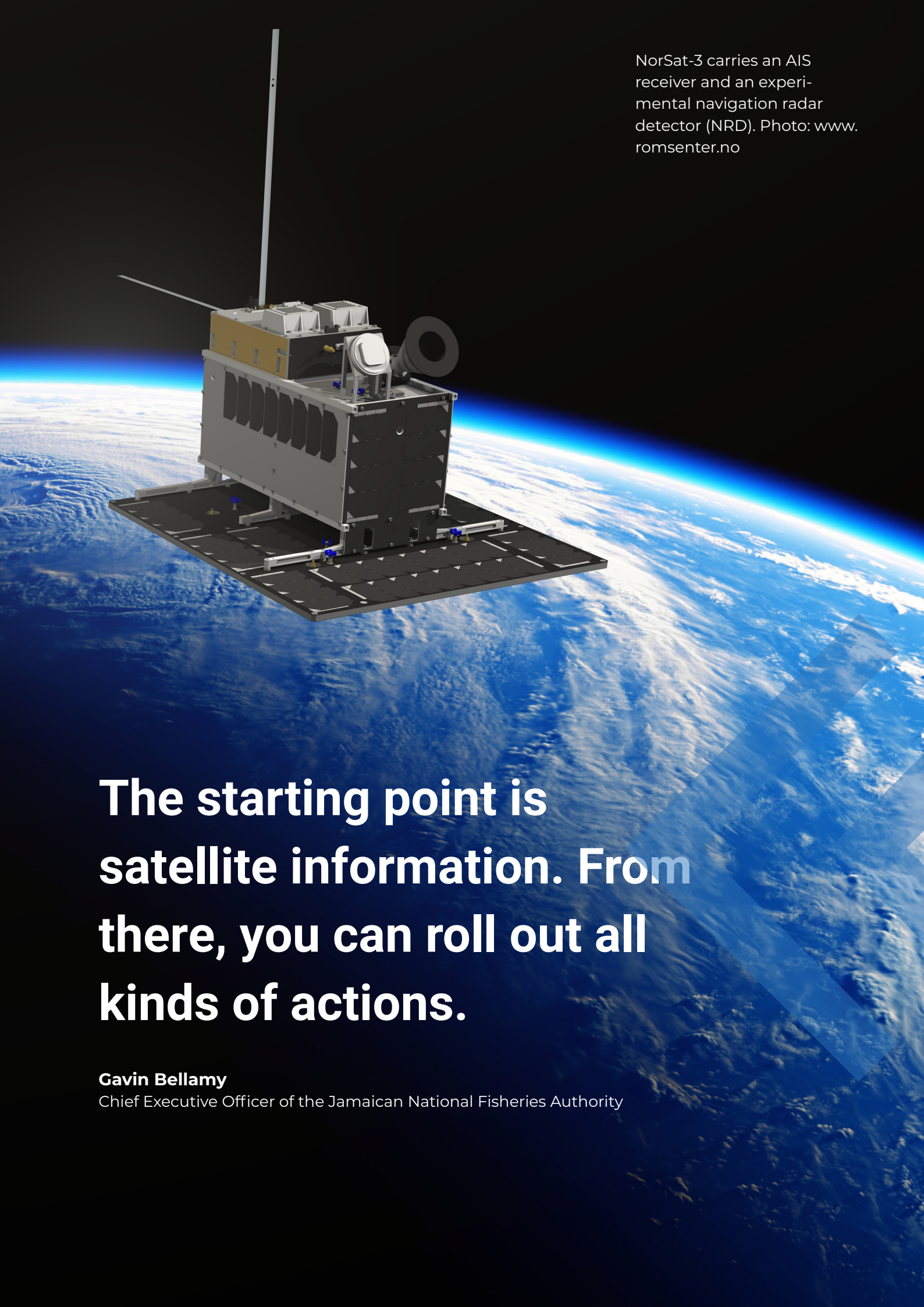
In order to run successful projects, good donorship is of the essence. Jensen points out that the level of funding matched the activities outlined and made it possible to plan ahead and share those plans with the project participants.

“Secured, long-term commitment eases structured planning,” she says. “While the project is phased out, Sri Lanka and the Maldives have undoubtedly become best practice countries,” says Jensen. “We see an increased understanding of what crimes in fisheries are and increased interdisciplinary cooperation. We’ve had some seizures and good results. You don’t change the world in three years, but you can get started, and it has been incredibly rewarding.”

“There is often an over-focus on physical strength. Yes, the work can be physically demanding, but many women are in better shape than men, so that argument doesn’t hold.”

**Anne Linn Jensen**  
Programme Officer  
Border Management  
Branch, UNODC





NorSat-3 carries an AIS receiver and an experimental navigation radar detector (NRD). Photo: [www.romsenter.no](http://www.romsenter.no)

**The starting point is  
satellite information. From  
there, you can roll out all  
kinds of actions.**

**Gavin Bellamy**

Chief Executive Officer of the Jamaican National Fisheries Authority



 **Norway**

