

## 'The most important talks no one has heard of': why the high seas treaty matters

### Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

**Article summary:** The article describes how almost 200 countries are trying to agree on a treaty to protect the high seas, which is threatened by overfishing and lies outside national boundaries.

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking, Writing

**Language focus:** Vocabulary (idiomatic phrases)

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of marine life and conservation and to get students engaged in the topic. You can note down C1–C2 examples of emergent language related to the theme on the board.

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups.

**Key:**

- a.

1. vessels	8. Reservoirs,
2. threat	reservoir
3. bioprospecting	9. coalition
4. biosphere	10. Confronting,
5. carbon sink,	confront
carbon-sink	11. silos
6. Frontlines,	12. quibbling
Frontline	13. broker
7. squabbling	14. encrusted

As an extension, you can focus on collocations with these words. Ask students to find some in the text or add their own. Some examples are:

*fishing / shipping / navy vessel*  
*mining / environmental threat*  
*on the frontlines of the war against nature*  
*stop squabbling*  
*reservoirs for adaptation and resilience*  
*a high-ambition coalition / a coalition between parties*  
*confront overfishing and illegal fishing /*  
*climate change*  
*silos between management bodies / departments*  
*broker (instead of break) a deal*  
*mountains encrusted in corals*

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to complete the task in pairs, and then compare their answers in small groups before checking with the whole class. Encourage students first to read the sentences, circling key words, and then to find the missing information in the text.

Answers provided are only suggested answers and can be paraphrased.

**Key:**

1. a legal framework / law enforcement
2. second breath
3. land and water
4. a changing climate
5. individual nations
6. fisheries
7. Illegal fishing, overfishing
8. global north
9. ten
10. Doug McCauley

#### 4. Key language

- a. Ask students to complete this activity in pairs or small groups.

**Key:**

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. at              | 5. sticking       |
| 2. once in         | 6. of the commons |
| 3. is on           | 7. make           |
| 4. close(r) to the |                   |

- b. Students write their sentences, sharing them with a partner when they're finished.

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#### 5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one. Then put them into small groups and ask them to share their ideas.

#### 6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research the animal that they have chosen. Students can do this individually or in pairs. If students do not have internet access in class, resources about marine animals will need to be provided. Some good points to cover would be:
  - animal population
  - the animal's habitat and food
  - the animal's lifestyle and society
  - the biggest threat to the animal's survival
- b. Elicit ideas on how to best structure a persuasive letter / a call to protect them. You can offer some suggestions:
  - Introduction: introduce yourself and connect with the reader; say why you are writing.
  - Reasons: back up your plea with reasons and facts.
  - Solution: offer a solution.
  - Closing: call to action using a strong emotional statement to end.

Encourage students to plan their letters in pairs, and then to complete writing individually. Have students peer-edit before submitting their letters to you.