

DNB

Asset Management



Expectations to companies on

# Serious Environmental Harm



## Objective

This document is part of a series of expectation documents from DNB Asset Management (DNB AM), intended to explicitly outline to companies within our investment universe how we expect them to manage specific environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics. Our expectations are based on internationally recognised principles such as the UN Global Compact, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UN Guiding Principles), the G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (OECD Guidelines) and other topic-specific standards.

The DNB Group Instruction for Responsible Investments<sup>1</sup> (the Group Instruction) is the starting point when considering sustainable investment practices. The Group Instruction shall ensure that DNB does not contribute to human or labour rights violations, corruption, serious environmental harm, and other actions which may be perceived to be unethical and/or unsustainable. It shall also ensure that assessments of risks and opportunities arising ESG factors are integrated into the investment decision-making process.

The purpose of this document is to define our expectations and criteria towards companies related to serious environmental harm and their obligation to respect the environment (air, water and soil), including in their supply chains and other business relationships. This document forms the basis for dialogues with companies and describes how we assess companies once an incident has occurred. Our expectations on serious environmental harm are closely linked to other expectation documents published by DNB AM, including expectations on climate<sup>2</sup>, biodiversity<sup>3</sup>, water<sup>4</sup>, oceans<sup>5</sup>, and human rights<sup>6</sup>, due to the close interconnectedness of these topics.

## Definition and scope

For the purposes of this document, serious environmental harm refers to *significant, long-term or irreversible negative impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, natural habitats, water resources, soil or air quality and human health — including habitat destruction, pollution, contamination, and other large-scale environmental degradation caused by a company's own operations or value chain*. Such harm may entail substantial adverse effects on species, ecological functions or human health, and constitute a material environmental and financial risk. See pages 2 and 3 for examples of serious environmental harm.

Our expectation document is applicable to all companies, but particularly relevant to sectors dependent on natural resources such as:

- Energy
- Electric utilities
- Metals and mining
- Chemicals and heavy industry
- Timber/pulp & paper (forestry)
- Agriculture
- Fishing and aquaculture
- Transportation (including marine transport, port activities, and ship building/ship recycling)
- Construction and infrastructure

For further details on related topics, we refer to our other expectations documents. These cover biodiversity, addressing nature-related risks including the impacts of deforestation, habitat loss, and disruption to ecosystems; climate change, covering the effects of greenhouse gas emissions and their contribution to

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<sup>1</sup> DNB, "Group Instruction for Responsible Investments": [Responsible-investments-Group-Instructions.pdf](#)

<sup>2</sup> DNB AM, "Expectations to companies on Climate change": [DNB AM Expectations to companies on Climate Change](#)

<sup>3</sup> DNB AM, "Expectations to companies on Biodiversity": [DNB AM expectations to companies on Biodiversity](#)

<sup>4</sup> DNB AM, "Expectations to companies on Water": [DNB AM Expectations to companies on Water](#)

<sup>5</sup> DNB AM, "Expectations to companies on Oceans": [DNB AM Expectations to companies on Oceans](#)

<sup>6</sup> DNB AM, "Expectations to companies on Human rights": [DNB AM Expectations to companies on Human Rights](#)

global warming; water, which addresses responsible water usage and the management of potentially harmful discharges; oceans, encompassing sustainable practices in fishing, aquaculture, and other marine activities linked to transportation and food production; human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples and the protection of land rights; and health and sustainable food systems, addressing pollution from harmful chemicals.

## **Introduction to serious environmental harm**

Environmental harm is one of the most pressing global challenges, and companies face increasing expectations from regulators, investors, and society to understand and manage their environmental impact. The *World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risks Report 2025* identifies pollution, biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse among the most severe long-term risks to economic stability and societal well-being<sup>7</sup>.

As global laws and regulations tighten, particularly through EU instruments, companies face rising expectations to demonstrate robust environmental management and transparent disclosure. In 2023, the OECD updated its guidelines, extending due diligence recommendations to the environment and technology. The revised guidelines emphasize risk-based due diligence to identify, prevent, and mitigate adverse environmental impacts, including those related to climate change, biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, deforestation, pollution of air, water, and soil, and the mismanagement of waste and hazardous substances<sup>8</sup>.

Failure to adequately mitigate serious environmental harm increases companies' exposure to regulatory sanctions, liability claims, rising operating costs, supply chain disruptions, and loss of access to critical resources. Consumer preferences are also shifting away from products associated with environmental damage, creating market risks as well as reputational concerns.

These corporate risks are inseparable from the wider ecological crisis facing natural systems globally. Humanity's dependence on ecosystems is increasing at a time when these systems are under accelerating pressure. According to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), one million species are currently at risk of extinction, largely due to human activities, and the drivers of nature loss have accelerated during the past 50 years<sup>9</sup>.

Environmental harm, through pollution, habitat destruction, biodiversity loss or mismanagement of hazardous substances, directly affects air and water quality, food production, climate resilience, and human well-being. As the global population grows toward a projected 9.8 billion people by 2050<sup>10</sup>, pressure on natural resources will intensify, while air, water, and soil pollution already contribute to approximately nine million premature human deaths annually<sup>11</sup>.

The integrity of ecosystems is essential for sustaining life, supporting livelihoods, and enabling long-term economic development. These interconnected challenges highlight the need for companies to adopt precautionary, forward-looking, and robust environmental risk management practices. Preventing severe environmental harm is fundamental for safeguarding ecosystems, protecting human health, ensuring operational continuity, and preserving the natural systems on which businesses and societies depend.

### Potential causes of serious environmental harm

Serious environmental harm can result from a wide range of corporate activities, both direct and indirect, across the value chain. These impacts may arise from insufficient environmental safeguards, or business

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<sup>7</sup> World Economic Forum (2025), "Global Risks Report 2025 20th Edition": [WEF Global Risks Report 2025.pdf](#)

<sup>8</sup> The Faculty of Law, University of Oslo (2024), "The OECD Guidelines revamped for planet and people": [The OECD Guidelines revamped for planet and people - The Faculty of Law](#)

<sup>9</sup> IPBES (2019), "The global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services": [ipbes\\_global\\_assessment\\_report\\_summary\\_for\\_policymakers.pdf](#)

<sup>10</sup> The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017), "World Population Prospects": [World population projected to reach 9.8 billion in 2050, and 11.2 billion in 2100 | United Nations](#)

<sup>11</sup> The Lancet (2022), "The Lancet Commission on pollution and health": [Pollution and health: a progress update - The Lancet Planetary Health](#)

models heavily reliant on resource extraction or land-use change. Examples of serious environmental harm include (see detailed description and examples in footnotes):

- *Large-scale or long-term pollution of air, soil, groundwater, freshwater or marine environments*<sup>12</sup>
- *Irreversible or long-lasting degradation of ecosystems or biodiversity*<sup>13</sup>
- *Destruction or significant modification of habitats*<sup>14</sup>
- *Emissions of hazardous substances posing health or environmental risks*<sup>15</sup>
- *Significant waste mismanagement*<sup>16</sup>
- *Major accidents, spills, contamination or industrial incidents*<sup>17</sup>
- *Systemic or repeated regulatory violations related to environmental protection*<sup>18</sup>

Certain environmental pressures can push ecosystems, climate systems, or other natural resources past critical thresholds, known as tipping points, where changes become abrupt, irreversible, or self-reinforcing<sup>19</sup>. Corporate activities such as deforestation, pollution, overexploitation, or poor waste management can contribute to crossing these thresholds.

Importantly, companies can also help create positive tipping points, where well-targeted actions trigger self-reinforcing environmental improvements. Examples include restoring degraded ecosystems, reducing emissions and pollutants, or investing in clean technologies.

Incidents are considered to be more severe in geographical areas where the population is dependent on natural resources such as access to food, water, and forest and where the local economy and political system is vulnerable (e.g. indigenous people). Areas of great ecological or biological value, such as Key Biodiversity Areas<sup>20</sup>, are also regarded as particularly vulnerable. Companies operating in these areas face an increased risk of contributing to serious environmental harm and are therefore held to a higher standard.

To manage these risks, companies are expected to implement robust environmental policies, conduct regular environmental risk assessments, and integrate material environmental risks into their strategy, procurement, and risk management. We also expect companies to demonstrate responsible waste management and actively aim to reduce extractive waste while handling and processing by-products in a safe and environmentally sound manner.

## Solutions

Efforts to prevent serious environmental harm draw on a growing body of international frameworks, regulatory developments, and best-practice standards guiding companies toward more responsible environmental management. While environmental challenges vary across geographies and sectors, several global initiatives provide a coherent direction for how companies should identify, prevent, mitigate, and remedy severe environmental impacts.

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<sup>12</sup> Can destroy habitats, impair drinking water sources, contaminate food systems, and create chronic health risks for local communities.

<sup>13</sup> Such as the decline or extinction of threatened or protected species due to habitat loss, pollution, overexploitation, or invasive species, or the disruption of essential ecological processes like pollination or carbon sequestration.

<sup>14</sup> Including deforestation, wetland drainage, or seabed disturbance, which can fragment ecosystems, reduce resilience, and drive endangered species closer to extinction.

<sup>15</sup> Such as toxic chemicals, heavy metals, Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's) or radioactive materials, that can accumulate in soils, waterways and food chains, leading to long-term ecological contamination and persistent health impacts.

<sup>16</sup> Including improper handling or disposal of hazardous or extractive waste (e.g. tailings, industrial residues, e-waste), which can cause groundwater contamination, toxic runoffs, soil degradation, or catastrophic failures of waste storage infrastructure.

<sup>17</sup> Such as oil spills, pipeline ruptures, chemical leaks, fires or dam collapses, which can result in sudden, large-scale ecological destruction, long-term toxicity, and costly remediation efforts.

<sup>18</sup> Indicating governance failures that enable ongoing pollution, habitat damage, illegal resource extraction, or persistent non-compliance that cumulatively results in significant environmental harm.

<sup>19</sup> IPCC (2024): <https://apps.ipcc.ch/eventmanager/documents/87/050720240429-Doc%207.%20Add%201%20-%20Expert%20Meeting%20Tipping%20Points.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Key biodiversity areas are defined according to the global IUCN criteria as sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity. Under SFDR PAI 7, these areas include internationally recognized conservation sites such as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA), UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Ramsar wetlands, Natura 2000 sites and other areas of high ecological or biological value.

Central developments within regulatory frameworks in the EU now include strong environmental components. In parallel, several international treaties and standards continue to drive global expectations to prevent serious environmental harm, such as the Basel Convention (hazardous waste), the Stockholm Convention (POP's), the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). For high-risk sectors, the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management (GISTM) sets out a precedent for avoiding catastrophic environmental incidents. Together, these frameworks support a broader shift toward prevention, robust safeguards, and science-based approaches.

## Assessment criteria

DNB AM's assessment of companies is based on internationally recognized standards and norms. Companies are expected to respect and adhere to these standards even when they are not legally bound to do so.

The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development established core principles of international environmental law, including the precautionary principle (Principle 15)<sup>21</sup> and the polluter pays principle (Principle 16)<sup>22</sup>. These principles remain central to modern environmental regulations, including EU Treaties, biodiversity and chemicals regulations, different carbon pricing schemes, and the 2023 OECD Guidelines<sup>23</sup>.

Companies are expected to interpret and apply the precautionary principle, and the polluter pays principle as core elements of responsible environmental management. In practice, this means:

- Under the precautionary principle, companies should avoid activities that may cause severe or irreversible environmental damage unless they can demonstrate that risks are effectively managed. This approach is increasingly reflected in emerging regulatory frameworks, including the Do No Significant Harm criteria<sup>24</sup>.
- Under the polluter pays principle, companies should internalize the environmental costs of their operations, including prevention, containment, remediation, and compensation. The EU considers this principle a core tool to ensure those responsible for environmental damage cover the full cost of prevention and restoration<sup>25</sup>, operationalized through stronger liability rules<sup>26</sup>, and environmental taxes.

A reported violation or potentially serious environmental damage is often based on a breach or potential breach of the UN Global Compact Principles linked to the underlying conventions and guidelines listed in the Appendix. To assess whether a company may be in breach with our Group Instruction, DNB AM has a framework for assessment of violations with the environmental norms-based criteria, based on the Council on Ethics principles for the selection of companies subject to further assessment<sup>27</sup>:

- *The damage is great*
- *The damage entails irreversible or long-term effects*
- *The damage has major negative consequences for human life and health, and biodiversity*
- *The damage is a result of a breach of national legislation or international norms*
- *The company has failed to act to prevent damage*
- *The company has not implemented measures to rectify the damage to a sufficient extent*
- *Is it likely that the company's practice will continue*

<sup>21</sup> UN (1992), "Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development", Principle 15: "The lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation": [A/CONF.151/26/Vol.I: Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#)

<sup>22</sup> UN (1992), "Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development", Principle 16: "(...) The polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment": [A/CONF.151/26/Vol.I: Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#)

<sup>23</sup> The 2023 OECD Guidelines oblige companies to identify and prevent environmental risks before harm occurs (The precautionary principle).

<sup>24</sup> See EU regulations, such as the EU Taxonomy Delegated Acts and the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR)

<sup>25</sup> European Commission, "Ensuring that polluters pays – toolkit": [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/economy-and-finance/ensuring-polluters-pay\\_en?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/economy-and-finance/ensuring-polluters-pay_en?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>26</sup> See the Environmental Liability Directive

<sup>27</sup> Council on Ethics, "Principles for the selection of companies subject to further assessment": [Principles for the selection of companies subject to further assessment – Council on Ethics](#)

## Expectations to companies

Our expectations are relevant for all companies within our investment universe and are viewed by us as best-practice guidance. However, companies within extractive industries and the sectors mentioned above are the main target group for our expectation document. See also the appendix for more details on relevant international standards and initiatives.

### 1. Governance

- a) Management of environmental issues and prevention of serious environmental harm should have board-level oversight.
- b) Companies should follow and support the development of international standards, principles, and best practices related to environmental protection and harm prevention. Pay particular attention to:
  - The Rio Declaration on Environmental and Development, including Principles 15 (precautionary principle) and 16 (polluter pays principle).
  - The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, including guidance on environmental due diligence.
  - The UN Global Compact principles on environment.
  - Relevant national, regional, and international environmental laws, directives, and regulations, including frameworks on liability, emissions, hazardous substances, and ecosystem protection.
- c) To prevent serious environmental harm, companies should follow general mitigation principles:
  - Avoid negative impacts.
  - Minimise negative impacts that cannot be avoided through operational controls and best practices.
  - Remediate and restore environmental harm that cannot be avoided or minimised (included polluted sites, contaminated water, or degraded habitats).
- d) Companies should have stand-alone policies on climate, biodiversity and ecosystems, that includes how the topic is integrated into governance, strategy, risk management, goals/metrics, and reporting. The focus should be on material risks and opportunities. In addition, companies should have a policy concerning the management of critical habitats when involved in activities that may significantly impact ecosystems.

### 2. Strategy, risk management and engagement

- a) Companies should assess their direct and indirect impacts and dependencies on the environment, identify material physical and transition risks in the short-, medium- and long-term, and integrate these assessments into their policies, strategy, procurement, and risk management.
- b) Companies should manage their impacts and dependencies on natural resources and seek to ensure that the ecosystems upon which they rely can sustain their business operations.
- c) Companies should include climate, biodiversity and ecosystems in their environmental impact assessments, prior to settling in new areas (which also should incorporate community impact, including on indigenous peoples). They should adopt a precautionary approach where there is a risk of significant impacts. Please refer to the expectation document on biodiversity for further details.
- d) Companies should be aware that protecting the environment may come in conflict with human-, labour- and indigenous peoples' rights. In this respect, companies should exercise appropriate due diligence in their supply chain, engage with relevant stakeholders and communities, and address identified impacts (respect the principle of free, prior, and informed consent).
- e) Companies should have oversight over, and policies or guidelines, for responsible engagement with policy makers, regulators, and NGOs on environmental protection. Transparency is expected regarding engagement efforts and positions on relevant regulations, with consistency between public positions and lobbying activities.
- f) Companies should take action to prevent pollution affecting the environment (such as plastics, chemical discharges, tailings and e-waste).

- g) Companies should utilise internal carbon pricing mechanisms to ensure investment decisions align with emission reduction plans and environmental objectives. If not, provide an explanation as to why this is not necessary.
- h) Please refer to the expectation document on biodiversity for detailed expectations on operations in areas of high biological significance or critical habitats, disclosure of risks related to land use changes.

### **3. Disclosure, Metrics and Targets**

- a) Companies should disclose whether and how climate, biodiversity and ecosystems form part of their strategies, policies and commitments. Where applicable, this should include targets, performance against these, and action plans.
- b) Companies should disclose material impacts and dependencies on ecosystems, assess associated business risks from overexploitation or degradation, and disclose proximity to critical habitats and protected areas.
- c) Companies should be transparent about their supply chains, including geographical origin of their commodities, level of traceability, and volumes certified as sustainably sources. They should disclose information on sourcing from environmentally sensitive areas and be open about their processes to engage and monitor suppliers.
- d) Companies should commit to achieving No Net Loss in high-value or sensitive biodiversity areas, and whenever possible, generating a Positive Net Impact.
- e) Companies should seek to develop relevant metrics for site-specific biodiversity, and the impact on vulnerable ecosystems and species there.
- f) Companies should commit to zero illegal deforestation and avoid conversion of high conservation value or high carbon stock ecosystems.

## Appendix:

Laws, norms, and standards relevant for serious environmental harm that DNB AM expects companies to be compliant with

International Standards and Initiatives	Description of Principles
The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) - and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Post-2020 Framework). See also the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing	The CBD is an international legally binding treaty with three main goals: Conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources
Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)	TNFD is a global initiative which aims to give financial institutions and companies a complete picture of their environmental risks. It will deliver a framework for organizations to report and act on evolving nature-related risks
Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) or International Financial Reporting Standards Climate-related Disclosures (IFRS S2)	An international framework established by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) to guide organizations in disclosing climate-related risks and opportunities, promoting transparency and informed decision-making to support the transition to a low-carbon economy. Now replaced by ISSB's IFRS S2 reporting
Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)/ European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS)	An EU directive mandating sustainability reporting for large companies in the EU to enhance transparency and accountability regarding their sustainability impacts and strategies. ESRS is the mandatory standards developed under the EU's CSRD
Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR)	An EU regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/2088) that requires financial market participants to disclose how ESG factors are integrated into investment decisions. Under the "Do No Significant Harm" (DNSH) principle, investments must not significantly harm environmental objectives
The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. See also the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations and the EU taxonomy	The EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030 is a comprehensive plan to protect nature and reverse the degradation of ecosystems. The strategy aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030
The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal	The object is to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects of hazardous waste
The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development	The goal of establishing a new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among states, key sectors of society and individuals. Includes Principle 15 (the precautionary principle) and Principle 16 (the polluter pays principle)
Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management (GISTM)	A globally recognized, comprehensive standard developed by ICMM, UNEP and PRI to ensure the safe, responsible and transparent management of tailings facilities, with the aim of preventing catastrophic failures and reducing environmental and social harm

Paris Agreement	An international treaty within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that aims to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius
High Seas Treaty / BBNJ Agreement	The global framework for protecting biodiversity on the high seas. Entered into force in 2026 as an implementation agreement under UNCLOS
CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)	An international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival
The IUCN Red list Threatened Species	The world's most comprehensive information source on the global extinction risk status of animal, fungus, and plant species
The Aarhus Convention	A multilateral environmental agreement through the opportunities for citizens to access environmental information, increased and transparent and reliable regulation procedure is secured
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic	The current legislative instrument regulating international cooperation on environmental protection in the North- East Atlantic
The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	An international agreement which aims to ensure the safe handling, transport and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health
Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	An international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which commits its Parties by setting internationally binding emission reduction targets
The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	An international treaty with aim of reducing the global emission of greenhouse gases
The Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats	The Convention is a binding international legal instrument in the field of nature conservation, covering most of the natural heritage of the European continent and extending to some States of Africa
The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention)	An international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands
The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	A global treaty to protect human health and the environment from chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife, and have harmful impacts on human health or on the environment
The Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution	The Convention is intended to protect the human environment against air pollution and to gradually reduce and prevent air pollution, including long-range transboundary air pollution. It is implemented by the European EMEP, directed by the UN (UNECE)
UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural	The Convention sets out the duties of States Parties in identifying potential sites and their role in protecting and

Heritage	preserving them
The UN Forest Principles (Rio Forest Principles)	A non-legally binding document that makes several recommendations for conservation and sustainable development forestry
UN Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment	In the declaration, the nations agreed to accept responsibility for any environmental effects caused by their actions
The Convention on Biological Diversity	An international legally binding treaty with three main goals: conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of biodiversity, fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources
Science Based Targets for Nature (SBTN)	A global framework that supports companies in setting science-based targets for nature
Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)	A global initiative that enables companies to set validated greenhouse gas reduction targets aligned with the latest climate science to limit global warming to well below 2°C, preferably 1.5°C, above pre-industrial levels
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)	An international declaration outlining the rights of Indigenous peoples, including rights to land, territories and resources, cultural integrity, self-determination, and meaningful consultation
ILO Convention 169 (free, prior & informed consent – FPIC)	A legally binding convention protecting the rights of Indigenous and tribal peoples. It requires governments and companies to conduct free, prior and informed consultation and consent processes before undertaking projects that may affect Indigenous lands, resources or livelihoods, ensuring participation, transparency and respect for Indigenous decision-making
Sustainable Ocean Principles (UN Global Compact)	Building on the UN Global Compact. The nine principles cover the topics: ocean health & productivity, governance & engagement, and data & transparency
United Nations Water (UN Water)	The topic of water is not managed by any single UN body but rather is linked to more than 30 different UN bodies. UN Water coordinates the efforts of UN entities and international organizations working on water
The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR)	OSPAR is the mechanism by which 15 Governments & the EU cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic
The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)	The core international convention for preventing pollution of the marine environment from ships, covering operational and accidental discharges, and continuously updated through IMO amendments
The Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships (2009) (“HKC”)	The HKC is aimed at ensuring that ships, when being recycled (at the end of their operational lives), do not pose any unnecessary risks to human health, safety, and the environment. Entered into force in 2025
EU Ship Recycling Regulation (2013), including the EU list of approved ship recycling facilities	Requires EU-flagged ships to be recycled only at facilities included on the EU list of approved ship recycling facilities. Builds on the HKC

The International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention)	A treaty adopted by the IMO in order to help prevent the spread of potentially harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens in ships' ballast water
The "Mining Code" of the International Seabed Authority (ISA)	A developing set of binding rules, regulations, and procedures governing mineral-related activities in the international seabed area, established under UNCLOS and the 1994 Implementing Agreement relating to deep seabed mining
Various UN (FAO) voluntary guidelines relevant for fishing and aquaculture (seafood)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (FAO)</li> <li>• Principles for Responsible Shrimp Farming (FAO etc.)</li> <li>• Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (FAO etc.)</li> <li>• Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (FAO)</li> </ul>
The Convention of Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) or the Bonn Convention	An international agreement that aims to conserve migratory species throughout their ranges. The Agreement was signed under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme and is concerned with conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale
UN Tourism sustainable tourism frameworks	Guidance on sustainable tourism that balances environmental, economic, and sociocultural considerations to support long-term viability of destinations and activities
Minamata Convention on Mercury (2013)	A global treaty to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury

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