



5th United Nations Ocean Forum

UN TRADE AND
DEVELOPMENT & FAO
Background Note

Luz María de la Mora Sánchez
Director, Division on International Trade
and Commodities (UN Trade and
Development))



3 March 2025

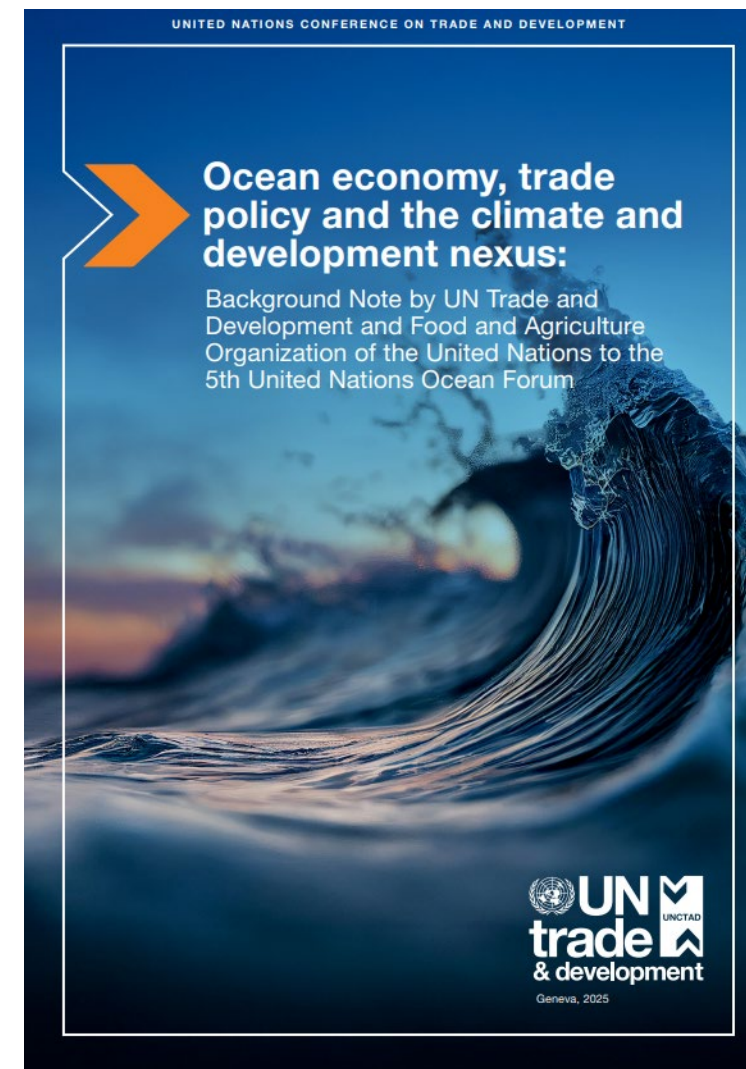
11 a.m.–1 p.m.





UNCTAD-FAO background note: Outline

1. Trends in the Ocean Economy
2. Decarbonization of the ocean economy, climate change adaptation and resilience building
3. The potential of South-South trade in marine fisheries and aquaculture products
4. Trade policies and tools for innovative marine-based, sustainable and low-carbon products
5. Blue finance for sustainable ocean economies

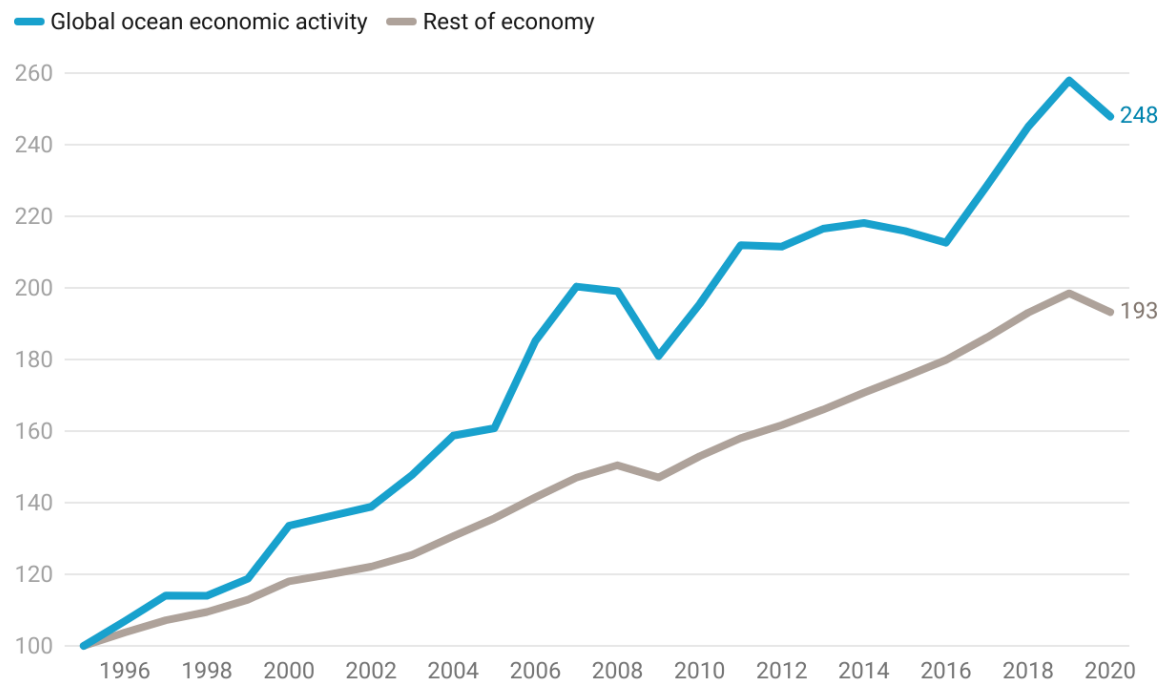




Ocean economy growth is outpacing global growth

Growth of ocean economy vs. rest, 1995-2020

1995 = 100

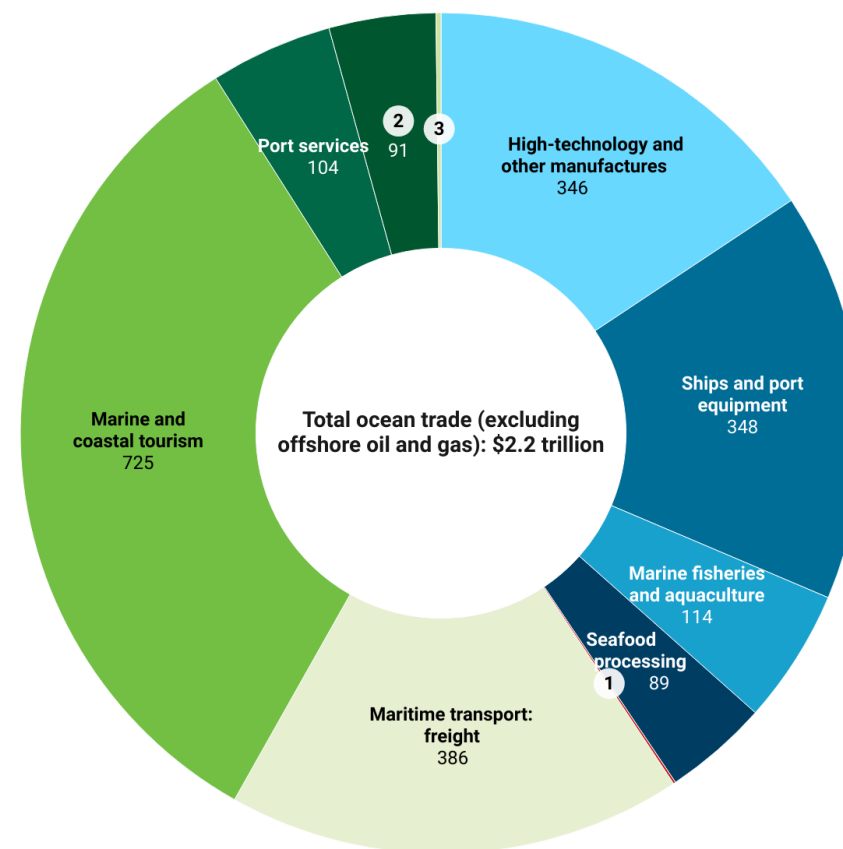


Source: UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) 2025 based on OECD Ocean Economy Monitor, preliminary estimates, June 2024.

Ocean trade reached \$2.2 trillion in 2023

Global ocean exports, 2023

Billion \$



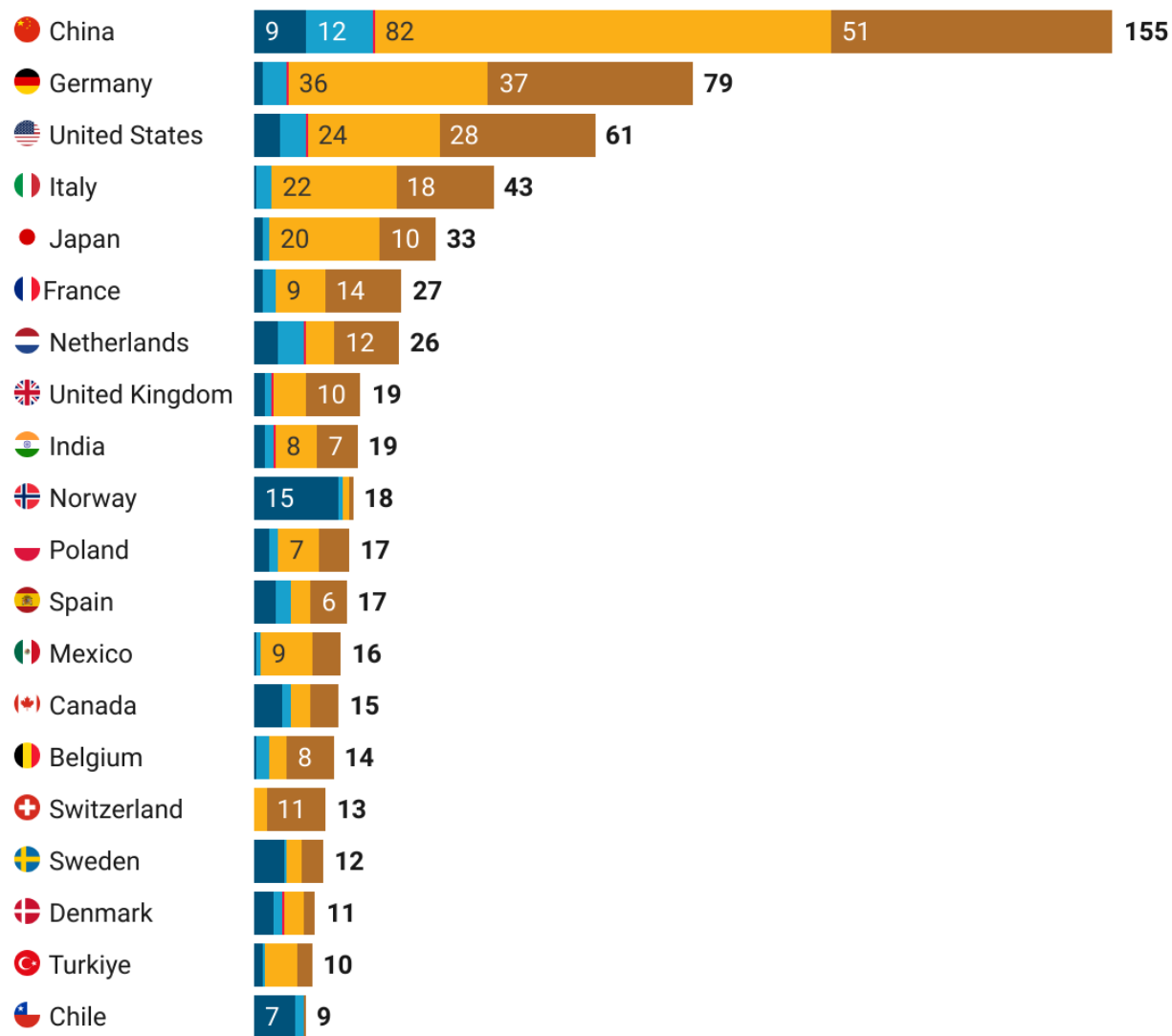
1 Sea minerals 2 Maritime transport: passengers 3 Marine R&D

Source: UNCTAD. 2025. Ocean Trade in Goods Database

Top 20 exporters of ocean-related goods, 2023

Billion \$

■ Marine fisheries, aquaculture and hatcheries ■ Seafood processing ■ Sea minerals
■ Ships, port equipment and parts thereof ■ High-technology and other manufactures



Source: UNCTAD. 2024. Ocean Trade in Goods Database

➤ China, Germany and the US are the leading ocean goods exporters

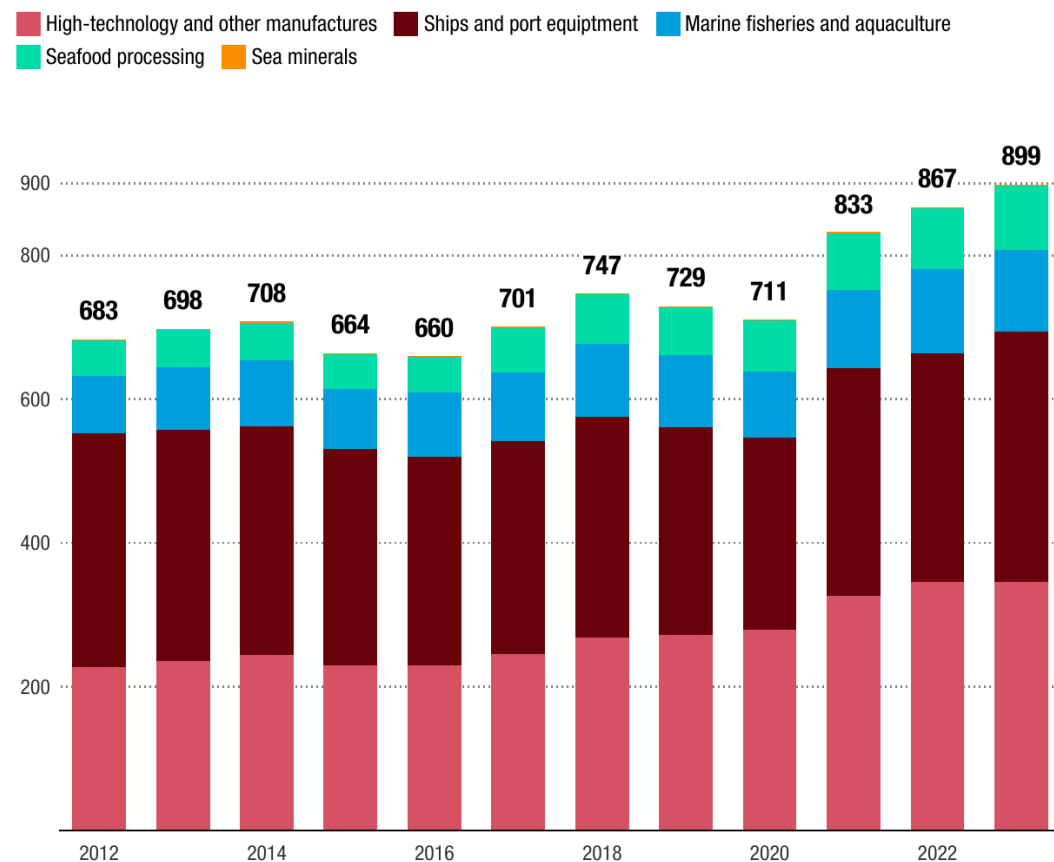
➤ Among developing countries, India, Mexico, Türkiye and Chile are in the top 20 global ocean goods exporters

77% of ocean goods exports are manufactures

Exports of ocean goods are growing fastest in developing economies

Ocean goods exports, 2012-2023

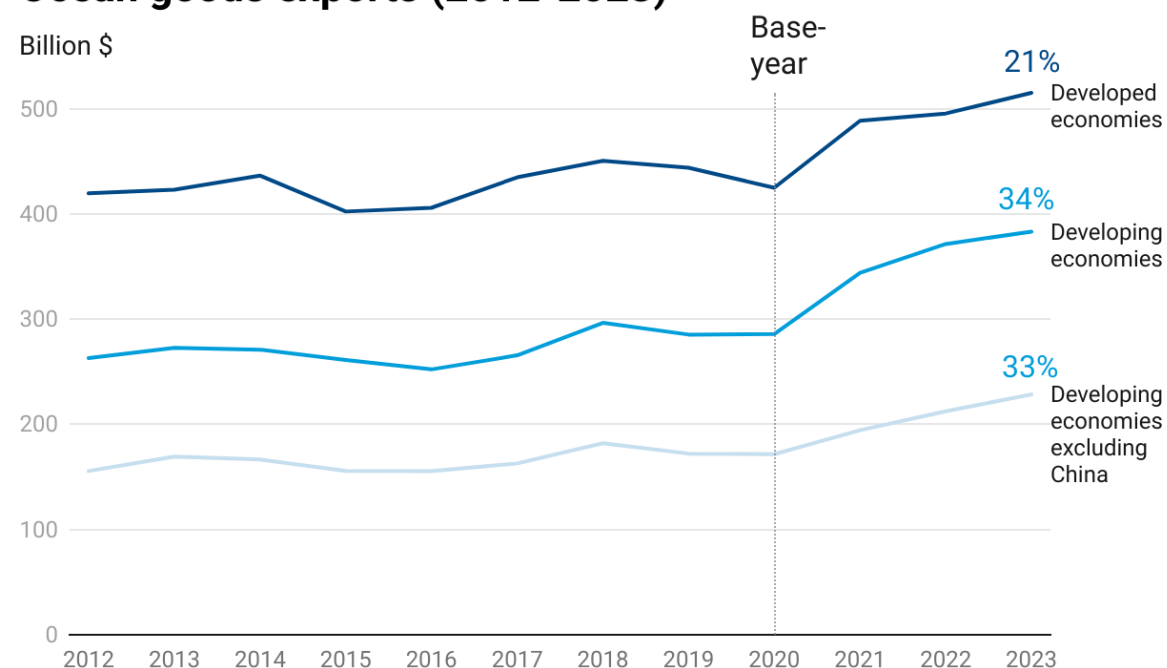
Billion \$



Source: UNCTAD. 2024. Ocean Trade in Goods Database

Ocean goods exports (2012-2023)

Billion \$



Source: UNCTAD. 2024. Ocean Trade in Goods Database

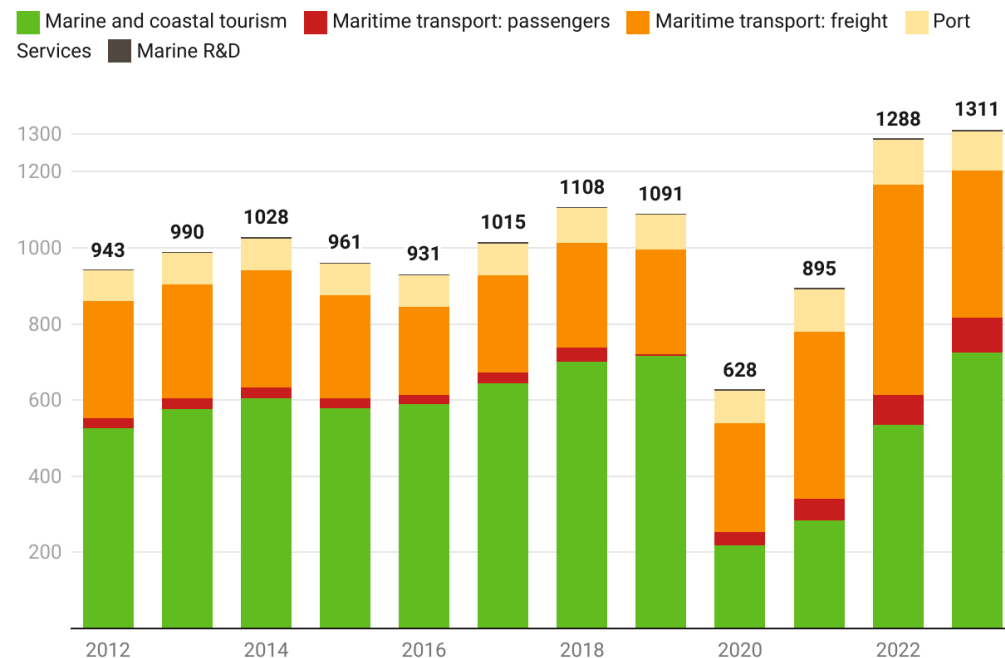


In 2023 international maritime tourism recovered pre-COVID-19 levels

Services account for 87% of SIDS' ocean exports

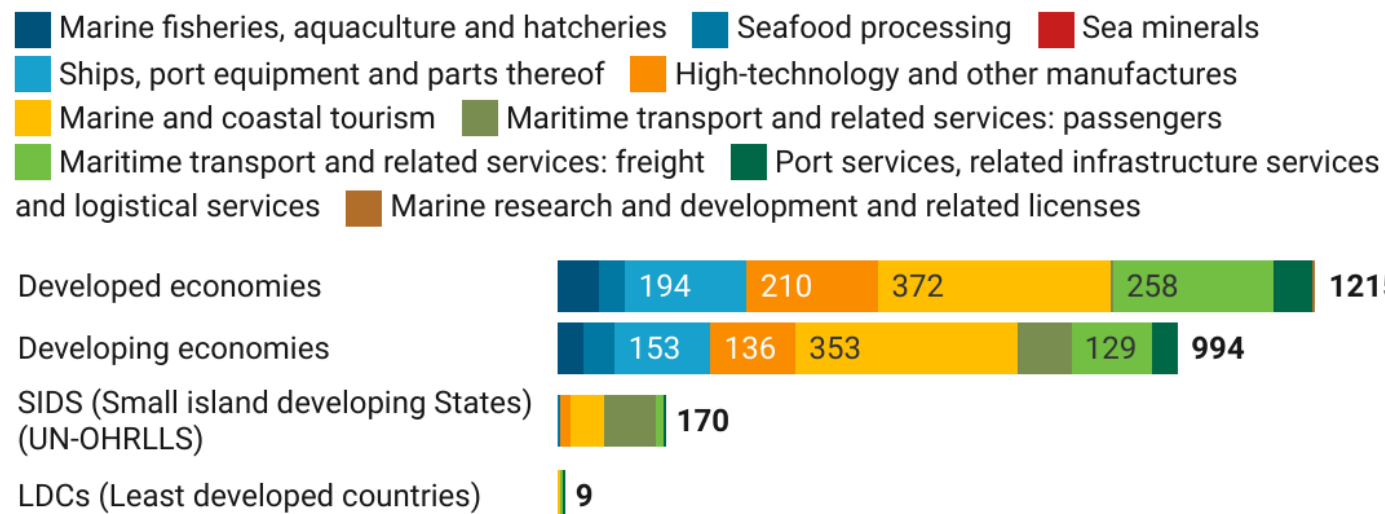
Ocean services exports, 2012-2023

Billion \$



Source: UNCTAD. 2024. Ocean Trade in Services Database

Ocean exports, 2023 (billion \$)



Source: UNCTAD (2024) Ocean trade in goods and services databases

➤ Launch of UNCTAD ocean trade database indicators

✓ Trade in ocean goods and services

Ocean goods trade: value and growth, individual economies, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean goods trade: trade and growth, estimated global and regional aggregates, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean goods trade: trade per capita, individual economies, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean goods trade: trade per capita, estimated global and regional aggregates, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean goods trade: Revealed comparative advantage index, individual economies, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean goods trade: Revealed comparative advantage index, estimated global and regional aggregates, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean goods trade: Theil index indices of exports and imports of products, individual economies, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

Ocean services trade: value, growth and per capita, annual

  17 Feb. 2025

[UNCTADstat Data Centre](#)





Filling ocean economy regulatory gaps

I. WTO FISHERIES SUBSIDIES AGREEMENT

- a) Entry into force: 91 countries have ratified, 20 more needed**
- b) Support for implementation is key**
- c) Phase 2 of negotiations on overcapacity and overfishing**

II. UN AGREEMENT Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)

- a) Entry into force: 18 countries have ratified, 42 more needed**
- b) Support for implementation on trade and economic-related aspects is key**

III. UN PLASTIC POLLUTION TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

- a) Advanced Chair text but there is uncertainty on the outcome**
- b) Negotiations to conclude by 2025**

Recommendations - Session 1

I. FOR UNCTAD 16:

- **STRENGTHEN OCEAN TRADE DATA AND RELEVANT ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL INDICATORS, AS WELL AS NATIONAL CAPACITIES TO COLLECT SUCH DATA.**

II. FOR UNOC 2025:

- **ENSURE THAT THE UN BBNJ AGREEMENT AND WTO FSA ENTER INTO FORCE AND SUPPORT THEIR IMPLEMENTATION.**
- **ADOPT AND RATIFY A UNITED NATIONS TREATY ON PLASTICS POLLUTION BY 2025.**

Thank you

Oceans Economy and
Fisheries | UN Trade and
Development (UNCTAD)



UNCTADstat Data
Centre

