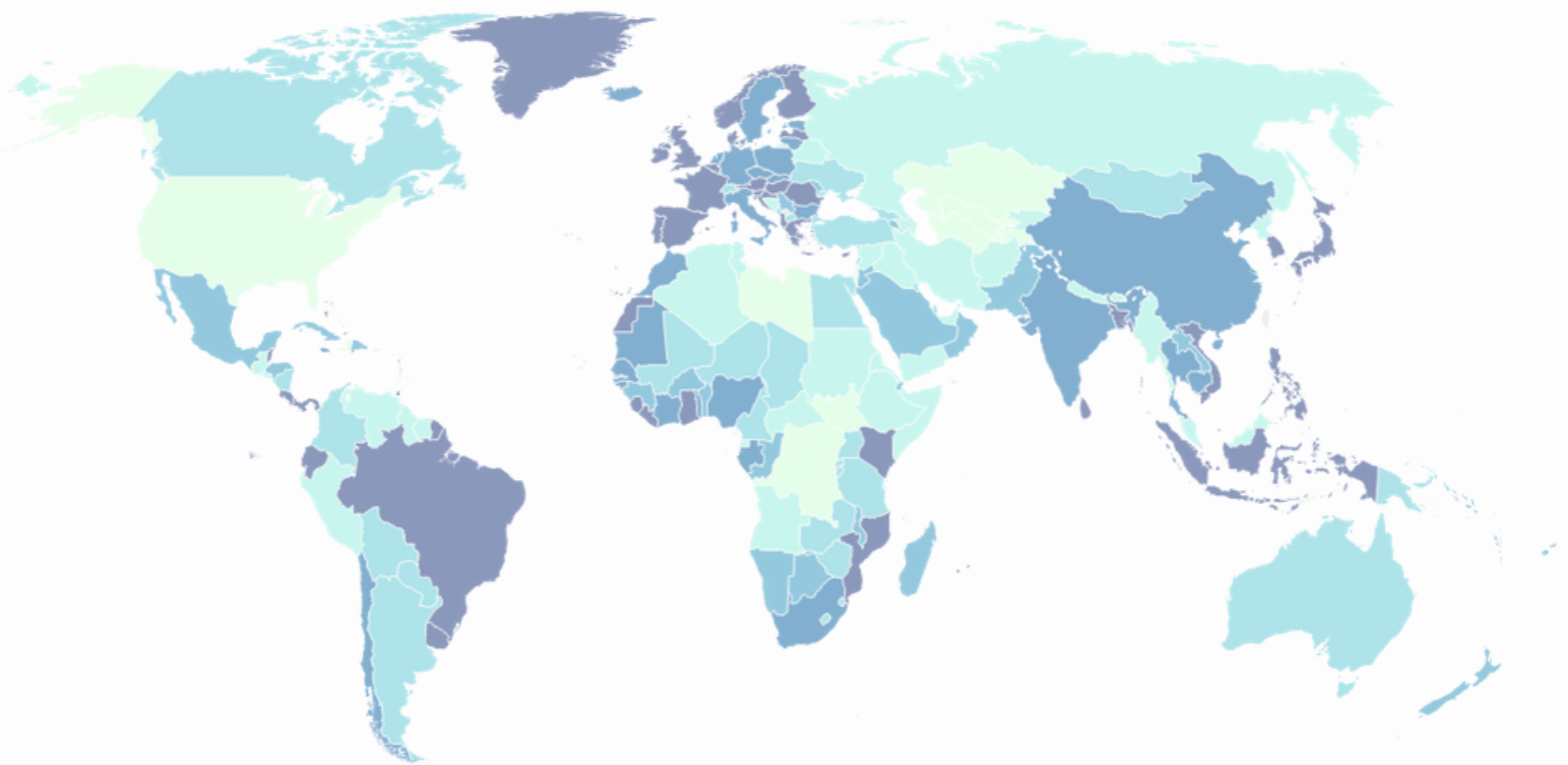


2026

Global Environmental League Tables



A global ranking of countries' commitments to
Multilateral Environmental Agreements



Stakeholder Forum
for a sustainable future

*by Kyra Sadat Ruben
September 2026*

About Stakeholder Forum

For more than 25 years, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future (SF) has been a bridge between stakeholders of all kinds and the international intergovernmental forums where sustainable development, and in particular the environment and issues related to its good governance, are debated, global goals are established, and strategies are mapped out. Our work aims to enhance open, accountable, and participatory decision-making and good governance for sustainable development through the continuous involvement and participation of stakeholders in these forums and in the actions that flow from their work. To achieve those aims, SF is guided by a Board of Directors with decades of experience internationally and in their home countries, further informed by Fellows and Associates from a wide range of fields, and we work closely with the intergovernmental bodies and UN Member States that strive for global environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

In consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1996, accredited with the United Nations Environment Programme since 2005, and an observer organization to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, SF is an international not-for-profit non-governmental organization, a European foundation, and a global network working to advance sustainable development and, in particular, the protection of the environment at all levels.

We have a particular focus on expanding the opportunities for effective stakeholder engagement in international sustainable development and environment processes, through communications, capacity building, and the establishment and maintenance of open and participatory governance arrangements in international assemblies and institutions. We also give support to a variety of networks and partnerships to engage stakeholders at regional and national levels in the implementation of sustainable development policies and practices, including in the environmental arena.

We support all actions directed to the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs, their targets, and the success of the 2030 Agenda. We encourage the continuing quest for maximizing the synergies, interlinkages, and coherence between the goals so that they can be implemented in a well-integrated and coherent way at all levels and maximize the benefits they offer and contribute to transformational change.

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Foreword

This report ranks the ratification by UN member countries of a selection of key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). We have used the metaphor of the football Leagues in the UK to group countries in a 'Premier League', 'Division One', 'Two', 'Three' and 'Four', as well as the Sunday league as the lowest professional league. Rankings are always simplifications of reality, and in this case the actual situation is dynamic. However, the League Tables do probably give a good general representation of where countries are in comparison, and what their specific challenges are.

Our objective is not to name, shame and blame, but to stimulate capacity building, exchange and mutual learning between countries. In the League Tables, countries can identify from which – neighbouring or other – countries they may learn in order to perform better on the MEAs. We have included an analysis per global region to cluster countries with at least some similar challenges and constraints. These regional parts of the report could be discussed in the context of the five UN regional Commissions, for example.

Better implementation of MEAs requires engagement of a broad range of societal stakeholders. Their knowledge, experience, ideas and resources (human, technical, financial) can play an important role in the acceleration of MEA implementation.

I hope that the report will be used to establish concrete peer learning and twinning activities between countries, to accelerate MEA implementation. In addition, we are looking forward to receiving comments and feedback on the report. We aim to present a next version in a few years' time.

Louis Meuleman

Chair, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future



Defining Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)¹

MEAs are commitments by countries to meet certain environment-related objectives. They can also be referred to as environmental Conventions or Treaties. Generally, and for the purposes of these League Tables, an MEA is a legally binding instrument between two or more nation-states that deals with some aspect of the environment.

Aside from the requirement that they deal with some aspect of the environment, two elements of the definition are very important to understand:

Legally binding

Multilateral environmental agreements are legal instruments binding countries that have agreed to become parties through ratification or accession. For the countries which have only signed and not as yet ratified, they are nonetheless not expected to do anything that will affect the aims and purposes of the MEA. They are not declarations of intention or avowals; they are rules of law. As such, they are a powerful tool for the implementation of policies with environmental protection and sustainable development goals.

Between two or more nation states

The better-known environmental agreements are multilateral in the sense that they involve many nations and deal with broad aspects of the environment (climate, biodiversity, etc.). However, an MEA can be any treaty between two or more nation-states if and when this instrument deals with direct environmental objectives.

¹ The information in the Introduction is taken from 'Negotiating and Implementing MEAs: A Manual for NGOs', a joint publication of Stakeholder Forum, Earth Media and Centro de Estudios Ambientales (CEDEA) p 2
<http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/MEAs%20Final.pdf>

Top-line Analysis: About the MEA League Tables

Rationale

Stakeholder Forum has been monitoring the ratification of MEAs on a regular basis since the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. It is the objective of the Global League Tables to highlight and praise progress made by nation-states towards the ratification of Multilateral Environmental Agreements. It is also the intention of the League Tables to encourage further action towards ratification in countries where progress is slow.

Stakeholder Forum believes that international environmental law in the form of environmental conventions and treaties offers a critical framework for promoting action on environmental issues at the national level. The proliferation of MEAs over the past two decades also reflects an acknowledgement of the global nature of environmental problems – Greenhouse Gas Emissions from one country stand to have an impact on the rest of the world due to resulting climate change; persistent organic pollutants produced in one country can become widely distributed geographically; impacts on biodiversity can have a significant geographic impact through climate change; global trade in hazardous chemicals without universal legislation can turn some regions into ‘danger-zones’ whilst others are insulated from negative consequences. The development of generic global standards relating to certain aspects of the environment represents a step towards the creation of a ‘level playing-field’ where citizens in all countries are protected from the negative impacts of a degraded environment. It also means that standards imposed in one country are not compromised by lower standards in another country that ‘leak’ across borders, either directly through water, land and air, or indirectly through products.

The MEAs

For this League Table, Stakeholder Forum has selected fifteen MEAs and has gathered data on which countries are signatories and non-signatories for each, as well as which countries have proceeded to ratification. The MEAs have been divided into five categories: 1) biodiversity; 2) chemicals and waste; 3) climate, including ozone; 4) land; and 5) oceans.

The data were sourced directly from official UN publications and are up to date as of September 18, 2026. As the MEA landscape is ever-evolving, we encourage cross-checking this report’s data with the United Nations Treaty Collection, updated in real time at <https://treaties.un.org>.

Individual MEAs can be found at:

- Basel Convention. UNEP. <https://basel.int>
- Cartagena Protocol. CBD. <https://bch.cbd.int/protocol>
- Convention on Biological Diversity. CBD. <https://cbd.int/convention>
- Fish Stocks. DOALOS. <https://www.un.org/oceancapacity/unfsa>
- High Seas. High Seas Alliance. <https://highseasalliance.org/treaty-negotiations/>
- Kigali Amendment. UNTC. <https://treaties.un.org>
- Kyoto Protocol. UNTC. <https://treaties.un.org>
- Minamata Convention on Mercury. UNEP. <https://minamataconvention.org/en>
- Montreal Protocol. UNEP Ozone Secretariat. <https://ozone.unep.org/treaties/montreal-protocol>
- Rotterdam Convention. UNEP. <https://www.pic.int/>
- Stockholm Convention. UNEP. <https://chm.pops.int/>
- UNCLOS. DOALOS. <https://www.un.org/depts/los>
- UNCCD. UNCCD. <https://www.unccd.int/convention/overview>
- UNFCCC. UNFCCC. <https://unfccc.int>
- Vienna Convention. UNEP. <https://ozone.unep.org/treaties/vienna-convention>

BIODIVERSITY MEAs

PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY TO THE BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION	
OTHER NAMES	BIO-SAFETY PROTOCOL CARTAGENA PROTOCOL
ADOPTION DATE	29.01.2000 MONTREAL, CANADA
SIGNATURE DATE	15.05.2000
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	11.09.2003
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	173 PARTIES 103 SIGNATURES

Created to ensure an adequate level of protection in the safe transfer, handling, and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The Protocol takes into account risks to human health, specifically focusing on transboundary movements. The Protocol contains a reference to a precautionary approach and reaffirms the precaution language in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development that allows countries to ban imports of a genetically modified organism (GMO) if they feel there is not enough scientific evidence that the product is safe. The Advance Informed Agreement (AIA) requires that countries importing certain LMOs must receive information needed to assess potential risks before permitting the import.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (UNCBD)	
OTHER NAMES	UNCBD
ADOPTION DATE	22.05.1992 NAIROBI, KENYA
SIGNATURE DATE	05.06.1992 RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	29.12.1993
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	196 PARTIES 168 SIGNATORIES

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) convened the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity in November 1988 to explore the need for an international convention on biological diversity. The Convention was prepared as an international legal instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and was opened for signature at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Covering biodiversity at all levels, a key objective is the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources. In 2022, the 15th meeting of the UNCBD COP adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which set the well-known “30 by 30” goals of restoring 30% of degraded ecosystems and conserving 30% of land, waters and seas by 2030.

CHEMICALS & WASTE MEAs

BASEL CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL OF TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENTS OF HAZARDOUS WASTES AND THEIR DISPOSAL	
OTHER NAMES	BASEL
ADOPTION DATE	22.03.1989 BASEL, SWITZERLAND
SIGNATURE DATE	23.03.1989
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	05.05.1992
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	191 PARTIES 53 SIGNATORIES

In the 1970s and 1980s, as environmental awareness increased and environmental regulations in industrialized countries strengthened, public resistance to hazardous waste disposal grew. NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) syndrome led some operators to seek cheap hazardous waste disposal options in developing countries. The public outcry upon discovery of these imported toxic waste deposits led to the Basel Convention, created to combat the “toxic trade.” Basel concerns environmentally sound hazardous waste management, restrictions on transboundary movements of said waste, and a regulatory system for cases where transboundary movements are permissible.

CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POPS)	
OTHER NAMES	THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION / POPS
ADOPTION DATE	22.05.2001 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
SIGNATURE DATE	23.05.2001
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	17.05.2004
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	186 PARTIES 152 SIGNATORIES

Adopted to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs). The convention guards human health from chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in the fatty tissue of living organisms, and are toxic to humans and wildlife. It currently lists 22 chemicals, including industrial chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides such as DDT and endosulfan, and unintentionally released chemicals such as dioxins and furans. PCBs remain common contaminants of animal and human food chains, with diet as one of the main sources of exposure to the general population.

CHEMICALS & WASTE MEAs

CONVENTION ON THE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS AND PESTICIDES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

OTHER NAMES	THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION / PIC
ADOPTION DATE	10.09.1998 ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
SIGNATURE DATE	11.09.1998
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	24.02.2004
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	168 PARTIES 72 SIGNATORIES

To promote shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among Parties in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals to protect human health and the environment from potential harm. The convention defines several substances that are characterized as hazardous chemicals, and Parties can decide whether to allow or ban the importation of chemicals listed in the treaty. Exporting countries are obliged to make sure that producers within their jurisdiction comply with proper labelling, include directions on safe handling, and inform purchasers of any known restrictions or bans based on the principle of Prior Informed Consent (PIC).

THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

OTHER NAMES	MERCURY CONVENTION
ADOPTION DATE	10.10.2013 KUMAMOTO, JAPAN
SIGNATURE DATE	10.10.2013
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	16.08.2017
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	154 PARTIES 128 SIGNATORIES

Designed to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of mercury and mercury compounds. Mercury is a toxic heavy metal that can travel long distances through the atmosphere and bioaccumulate in food chains, particularly in fish and other aquatic organisms. Exposure is especially concerning for fetal and child development, causing potential nervous, digestive, and immune system damage. To address mercury throughout its entire life cycle, countries are required to control mercury mining and trade, reduce or eliminate mercury use in certain processes and products, manage mercury-containing waste, address contaminated sites, and reduce mercury use in small-scale gold mining. The Convention is named after Minamata, Japan, where industrial releases of methylmercury into Minamata Bay caused severe mercury poisoning in the 20th century, becoming known as Minamata disease.

CLIMATE & OZONE MEAs

AMENDMENT TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER	
OTHER NAMES	KIGALI AMENDMENT
ADOPTION DATE	15.10.2016 KIGALI, RWANDA
SIGNATURE DATE	15.10.2016
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	01.01.2019
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	174 PARTIES

Building on the success of the Montreal Protocol, the Kigali Amendment was established to phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), a man-made chemical and a type of fluorinated greenhouse gas (F-gases). Often used in air conditioning or refrigeration, these highly potent greenhouse gases were growing at over 10% annually without restrictions. Despite not posing a threat to the ozone layer, HFCs have global warming potential thousands of times greater than carbon dioxide, elevating their climate priority status. The Amendment commits developed and developing nations to reducing HFC production and consumption over different periods of time, with developed countries beginning reductions in 2019 and developing countries expected to cap HFC use in 2024. Under this agreement, global HFC use is expected to fall by 80 - 85%.

MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER	
OTHER NAMES	MONTREAL PROTOCOL
ADOPTION DATE	16.09.1987 MONTREAL, CANADA
SIGNATURE DATE	16.09.1987
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	01.01.1989
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	198 PARTIES 46 SIGNATORIES

Regulates the production and consumption of nearly 100 man-made chemicals known as ozone-depleting substances (ODS), which damage the stratospheric ozone layer when released into the atmosphere. All parties have specific responsibilities related to the phasing out of different groups of ODS, control of ODS trade, data reporting, and licensing systems to control ODS imports and exports. With equal but differentiated responsibilities, developed and developing countries have different timetables of binding, measurable commitments. One of the only treaties to achieve universal ratification.

CLIMATE & OZONE MEAs

PROTOCOL TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE	
OTHER NAMES	THE KYOTO PROTOCOL
ADOPTION DATE	11.12.1997 KYOTO, JAPAN
SIGNATURE DATE	16.03.1998
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	16.02.2005
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	192 PARTIES 83 SIGNATORIES

The Kyoto Protocol is a protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC), aimed at combating global warming. The major distinction between the Protocol and the Convention is that while the Convention encouraged industrialised countries to stabilize GHG emissions, the Protocol commits them to do so. The major feature of the Kyoto Protocol is that it sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European Community for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These amount to an average of five per cent against 1990 levels over the five years 2008–2012. Besides needing to meet targets through national measures, the Kyoto Protocol offers countries an additional means of meeting their targets by way of three market-based mechanisms: Emission trading schemes, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint implementation (JI).

UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE	
OTHER NAMES	UNFCCC
ADOPTION DATE	9.05.1992 NEW YORK
SIGNATURE DATE	04.06.1992
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	21.03.1994
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	198 PARTIES 165 SIGNATORIES

The principal global treaty for coordinating international responses to climate change, providing the foundation for subsequent legal instruments including the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. Relying on the scientific assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to inform its decisions and guide negotiations, it aims to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system. Built on the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities, it bifurcates these responsibilities among Annex I and Annex II countries.

CLIMATE & OZONE MEAs

VIENNA CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE OZONE LAYER	
OTHER NAMES	VIENNA CONVENTION
ADOPTION DATE	22.03.1985 VIENNA, AUSTRIA
SIGNATURE DATE	22.03.1985
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	22.09.1988
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	198 PARTIES 28 SIGNATORIES

The Vienna Convention made history as the first convention of any kind to be ratified by every country involved. As chlorofluorocarbon gases (CFCs) migrate to the stratosphere, they release chlorine, breaking down the ozone layer, which protects against excess ultraviolet radiation. Created in response to advancements in scientific understanding of stratospheric ozone depletion and its impacts on human health and the environment, the framework lays out agreed-upon principles but does not require countries to take action. The Convention prioritized knowledge sharing and cooperation, containing no specific limits on chemicals that cause ozone depletion.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA

OTHER NAMES	UNCCD
ADOPTION DATE	17.06.1994 PARIS, FRANCE
SIGNATURE DATE	14.10.1994
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	26.12.1996
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	197 PARTIES 114 SIGNATORIES

Established to restore healthy lands and address crop failure, migration, and conflict due to drought and degradation. Based on the principles of participation, partnership, and decentralization, the UNCCD is a commitment to restore and manage the world's land. One of the three "Rio Conventions," alongside UNFCCC and CBD, mitigating desertification was made a priority due to its influence on political and socio-economic issues and environmental impact. Making areas flood-prone, desertification leads to soil salinization, the deterioration of water quality, and silting of rivers, streams, and reservoirs.

OCEAN MEAs

AGREEMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION

OTHER NAMES	HIGH SEAS TREATY / BBNJ AGREEMENT
ADOPTION DATE	19.06.2023 NEW YORK, US
SIGNATURE DATE	20.09.2023
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	17.01.2026
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	94 PARTIES 145 SIGNATORIES

Provides a legally binding framework to protect marine biodiversity in the high seas and the deep seabed, or areas of the ocean that lie beyond any country's national jurisdiction. The treaty applies to two-thirds of the world's oceans, promoting sustainable use of ocean resources and ensuring fair sharing of benefits from marine genetic materials found in deep-sea species. The high seas are home to 10 million species, many of which remain unidentified, and serve as vital migratory corridors for many important marine species. The Agreement enables the creation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the high seas, which were often limited to national waters previously.

UNCLOS - CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA (INCLUDING PART XI)

OTHER NAMES	LAW OF THE SEA CONVENTION OR THE LAW OF THE SEA TREATY
ADOPTION DATE	10.12.1982 MONTEGO BAY
SIGNATURE DATE	10.12.1982
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	16.11.1994
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	172 PARTIES 157 SIGNATORIES

The international agreement that defines the rights and responsibilities of nations in their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources. The "Constitution of the Sea", it codified international law and balanced the interests of coastal and landlocked States to promote sustainable use of the oceans. UNCLOS defines different maritime zones, including territorial seas, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and the high seas, determining what states may do within each.

THE UNITED NATIONS AGREEMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA OF 10 DECEMBER 1982 RELATING TO THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS

OTHER NAMES	FISH STOCKS
ADOPTION DATE	04.08.1995 NEW YORK
SIGNATURE DATE	04.12.1995
DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE	11.12.2001
PARTIES AND SIGNATORIES	96 PARTIES 59 SIGNATORIES

Sets out principles for the conservation and management of those fish stocks and establishes that such management must be based on the precautionary approach and the best available scientific information. It attempts to achieve this objective by providing a framework for cooperation in the conservation and management of those resources. It establishes detailed minimum international standards for the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks; ensures that measures taken for the conservation and management of those stocks in areas under national jurisdiction and in the adjacent high seas are compatible and coherent; ensures that there are effective mechanisms for compliance and enforcement of those measures on the high seas; and recognizes the special requirements of developing States in relation to conservation and management as well as the development and participation in fisheries for the two types of stocks mentioned above.

Glossary

Other terms relevant to this report are as follows:

Treaty: an international agreement concluded between States in written form and governed by international law, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments and whatever its particular designation.²

Ratification, Acceptance(A), Approval(AA), Accession(a), Succession(d): in each case, the international act so named whereby a State establishes on the international plane its consent to be bound by a treaty.³

Party: a State which has consented to be bound by the treaty and for which the treaty is in force.⁴

Signature ad referendum: A representative may sign a treaty "ad referendum", i.e., under the condition that the signature is confirmed by his/her state.⁵

Signature Subject to Ratification, Acceptance or Approval: Where the signature is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval, the signature does not establish consent to be bound. However, it is a means of authentication and expresses the willingness of the signatory state to continue the treaty-making process.⁶

Entry into force: In cases where multilateral treaties are involved, it is common to provide for a fixed number of states to express their consent for entry into force. Some treaties provide for additional conditions to be satisfied, e.g., by specifying that a certain category of states must be among the consenters.⁷

Scoring System

Based on the data, points have been assigned for signing and ratification, and points have been deducted for not signing. For the League Tables, the following ratings have been used:

- **3 points for ratifying (being both party/signatory and having ratified)**
- **1 point for signing (not being Party to the conventions)**
- **-1 point for not signing**

If a country has ratified the MEA, it receives 3 points, whereas if it has only signed the convention without ratifying it, it receives only 1 point. If a country has not signed the MEA, then one point is deducted from its total; on this basis, it would be possible for a country to score a negative number of points overall – if it is a non-signatory to more MEAs than it is a signatory.

² 'Negotiating and Implementing MEAs: A Manual for NGOs', a joint publication of Stakeholder Forum, Earth Media and Centro de Estudios Ambientales (CEDEA) p11 <http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/MEAs%20Final.pdf>

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ *United Nations Treaty Collection: Treaty Reference Guide*. Based on Art.12 (2) (b), Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 <https://treaties.un.org/pages/Overview>

⁶ *United Nations Treaty Collection: Treaty Reference Guide*. Based on Arts.10 and 18, Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 <https://treaties.un.org/pages/Overview>

⁷ *United Nations Treaty Collection: Treaty Reference Guide*. Based on Art.24, Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 <https://treaties.un.org/pages/Overview>

Divisions

Conventions Played

The column on 'Conventions Played' shows how many MEAs the country is part of as a signatory to. If a country is not a signatory to one or more MEAs, the total played is reduced accordingly, and the missing MEAs are listed beside the number.

Premiership

Countries within the Premiership group are Parties to all 15 Conventions, regardless of whether they are Signatories. This has earned them a perfect score of 45 points. Each Premiership country, whether through Ratification, Acceptance, Approval, or Accession, thereby has a legal duty to adhere to the rules and regulations outlined in each MEA, though this does not necessarily guarantee their actual compliance.

Division One

Countries within Division One have reached a point threshold indicative of being Signatories to all 15 treaties. Countries that have signed but not yet ratified one treaty achieved 43 points, earning them second place and a spot in Division One. Signing an MEA signals a country's general approval and intention to cooperate, but does not legally bind them to the agreement.

Division Two

Countries in Division Two have had points deducted because they failed to sign one of the Conventions, mainly Fish Stocks, or have signed all 15 conventions but have yet to ratify two.

Division Three

Countries in this Division have 26–40 points and mainly lost points due to their failure to sign two or more agreements or to ratify a significant enough number of agreements.

Division Four

Division Four looks similar to Division Three in the Conventions Played column, but is set apart by its players' histories of signing, but not ratifying, MEAs. Countries in this Division have earned 30–35 points.

Sunday League

Countries that fall within this group are characterised by a poor record in terms of signing or ratifying the identified Conventions, all having fewer than 30 points. Many of these countries are Parties to fewer than half of the Conventions, and in many cases have ratified even fewer of them.

Change From 2010 League

While the past MEA League Tables calculated the point differences for countries between five conventions from 2002, 2008, and 2010, this 2026 League Table is only marking differences between the nations' leagues in 2010 versus now (i.e., if Barbados was in the Premier League in the 2010 League Table and dropped to Division Two in the 2026 League Table, it will be marked as **- 2 Leagues**; vice versa would be **+ 2 Leagues**). This is due to the amount of time between the two Tables and the increase from 5 to 15 Conventions included, significantly impacting all scores.

PREMIERSHIP				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
1	ALBANIA	15	45	+3 LEAGUES
	AUSTRIA	15	45	-
	BAHAMAS	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	BANGLADESH	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	BELGIUM	15	45	-
	BELIZE	15	45	-
	BRAZIL	15	45	-
	COSTA RICA	15	45	-
	CROATIA	15	45	+3 LEAGUES
	CYPRUS	15	45	-
	DENMARK	15	45	-
	ECUADOR	15	45	+3 LEAGUES
	EUROPEAN UNION	15	45	-
	FINLAND	15	45	-
	FRANCE	15	45	-
	GHANA	15	45	+2 LEAGUES
	GREECE	15	45	-
	HUNGARY	15	45	-
	INDONESIA	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	IRELAND	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	JAPAN	15	45	-
	KENYA	15	45	-
	KIRIBATI	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	LATVIA	15	45	-
	LIBERIA	15	45	-
	LUXEMBOURG	15	45	-
	MALDIVES	15	45	-
	MALTA	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	MARSHALL ISLANDS	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	MAURITIUS	15	45	-

PREMIERSHIP				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
	MOZAMBIQUE	15	45	+2 LEAGUES
	PANAMA	15	45	-
	PALAU	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	PHILIPPINES	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	PORTUGAL	15	45	-
	REP. OF KOREA	15	45	-
	ROMANIA	15	45	-
	SAINT KITTS & NEVIS	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	SAINT VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	15	45	+3 LEAGUES
	SAMOA	15	45	-
	SIERRA LEONE	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	SLOVENIA	15	45	-
	SPAIN	15	45	-
	SRI LANKA	15	45	-
	TONGA	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	UNITED KINGDOM	15	45	-
	URUGUAY	15	45	+1 LEAGUE
	VIET NAM	15	45	+2 LEAGUES

DIVISION ONE				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
2	BULGARIA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	CAMBODIA	15	43	+2 LEAGUES
	CHILE	15	43	+1 LEAGUE
	CHINA	15	43	-
	CÔTE D'IVOIRE	15	43	+1 LEAGUE
	CZECHIA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	ESTONIA	15	43	+1 LEAGUE
	GABON	15	43	-
	GERMANY	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	GUINEA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	GUINEA-BISSAU	15	43	+2 LEAGUES
	ICELAND	15	43	+1 LEAGUE
	INDIA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	ITALY	15	43	-
	JAMAICA	15	43	+1 LEAGUE
	LITHUANIA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	MAURITANIA	15	43	-
	MOROCCO	15	43	+2 LEAGUES
	NETHERLANDS (KINGDOM OF THE)	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	NIGERIA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	NORWAY	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	POLAND	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	SAINT LUCIA	15	43	-
	SENEGAL	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	SEYCHELLES	15	43	-
	SLOVAKIA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	SOUTH AFRICA	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	SWEDEN	15	43	-1 LEAGUE
	THAILAND	15	43	+1 LEAGUE
	TOGO	15	43	+1 LEAGUE

DIVISION TWO				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
3	ARMENIA	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	BARBADOS	14 MERCURY	41	-1 LEAGUE
	BENIN	14 HIGH SEAS	41	-
	BOTSWANA	14 FISH STOCKS	41	+1 LEAGUE
	BURKINA FASO	15	41	-1 LEAGUE
	COMOROS	14 FISH STOCKS	41	+1 LEAGUE
	CONGO	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	CUBA	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	DJIBOUTI	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	FIJI	14 MERCURY	41	-
	GAMBIA (REP OF THE)	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	HONDURAS	14 FISH STOCKS	41	+1 LEAGUE
	JORDAN	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REP.	14 FISH STOCKS	41	+1 LEAGUE
	MADAGASCAR	14 KIGALI	41	-
	MALAWI	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	MEXICO	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	NAMIBIA	14 HIGH SEAS	41	-2 LEAGUES
	NEW ZEALAND	15	41	-2 LEAGUES
	OMAN	14 HIGH SEAS	41	-2 LEAGUES
	PAKISTAN	15	41	-1 LEAGUE
	REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	SAUDI ARABIA	14 HIGH SEAS	41	-

DIVISION TWO				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
	SERBIA	14 FISH STOCKS	41	-
	SOLOMON ISLANDS	14 MERCURY	41	-
	TUVALU	14 CARTAGENA	41	+1 LEAGUE
	VANUATU	14 CARTAGENA	41	+1 LEAGUE

DIVISION THREE				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
4	ARGENTINA	15	39	-1 LEAGUE
	AUSTRALIA	14 CARTAGENA	39	-1 LEAGUE
	BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	CAMEROON	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	LEBANON	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-
	LESOTHO	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-
	MONACO	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	MONTENEGRO	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	NAURU	14 MERCURY	39	-1 LEAGUE
	NORTH MACEDONIA	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-
	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	14 MERCURY	39	-1 LEAGUE
	PARAGUAY	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	SWITZERLAND	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	UGANDA	14 HIGH SEAS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	UKRAINE	14 KIGALI	39	-3 LEAGUES
	UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-1 LEAGUE
	ZAMBIA	14 FISH STOCKS	39	-
	ZIMBABWE	14 FISH STOCKS	39	+1 LEAGUE
5	ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	13 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	37	-
	BAHRAIN	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	+1 LEAGUE
	BURUNDI	14 FISH STOCKS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	CABO VERDE	13 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY	37	-1 LEAGUE
	CANADA	14 KYOTO	37	-2 LEAGUES

DIVISION THREE				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
5	CHAD	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	COLOMBIA	14 FISH STOCKS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	COOK ISLANDS	14 MERCURY	37	-2 LEAGUES
	DOMINICA	13 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY	37	-1 LEAGUE
	EGYPT	14 MERCURY	37	-
	ESWATINI	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-
	GEORGIA	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	GRENADA	13 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY	37	+1 LEAGUE
	KUWAIT	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-
	MALI	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	MICRONESIA (FED STATES OF)	13 CARTAGENA + MERCURY	37	-
	MONGOLIA	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	NICARAGUA	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-
	NIGER	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	RWANDA	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	37	-1 LEAGUE
	QATAR	13 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	37	-1 LEAGUE
	SINGAPORE	13 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS	37	-
	TÜRKIYE	13 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS	37	-

DIVISION FOUR				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
6	ALGERIA	13 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	35	-1 LEAGUE
	ANGOLA	14 FISH STOCKS	35	-
	BELARUS	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-1 LEAGUE
	CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-1 LEAGUE
	EL SALVADOR	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-2 LEAGUES
	ETHIOPIA	14 FISH STOCKS	35	-2 LEAGUES
	IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)	13 KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	35	-3 LEAGUES
	GUATEMALA	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-1 LEAGUE
	MALAYSIA	14 FISH STOCKS	35	-2 LEAGUES
	NEPAL	14 FISH STOCKS	35	-2 LEAGUES
	PERU	13 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS	35	-1 LEAGUE
	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	13 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	35	-1 LEAGUE
	SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE	13 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS	35	-
	SURINAME	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-2 LEAGUES
	TUNISIA	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-2 LEAGUES
	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	13 FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	35	-1 LEAGUE
7	AZERBAIJAN	12 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	33	-
	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	12 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	33	-1 LEAGUE
	ERITREA	12 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	33	-1 LEAGUE

DIVISION FOUR				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
	GUYANA	12 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	33	-2 LEAGUES
	IRAQ	12 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	33	+1 LEAGUE
	KYRGYZSTAN	12 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + MERCURY	33	-1 LEAGUE
	MYANMAR	12 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	33	-1 LEAGUE
	SOMALIA	12 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	33	+1 LEAGUE
	STATE OF PALESTINE	12 KYOTO + FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	33	
	SYRIAN ARAB REP	12 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	33	-1 LEAGUE
	YEMEN	13 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	33	-2 LEAGUES
8	AFGHANISTAN	12 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	31	+1 LEAGUE
	BHUTAN	13 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	31	-
	DEM PEOPLE'S REP OF KOREA	12 FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	31	-2 LEAGUES
	EQUATORIAL GUINEA	13 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS	31	-
	LIECHTENSTEIN	12 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	31	-1 LEAGUE
	NIUE	12 BASEL + MERCURY + ROTTERDAM	31	-2 LEAGUES
	SUDAN	12 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	31	-2 LEAGUES
	VENEZUELA	12 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + HIGH SEAS	31	-1 LEAGUE

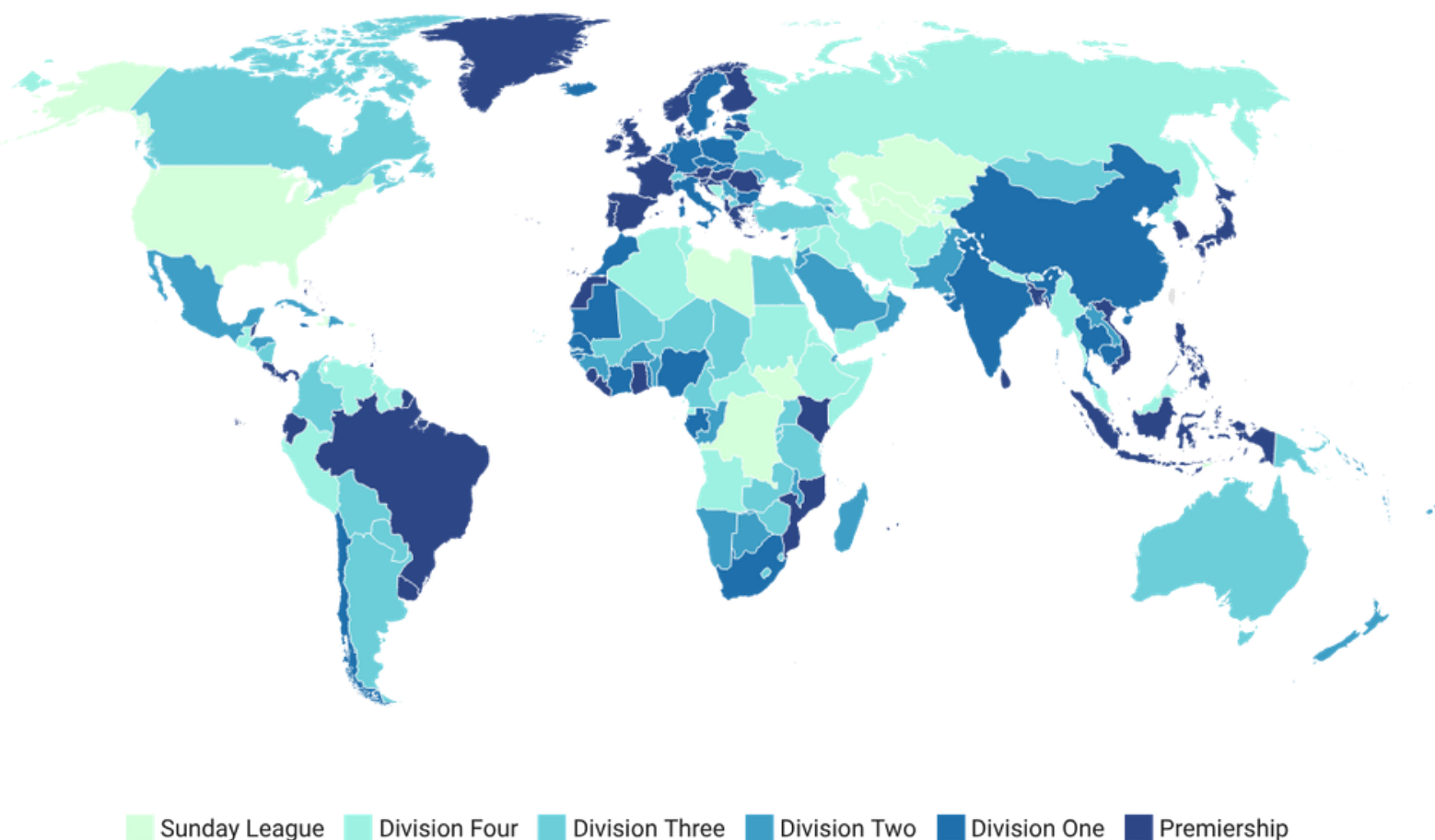
SUNDAY LEAGUE				
RANKING	COUNTRY	CONVENTIONS PLAYED	POINTS IN 2026	CHANGE FROM 2010 LEAGUE
9	DEM REP OF THE CONGO	11 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	29	-3 LEAGUES
	LIBYA	12 FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	29	-3 LEAGUES
	TAJIKISTAN	11 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	29	-1 LEAGUE
	TIMOR-LESTE	11 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + MERCURY	29	-1 LEAGUE
	TURKMENISTAN	11 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	29	-1 LEAGUE
	UZBEKISTAN	11 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	29	-
	BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	12 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS + MERCURY	29	-1 LEAGUE
	SAN MARINO	10 CARTAGENA + FISH STOCKS + KIGALI + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	29	-
10	HAITI	12 KYOTO + FISH STOCKS + KIGALI	27	-
11	KAZAKHSTAN	11 UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + MERCURY + HIGH SEAS	25	-2 LEAGUES
	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	10 UNFCCC + KYOTO + CBD + CARTAGENA + UNCLOS	25	-1 LEAGUE
	ISRAEL	11 CARTAGENA + UNCLOS + KIGALI + HIGH SEAS	25	-1 LEAGUE
12	ANDORRA	10 KYOTO + CARTAGENA + UNCLOS + FISH STOCKS + MERCURY	23	-
13	HOLY SEE	ONLY PLAYED UNFCCC + BASEL + VIENNA + MONTREAL + KIGALI	5	-
	SOUTH SUDAN	ONLY PLAYED UNFCCC + UNCBD + UNCCD + VIENNA + MONTREAL	5	

Global Analysis

This map shows the scores of all countries, with the lightest color representing the Sunday League (the fewest points) and the darkest color representing the Premiership (the most points).

The next section looks at how regions as a whole are performing, analyzing regional trends, top competitors, and those that have fallen behind. We have also chosen to examine AOSIS as a grouping. Although AOSIS membership is not determined regionally, analyzing its members together can help facilitate peer learning.

Please note that this report is based on official United Nations country classifications and assigns overseas territories the same ranking as the UN-recognized Party under whose jurisdiction they currently fall.



Regional Analysis: Africa

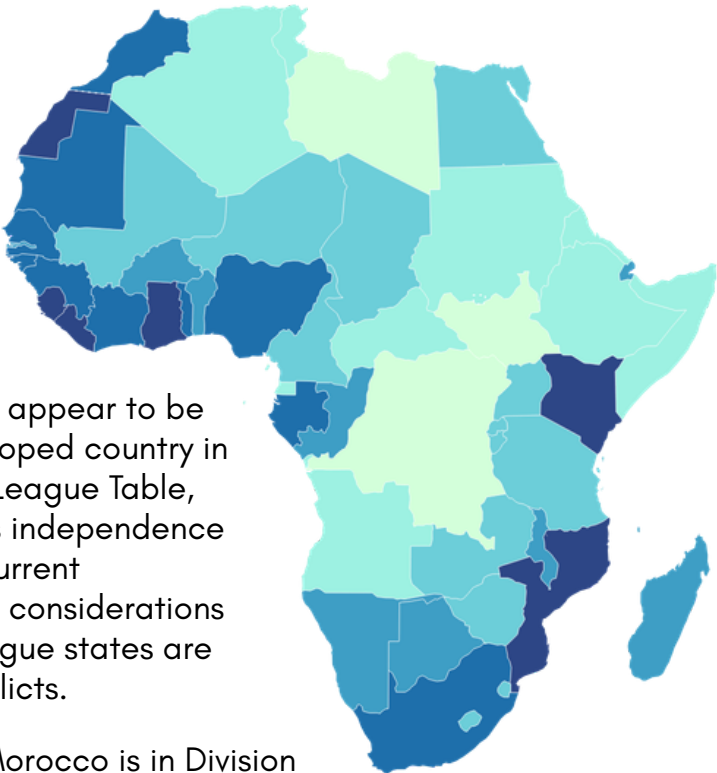
PREMIER LEAGUE	GHANA, KENYA, LIBERIA, MAURITIUS, MOZAMBIQUE, SIERRA LEONE
DIVISION ONE	CÔTE D'IVOIRE, GABON, GUINEA, GUINEA-BISSAU, MAURITANIA, MOROCCO, NIGERIA, SENEGAL, SEYCHELLES, SOUTH AFRICA, TOGO
DIVISION TWO	BENIN, BOTSWANA, BURKINA FASO, COMOROS, CONGO, DJIBOUTI, THE GAMBIA, MADAGASCAR, MALAWI, MOZAMBIQUE, NAMIBIA
DIVISION THREE	BURUNDI, CABO VERDE, CAMEROON, CHAD, EGYPT, ESWATINI, LESOTHO, MALI, NIGER, RWANDA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, UGANDA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE
DIVISION FOUR	ALGERIA, ANGOLA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, SOMALIA, SUDAN, TUNISIA
SUNDAY LEAGUE	DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, LIBYA, SOUTH SUDAN

Africa as a whole contributes less than 4% of global GHG emissions and has also received less than 4% of global climate finance as of 2024.⁸ This compounds many African nations' existing distinct structural, political, and technical hurdles in ratifying and implementing MEAs.

West Africa contains most of the continent's highest performers, while Central and East Africa appear to be the furthest behind. The youngest and least developed country in the world, South Sudan sits at the bottom of the League Table, having ratified five of these fifteen MEAs since its independence in 2011. However, recent political instability and current humanitarian crises in South Sudan are important considerations here. Notably, all three of the African Sunday League states are sites of the continent's most severe, ongoing conflicts.

North Africa as a region is struggling, and while Morocco is in Division One, it is distantly followed by Egypt in Division Three, Algeria and Tunisia in Division Four, and Libya in the Sunday League.

Mozambique rose to the Premiership as recently as August 11, 2026, when it ratified its accession to the High Seas Treaty.

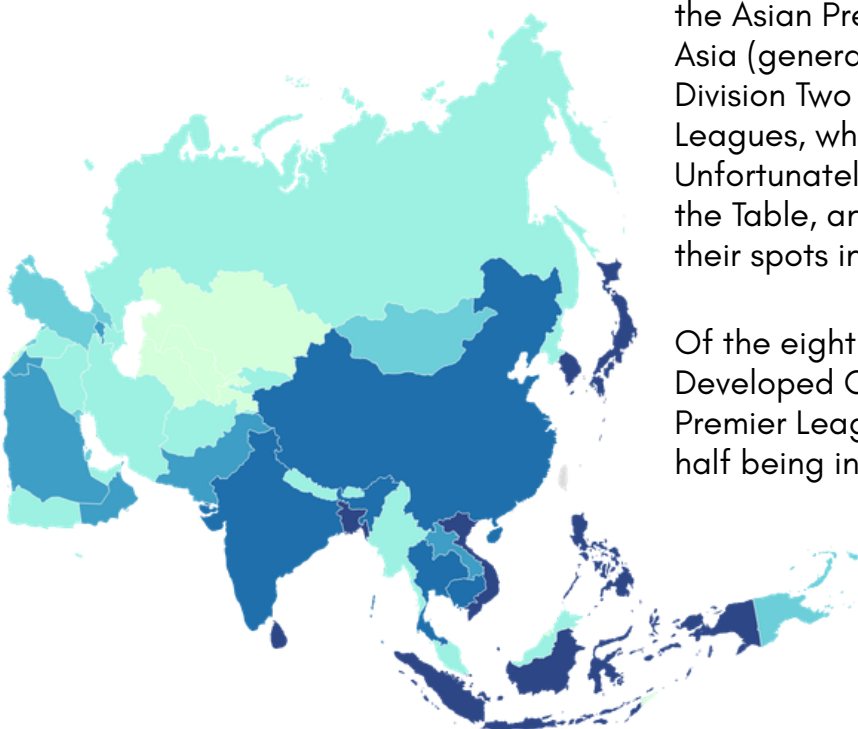


⁸ Africa – Total CO2 Emissions. IEA. (2026). <https://www.iea.org/regions/africa/emissions>

Regional Analysis: Asia

PREMIER LEAGUE	BANGLADESH, INDONESIA, JAPAN, MALDIVES, PHILIPPINES, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, SRI LANKA, VIET NAM
DIVISION ONE	CAMBODIA, CHINA, INDIA, THAILAND
DIVISION TWO	ARMENIA, JORDAN, LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, OMAN, PAKISTAN, SAUDI ARABIA
DIVISION THREE	BAHRAIN, GEORGIA, KUWAIT, LEBANON, MONGOLIA, QATAR, SINGAPORE, TÜRKIYE
DIVISION FOUR	AFGHANISTAN, AZERBAIJAN, BHUTAN, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA, IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF), IRAQ, KYRGYZSTAN, MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, NEPAL, STATE OF PALESTINE, SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, YEMEN
SUNDAY LEAGUE	BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, ISRAEL, KAZAKHSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, TIMOR-LESTE, TURKMENISTAN, UZBEKISTAN

The world's two most populous nations, China, due to Fish Stocks, and India, for High Seas, both occupy Division One.⁹ When considering other economic leaders like Japan and South Korea sit in the Premier League, Asia is a strong force in global MEAs. But considerably less concentrated at the top of the league than Europe, there is significant variation between Asia's subregions. Only 12 of 47 countries (25.5%) are in the Premiership or Division 1, while Division 4 alone contains almost 30% of Asian countries, making it the largest Asian group. The strongest participation comes from East, Southeast, and South Asia, while Western and Central Asian countries skew towards the bottom of the Table.



Southeast Asian island nations make up the majority of the Asian Premier League, while much of Southwest Asia (generally referred to as the 'Middle East') sits in Division Two and below. Since 2010, Iran has dropped 3 Leagues, while Oman has dropped 2 Leagues. Unfortunately, no Middle Eastern country has risen in the Table, and only Jordan and Saudi Arabia have kept their spots in Division Two.

Of the eight Asian countries that are considered Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Bangladesh sits in the Premier League and Cambodia in Division One, with half being in Division Four and below.

⁹ U.S. and World Population Clock, U.S. Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/popclock/world>

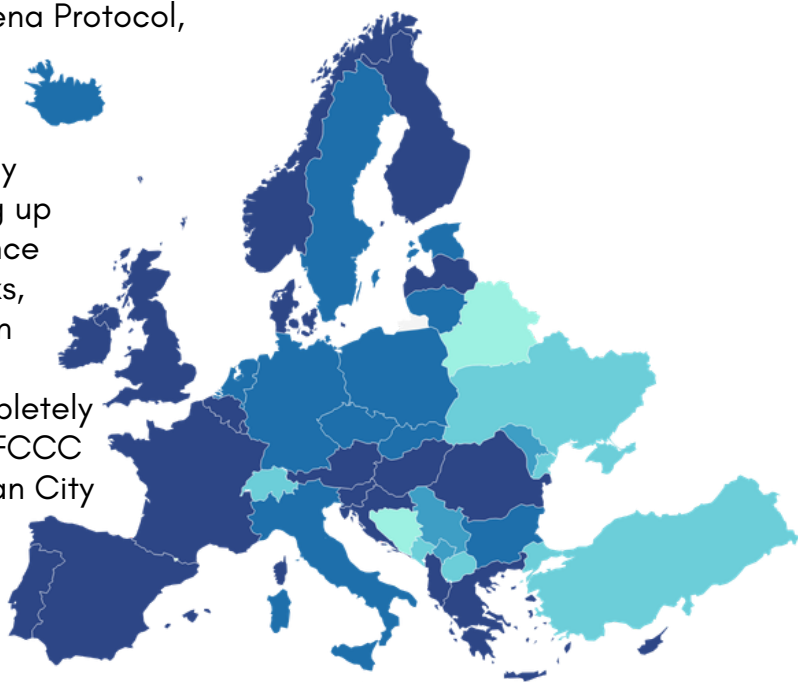
Regional Analysis: Europe

PREMIER LEAGUE	ALBANIA, AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CROATIA, CYPRUS, DENMARK, FINLAND, FRANCE, GREECE, HUNGARY, IRELAND, LATVIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
DIVISION ONE	BULGARIA, CZECHIA, ESTONIA, GERMANY, ICELAND, ITALY, LITHUANIA, NETHERLANDS (KINGDOM OF THE), NORWAY, POLAND, SLOVAKIA, SWEDEN
DIVISION TWO	REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, SERBIA
DIVISION THREE	MONACO, MONTENEGRO, NORTH MACEDONIA, SWITZERLAND, UKRAINE
DIVISION FOUR	BELARUS, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, LIECHTENSTEIN, RUSSIAN FEDERATION
SUNDAY LEAGUE	ANDORRA, HOLY SEE, SAN MARINO

With around 40% of all European countries in the Premier League, Europe is the global leader in MEAs. A very recent addition is Albania, which went from non-signatory to Party to the Fish Stocks Agreement on July 9th, 2026, making an impressive jump from Division Three in 2010. Croatia, Ireland, and Malta all made the Premiership since 2010 as well, with Ireland finally ratifying Stockholm, Malta ratifying Rotterdam, and Croatia, previously Division Three, ratifying Fish Stocks and Rotterdam.

Southern and western European countries comprise most of the Premiership, with eastern Europe generally being the weakest regional area, represented only by Hungary and Romania. The opposite is true for Division One, which houses approximately 30% of European nations, primarily in the north and east. Iceland is the only Division One country that has ratified the High Seas Treaty; instead, it has not yet ratified the Cartagena Protocol, being only one of twenty-three member states that have yet to do so.

Europe is also home to around 20% of the Sunday League. Andorra, Holy See, and San Marino bring up the rear, having remained in the same division since 2010. None have played in Cartagena, Fish Stocks, or Mercury, and Holy See is tied with South Sudan for last place in the Table, having played only five conventions. Two of these countries are completely surrounded by Italy. The Holy See ratified the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement in 2022 on behalf of Vatican City State, and applies exclusively within its territory.¹⁰ Vatican City is the smallest country in the world, and San Marino is the fifth-smallest.



¹⁰ Vatican City State's National Determined Contribution. (2023). <https://unfccc.int>.

Regional Analysis: Oceania

PREMIER LEAGUE	KIRIBATI, MARSHALL ISLANDS, PALAU, SAMOA, TONGA
DIVISION ONE	
DIVISION TWO	FIJI, NEW ZEALAND, SOLOMON ISLANDS, TUVALU, VANUATU
DIVISION THREE	AUSTRALIA, COOK ISLANDS, MICRONESIA (FEDERATED STATES OF), NAURU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA
DIVISION FOUR	NIUE
SUNDAY LEAGUE	

Comprised primarily of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Oceania and Polynesia have most of their countries concentrated in Divisions Two and Three. There are five Premiership countries: Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, and Tonga. Samoa is the most recent addition to the Premier League, having only ratified the High Seas Treaty on 14th September 2026, highlighting the rapidly evolving global MEA landscape.

Unsurprisingly, all Oceania countries are players in the three ocean MEAs. These countries' vulnerabilities to climate change impacts, including sea-level rise and intensifying tropical cyclones and storms, make the aims of these MEAs particularly relevant.

The two treaties least played by these islands are the Cartagena Protocol and the Minamata (Mercury) Convention. The Mercury Convention has yet to be ratified by half of the Oceania countries. However, the GEF created the “Development of the Minamata Initial Assessment in the Pacific Region (MIA Pacific)” project to encourage and aid in the ratification of the Convention.¹¹ In addition, Australia, Micronesia, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu have not yet signed, while the Cook Islands has not yet ratified, the Cartagena Protocol.



¹¹ Learn more about the Mercury-Free Pacific Campaign at <https://www.sprep.org/news>.

Regional Analysis: North America

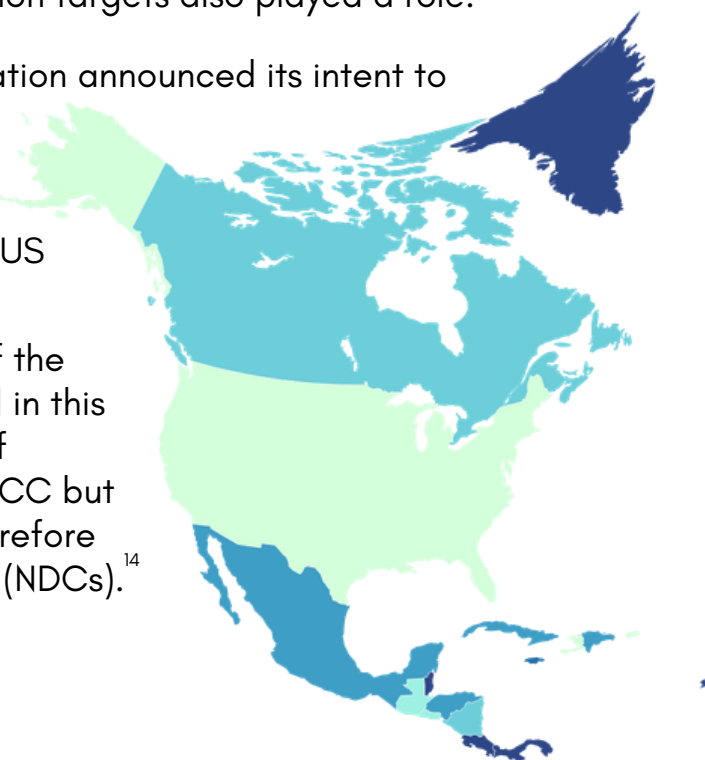
PREMIER LEAGUE	BAHAMAS, BELIZE, COSTA RICA, PANAMA, SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS, SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
DIVISION ONE	JAMAICA, SAINT LUCIA
DIVISION TWO	BARBADOS, CUBA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HONDURAS, MEXICO
DIVISION THREE	ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, CANADA, DOMINICA, GRENADA, NICARAGUA
DIVISION FOUR	EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA
SUNDAY LEAGUE	HAITI, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The North American continent is carried by Latin America and the Caribbean, as is reflected in the League Table. Most of the continent's Premier League members are part of the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC). Costa Rica and Panama both belong to the Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC).

Since the last League Table report in 2010, Canada has dropped two leagues due to its surprising withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol in 2012. The Canadian environment minister, Peter Kent, stated at the time that the Protocol's lack of coverage of the world's two largest emitters, the US and China, made it an "impediment".¹² Some speculate that the country's inability to meet its GHG emissions reduction targets also played a role.

Five years later, in the US, the new Trump administration announced its intent to leave the Paris Agreement, a decision that took effect in 2020.¹³ One year later, the newly elected Biden administration rejoined the Paris Agreement, only for the reelected President Trump to direct the US to withdraw from the UNFCCC itself.

Note that while Greenland is geographically part of the North American continent and therefore considered in this map, it is an autonomous territory of the Kingdom of Denmark. It is covered by the Kingdom by the UNFCCC but signed up for the Paris Agreement in 2023, and therefore submit its own Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).¹⁴



¹² Quote from The Guardian [article](#). Find the official UNFCCC document [here](#).

¹³ Paris Climate Agreement. Environmental & Energy Law Program. Harvard Law School. (2026). <https://eelp.law.harvard.edu/tracker/paris>. Official Presidential Memoranda can be found [here](#).

¹⁴ Climate Greenland. (2026). <https://climategreenland.gl>

Regional Analysis: South America

PREMIER LEAGUE	BRAZIL, ECUADOR, URUGUAY
DIVISION ONE	CHILE
DIVISION TWO	
DIVISION THREE	ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF), COLOMBIA, PARAGUAY
DIVISION FOUR	GUYANA, PERU, SURINAME, VENEZUELA (BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF)
SUNDAY LEAGUE	

South American countries are divided into multiple different UNFCCC negotiating blocs, with some countries falling into multiple groups: notably, Venezuela and Bolivia are part of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA); Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay form Grupo SUR; Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, and Peru are in the Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC).¹⁵

Despite most South American countries possessing a coastline, the greatest gaps in their ratification of MEAs are in the ocean governance treaties. Over half have not ratified the Fish Stocks Agreement, and six of these seven countries are also non-signatories. Argentina is the only exception to this trend, having signed but not ratified the Agreement.

The High Seas Treaty is also missing seven of the twelve South American ratifications, though most countries have signed it. Guyana and Venezuela are the only two that have yet to sign or ratify the Treaty. Guyana has ratified UNCLOS but not signed Fish Stocks, while Venezuela has neither signed nor ratified either.

Note that while French Guiana is filled in on this map, it is done so as an official overseas region of France, as is currently recognized under the UNFCCC and therefore reflects France's score of 45 points. The case is the same for the Falkland Islands, which the UK officially extended to include in its ratification of the UNFCCC.



¹⁵ You can find information on UNFCCC party groupings at <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings>. Note that some countries fall into more blocs than mentioned.

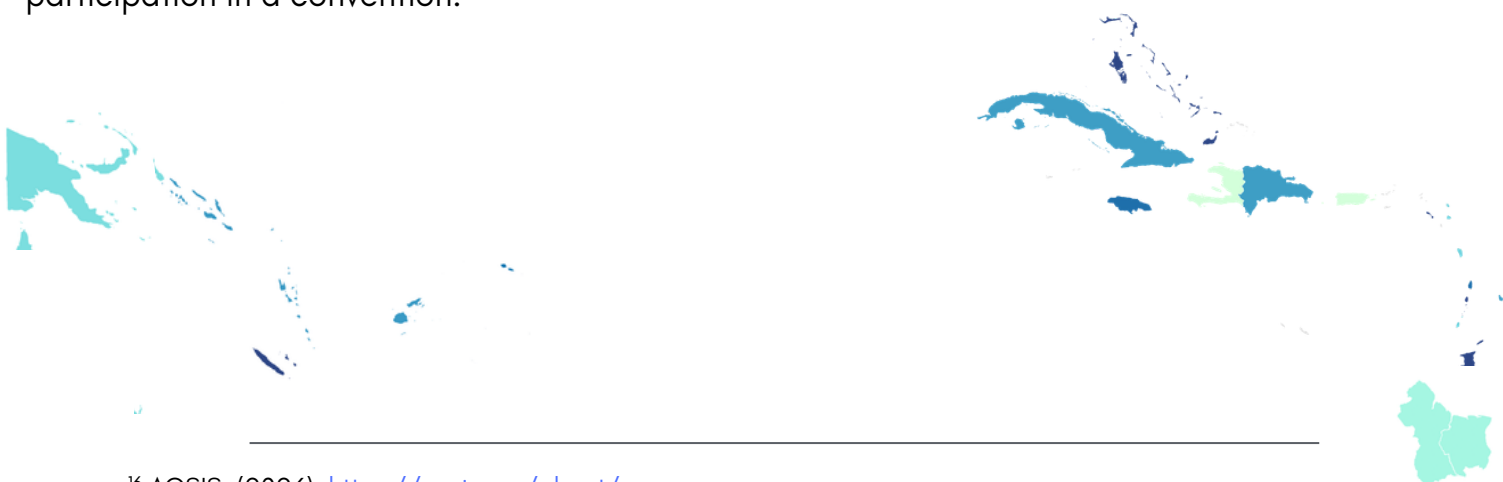
Group Analysis: Association of Small Island States (AOSIS)

PREMIER LEAGUE	BAHAMAS, BELIZE, KIRIBATI, MALDIVES, MARSHALL ISLANDS, MAURITIUS, PALAU, SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS, SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, SAMOA, TONGA, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
DIVISION ONE	GUINEA-BISSAU, JAMAICA, SAINT LUCIA, SEYCHELLES
DIVISION TWO	BARBADOS, COMOROS, CUBA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, FIJI, SOLOMON ISLANDS, TUVALU, VANUATU
DIVISION THREE	ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, CABO VERDE, COOK ISLANDS, DOMINICA, GRENADA, MICRONESIA (FEDERATED STATES OF), NAURU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SINGAPORE
DIVISION FOUR	GUYANA, NIUE, SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE, SURINAME
SUNDAY LEAGUE	HAITI, TIMOR-LESTE

AOSIS is made up of 39 small islands and low-lying coastal developing states in the Caribbean, Pacific, African, Indian Ocean, and South China Sea.¹⁶ Of these, 37 are members of the UN, and the Cook Islands and Niue participate in UN agencies. The group was formed in 1990 in recognition of these regionally diverse countries' shared vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change and to create a more powerful internationally negotiating bloc.

It is important to differentiate AOSIS from Small Island Developing States (SIDS). While the UN recognizes 57 SIDS, 18 are non-UN Members or Associate Members of Regional Commissions. UN-recognized SIDS American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands hold observer status but cannot attain full membership as US territories.¹⁷ The Netherlands Antilles was an observer until it dissolved in 2010, with Aruba, Curaçao, and Sint Maarten becoming autonomous constituent countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.¹⁸

While AOSIS often operates as a well-aligned, cohesive bloc, our analysis shows that there is still division among members in the League Table. However, it is important to note that a country's ranking is not necessarily indicative of its views on MEAs or its focus areas. Limited capacities, funding restraints, or competing national priorities may be the reasons for a state's lack of participation in a convention.



¹⁶ AOSIS. (2026). <https://aosis.org/about/>

¹⁷ SIDS. <https://www.un.org/ohrls>

¹⁸ Statistics Netherlands. den Dulk & Langenberg. (2025). <https://www.cbs.nl>

League Analysis

Premiership

Of the forty-eight parties in the Premier League, nineteen are in Europe, including the European Union (EU) and Cyprus. This positions the continent as the clear global leader in the ratification of MEA's, potentially indicative of why the 2019 European Green Deal saw Member States agree to regulations aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Europe is followed, though distantly, by Asia, home to eight Premiership nations. North America comes in third, though notably all seven countries are either Latin American or SIDS. Five Premiership countries are African, five are in Oceania, and three lie in South America.

Most notable additions to the Premiership are Croatia and Ecuador, which rose three Leagues since the 2010 report. Ghana and Vietnam moved up from Division Two, and of the newcomers, almost half are SIDs. Of the twenty nations added to the Premiership, seventeen are developing countries, making the League comprised mostly of developing nations. With the High Seas and UNCLOS Fish Stocks Treaties being those ratified by the least number of parties, both are of vital importance to SIDs and coastal states. As these treaties aim to halt the overexploitation of shared ocean resources, protect ocean health and climate resilience, and give small island nations a stronger global voice, it is not surprising that SIDs would sit at the top of the Table.

Division One

Countries sit in Division One because they have ratified fourteen conventions and are signatories to one. While Europe still represents the majority of the countries, it is followed very closely by strong representation from West Africa. Africa and Europe account for 72% of the Division alone. South America is represented only by Chile, and Oceania has no countries in Division One at all. There are four Small Island Developing States, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Seychelles, and most members are developing countries. Morocco and Cambodia notably both rose from Division Three in 2010.

The addition of the High Seas Treaty was the gatekeeper of the Premiership for most of these states, as seventeen of the twenty-nine are not Parties. Six are not Parties to UNCLOS Fish Stocks Treaty, while Cambodia notably is, but has yet to ratify UNCLOS itself. Rotterdam and Cartagena have not been ratified by a few countries, and Morocco is the sole country in this group to not be Party to the Minamata Convention.

Division Two

Division Two stayed the most constant from 2010, with only fifteen countries added to the Division. Of the thirty members, all but one, New Zealand, are classified as developing countries. African countries make up 40% of this Division, followed by Asia at 20%, North America and Oceania each close to 17%, and Europe at nearly 7%. There are no South American members in this Division.

Like Division One, Fish Stocks was the cause of many countries' rankings. 60% of Division Two countries have not ratified it, though Burkina Faso and Pakistan have signed the Agreement. However, 70% have ratified High Seas, with another four countries, Burkina Faso, Guinea, New Zealand, and Pakistan, having signed it.

Three SIDs, Barbados, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands, have not participated in the Mercury Convention, with another two, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, not participating in Cartagena. All five are AOSIS members, and four are in Oceania.

League Analysis

Division Three

Many countries have fallen to Division Three since 2010, as this group is generally only one or two treaty decisions away from the highest League Divisions. Only twelve parties have remained constant, with three being added. All three countries that rose from Division Four in 2010 have since ratified the Rotterdam Convention: Bahrain and Zimbabwe in 2012, and Grenada in 2021. Bahrain also ratified the Cartagena Protocol in 2012, and Grenada the Stockholm Convention in 2021. This demonstrates how countries may choose to accede to multiple conventions at once.

Africa heavily dominates Division Three, making up almost 35% of the group. Of the fourteen African countries, they are divided evenly between West, Central, East, and Southern Africa, though Egypt is the only North African country in this Division. Asia follows with eight members in this Division, and the remaining countries are split evenly between Europe, North America, Oceania, and South America. The Fish Stocks Agreement remains a common loss for many Division Three members apart from Oceania, as Pacific states perform particularly strongly on marine governance agreements. For the four South American countries, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, and Paraguay, the ocean MEAs are the sole cause of their rankings.

Division Four

While near the end of the League Table, Division Four countries overwhelmingly participate in the core international environmental conventions. All thirty-four have ratified UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, the Vienna Convention, and the Montreal Protocol, with all but one having ratified Kyoto, Stockholm, and Basel. Where these members lose points is in the ocean MEAs and newer or more specialized treaties. Thirty-two states have not ratified Fish Stocks, and only two have ratified High Seas, with ten as signatories. Minamata and Kigali follow as the least played by members of this group.

Asia is the largest regional concentration in this Division, though countries are geographically dispersed throughout the continent. As the second-largest group, African states represent roughly a quarter of the Division, and North Africa is particularly concentrated in this group.

Sunday League

Comprising those with the greatest room for improvement, the Sunday League represents the amateur players of the global MEA conventions. The 2026 Sunday League welcomed 9 new members since 2010: three from Africa, six from Asia, and the United States. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Libya both fell three Leagues since 2010, Kazakhstan two, and the others one. As South Sudan gained independence in 2011, this is its first League Table as a player.

The clearest dividing issue among the fifteen Sunday League countries is ocean governance: only five of fifteen have ratified UNCLOS, while nine have neither signed nor ratified it. Participation in the UN Fish Stocks Agreement is even lower: only one of fifteen has ratified it, while thirteen have neither signed nor ratified it. Only six have ratified the Cartagena Protocol, eight the Kigali Amendment, and just three the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Eleven have neither signed nor ratified Minamata. The High Seas Treaty is largely absent from this League entirely, with only one ratification, three signatures, and eleven countries with neither.

It is also notable that no South American or Oceania countries fall into the Sunday League.

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