



Marine Resources & Sustainability

14 – 18 December 2026
Madrid (Spain)



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Introduction:

Marine Resources & Sustainability explores how to manage marine ecosystems, biological resources, and ocean governance to balance environmental health, human well-being, and economic development. It examines threats like overfishing, pollution, climate change, habitat loss, and unsustainable exploitation, and offers frameworks for sustainable use of marine biodiversity, coastal zones, and marine protected areas. Participants will study international treaties, policy tools, and management approaches for conservation and sustainable development in marine settings.

The Marine Resources and Sustainability course also emphasizes ecosystem services, blue economy, marine spatial planning, and sustainable fisheries practices. Real-world case studies will show how marine conservation and sustainable utilization can support livelihoods, food security, and resilience. Learners will be able to assess, design, and advocate for policies or practices that maintain marine health while allowing responsible use of marine resources.

Targeted Groups:

This Marine Resources and Sustainability training targets professionals seeking specialized knowledge and skills:

- Environmental managers in government agencies.
- Marine biologists and ecologists.
- Coastal zone planners and marine spatial planners.
- Fisheries officers and aquaculture managers.
- NGO practitioners in marine conservation.
- Policy analysts focused on ocean governance.
- Sustainability officers in the private sector and industries linked to marine resources.

Course Objectives:

Participants will achieve the following objectives by completing the Marine Resources and Sustainability course:

- Understand key concepts of marine ecosystems, marine biodiversity, and ecosystem services.
- Analyze global and regional threats to marine resources, including overfishing, pollution, habitat degradation, and climate stress.
- Evaluate legal and policy instruments, including treaties, marine protected areas, and sustainable fisheries management.
- Design management plans for marine resources that integrate social, economic, and environmental dimensions.
- Apply tools like marine spatial planning, stock assessment models, and impact assessments.
- Communicate scientific and policy issues related to marine sustainability to stakeholders.
- Promote sustainable practices in blue economy sectors, aquaculture, and coastal development.

Targeted Competencies:

Participants will gain the following competencies during the Marine Resources and Sustainability program:

- Ability to assess marine ecological health using biodiversity metrics, water quality indicators, and habitat mapping.
- Skill in interpreting international standards, conventions, and regulations for marine conservation and sustainable use.
- Competence in applying planning methods for marine spatial planning, coastal zone management, and fisheries quota systems.
- Capability to conduct impact assessments and risk analysis for marine pollution, climate change, and human interventions.
- Proficiency in stakeholder engagement: working with local communities, governments, NGOs.
- Capacity to design sustainable resource utilization strategies that align with blue economy and marine governance principles.
- Critical thinking to balance trade-offs between conservation, economic development, and social justice in marine contexts.

Studying Scenarios:

In this Marine Resources and Sustainability training, participants will develop their skills through the analysis of the following scenarios:

- A coastal community seeks to restore mangrove forests while maintaining livelihoods from fishing and tourism.
- A fishery suffering declining fish stocks must design quota systems and protected areas to ensure sustainability.
- An oil spill or marine pollution event threatens coral reefs; policy and mitigation strategies..
- Marine spatial planning for offshore renewable energy installations conflicts with marine habitats.
- Climate change impacts e.g., ocean acidification and warming affect marine species and alter fishing zones.
- Implementing blue economy initiatives that balance growth in marine tourism, aquaculture, and conservation.

Course Content:

Unit 1: Foundations of Marine Resources & Marine Ecology:

- Structure and function of marine ecosystems: food webs, trophic levels, primary productivity.
- Marine biodiversity: species, habitat types coral reefs, seagrasses, mangroves, deep sea.
- Ecosystem services: provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural services.
- Marine threats: overfishing, habitat destruction, invasive species, pollution, and climate change.
- Oceanographic processes: currents, upwelling, thermocline, nutrient cycling.
- Biological productivity: phytoplankton, reef building, biomass dynamics.

Unit 2: Legal, Policy & Governance Frameworks:

- National and international treaties, conventions, and frameworks UNCLOS, SDGs, biodiversity conventions.
- Legal mechanisms for marine conservation: marine protected areas, fisheries regulation, and pollution control.
- Marine spatial planning and coastal zone management: zoning, policy integration.
- Governance models include participatory governance, co-management, top-down, and bottom-up approaches.
- Blue economy policy: sustainable development goals, economic incentives, and sustainable tourism.
- Rights, equity, stakeholders: indigenous communities, small-scale fishers, public participation.

Unit 3: Assessing Marine Resource Status & Research Methods:

- Data collection methods: sampling, remote sensing, and underwater surveys.
- Stock assessment models and fisheries science: sustainable yield, maximum sustainable yield.
- Monitoring and evaluation frameworks: indicators, baselines, adaptive management.
- Pollution monitoring: chemical, plastic, nutrient, and oil pollution.
- Climate change effects: ocean acidification, sea level rise, and warming.
- Socio-economic research: livelihoods, costs & benefits, ecosystem valuation.

Unit 4: Conservation Strategies & Sustainable Utilization:

- Protected areas design and management: MPAs, marine reserves, no-take zones.
- Sustainable fisheries practices: gear regulations, quotas, and bycatch reduction.
- Sustainable aquaculture: species selection, environmental impacts, feed, disease control.
- Restoration ecology encompasses coral restoration, mangrove replanting, and habitat rehabilitation.
- Pollution mitigation and waste management: plastic reduction, oil spill response.
- Sustainable tourism and marine recreation: carrying capacity, environmental impact.

Unit 5: Tools, Planning & Emerging Issues:

- Marine spatial planning tools and GIS for mapping and decision support.
- Environmental impact assessment EIA and strategic environmental assessment SEA.
- Emerging technologies: remote sensing, modeling, drones, and AI in monitoring.
- Blue carbon and carbon sequestration in marine habitats.
- Climate resilience planning: adaptation strategies for coastal systems.
- Economic tools include valuation, incentives, and market-based instruments e.g., payments for ecosystem services.
- Governance challenges include illegal, unreported, and unregulated IUU fishing, policy enforcement, and transboundary issues.

Final Insights & Key Takeaways:

Participants will leave this course equipped to critically evaluate and design sustainable marine resource policies and practices that respond to complex environmental, social, and economic challenges. The knowledge and competencies developed will empower leaders to contribute responsibly to marine conservation, blue economy development, and sustainable use of ocean resources.