Pelagic ecosystem service assessments can reveal an underappreciated source of ocean wealth

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Value of the ocean

Direct outputs from the ocean: $6.9 T
Trade and transport: $5.2 T
Adjacent assets: $12.1 T

TOTAL: $24.2 T

WWF, Reviving the Ocean Economy, 2015.
WHERE IS THE OCEAN’S VALUE FOUND?
Mapping Ocean Wealth demonstrates what the ocean does for us today so that we maximize what the ocean can do for us tomorrow.

The Nature Conservancy | oceanwealth.org
What is pelagic
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Threats to services

• Putting too much in:
  • Nutrient, plastic, toxic waste, carbon pollution

• Taking too much out:
  • Overfishing, habitat destruction
Challenges: Limited Appreciation

“I don’t know why I don’t care about the bottom of the ocean, but I don’t.”
Challenges: Limited Data

70% area

4% research

Modified from DeGroot, 2012
Challenges: limited tools, mismatch between scales
Mean of Fish Biomass Distribution 2004-2014
Overcoming Technical Pelagic Ecosystem Service Assessment Challenges Will Help Enhance Ocean Governance

Governance examples
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We need to ensure that conservation has a voice in ocean and coastal development to place oceans on a sustainable path.
“The open ocean is at the top of my environmental concerns, and it should be for you, too!”
Thank you
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