

Side event at the HLPF 2025

Seaweed and SDG 17: Advancing Partnerships for Sustainable Development

Division on International Trade and Commodities (DITC)
UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

16 July 2025



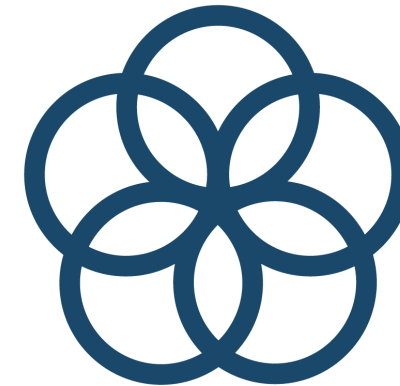
➤ Why SDG 17 matters in the context of seaweed

- Seaweed contributes to multiple SDGs – but **cannot scale impact without coordination**.
- SDG 17 is critical to mobilise **trade, finance, data, and technology** for the sector.
- **LDCs and SIDS need targeted support to participate** in seaweed value chains.
- The **UN Global Seaweed Initiative** aligns with SDG 17 priorities.



THE GLOBAL GOALS

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



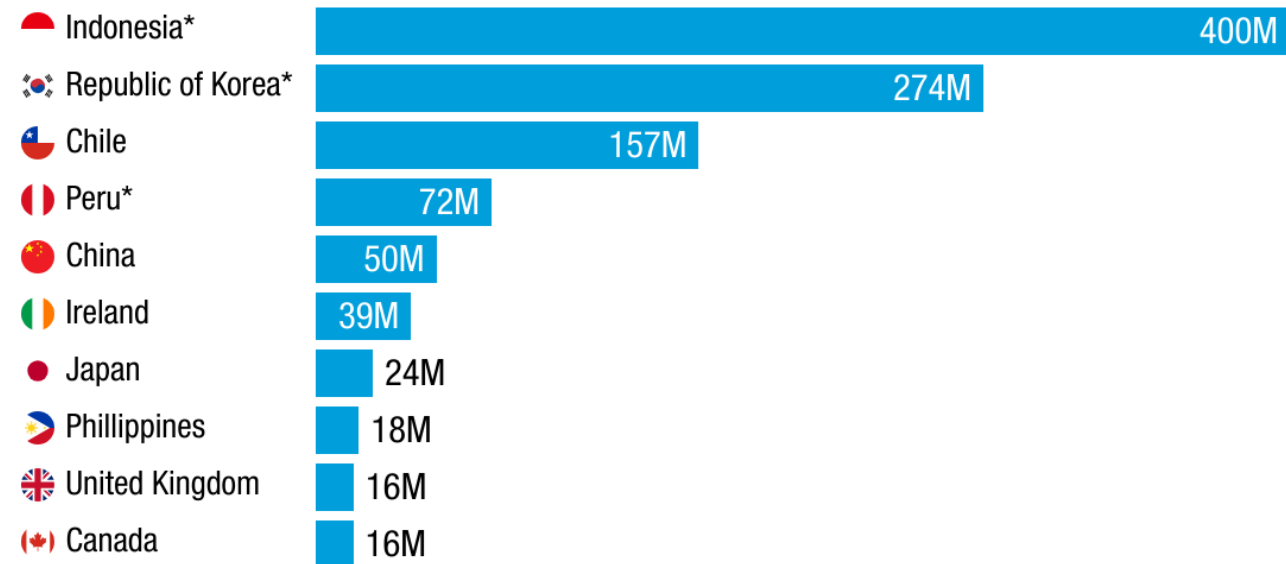
➤ Seaweed production and trade trends

- Global seaweed market: **\$17B in 2021**, but only \$943M traded.
- Asia leads production and trade (99.5% of volume).
- Africa, LDCs, and SIDS remain underrepresented.
- Seaweed trade remains **mostly domestic and informal**.



Global seaweed trade was driven by Indonesia and the Republic of Korea in 2023

Top 10 exporters of aquatic plants, seaweeds and other algae in 2023, million \$



Source: UNCTAD. 2025. Ocean Trade in Goods Database.

Note: *2022 data used for countries without 2023 data.

TARGET 17.5



INVEST IN LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries.

TARGET 17.A



PROMOTE A UNIVERSAL TRADING SYSTEM UNDER THE WTO

Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda.

TARGET 17.B



INCREASE THE EXPORTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020.

➤ Financing and ODA for ocean-based economies

- Ocean economy received **~\$3B in ODA and grants (2022)**.
- Seaweed attracts minimal dedicated finance.
- Seaweed aligns with blue finance priorities: climate mitigation and resilience, jobs, biodiversity.
- The UNGSI will help **channel resources to underfunded areas**.



TARGET 17.2

IMPLEMENT ALL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITMENTS

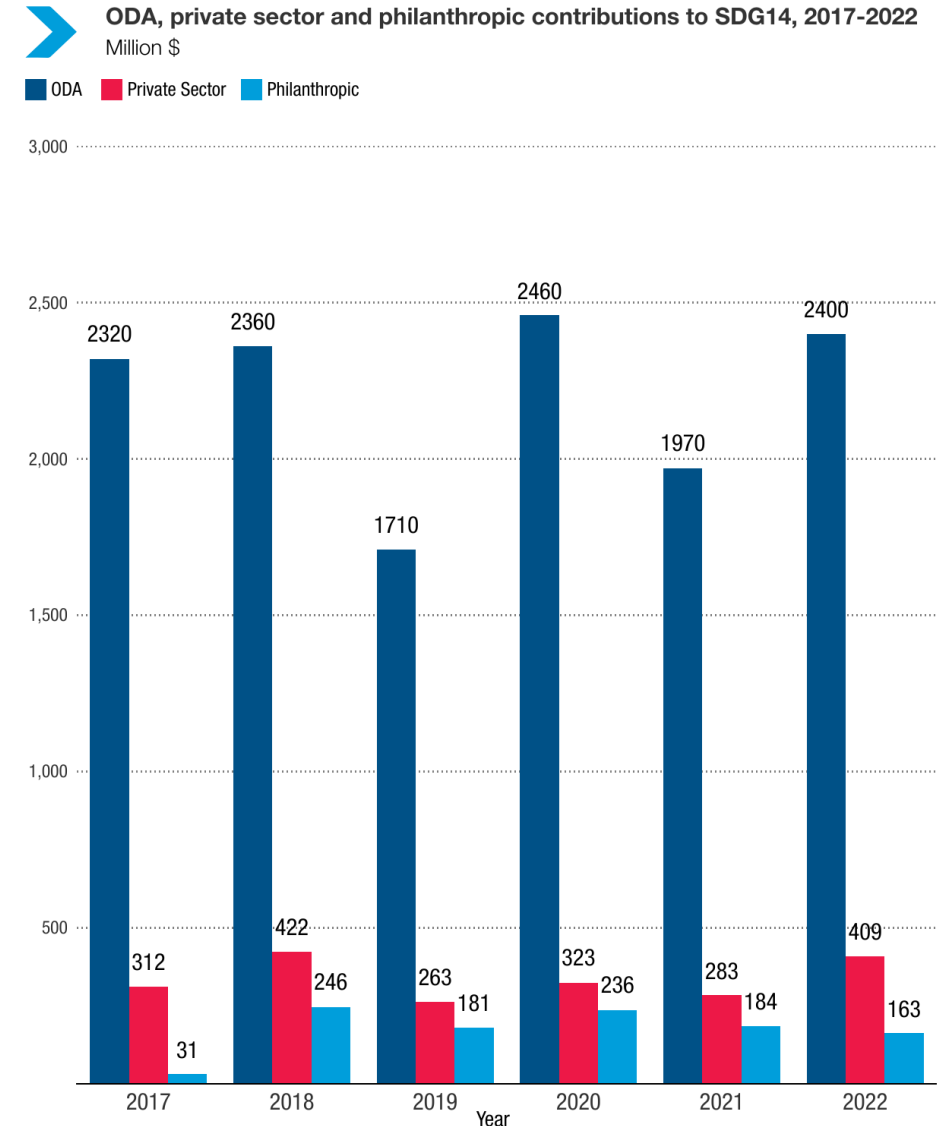
Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries.



TARGET 17.3

MOBILIZE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.



Source: UNCTAD (2025) calculations based on OECD data.

➤ Enhancing data and policy coherence

- **Few seaweed-specific multilateral regulations and standards** exist internationally.
- UNCTAD mapping reveals **regulatory fragmentation**.
- Of the 340 Non-Tariffs Measures (NTMs) notified to the WTO identified, **130 (38.2%) specifically reference seaweed or its associated HS codes**
- Among these, **67% apply to food-grade seaweed**, (87 NTMs), followed by alginic acid (18 NTMs), agar-agar (13 NTMs) and non-food uses for seaweed (12 NTMs)
- LDCs and SIDS often **lack disaggregated trade and production data**.



TARGET 17.E **ENHANCE POLICY COHERENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.



TARGET 17.I **ENHANCE AVAILABILITY OF RELIABLE DATA**

By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.



TARGET 17.J **FURTHER DEVELOP MEASUREMENTS OF PROGRESS**

By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries.

➤ Technology transfer and innovation

- Processing and certification technologies are **concentrated in high-income countries**.
- Developing countries **face barriers** to access relevant innovations and related IP (**more than 15K patents mainly from Asia**).
- Most seaweed research has been done by **public entities**
- **Knowledge exchange** is essential for feed, packaging, and pharmaceutical uses.
- **We need to foster South-South trade and technology partnerships**, including the GSTP



TARGET 17.6

KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COOPERATION FOR ACCESS TO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism.



TARGET 17.7

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed.



TARGET 17.8

STRENGTHEN THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CAPACITY FOR LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology.



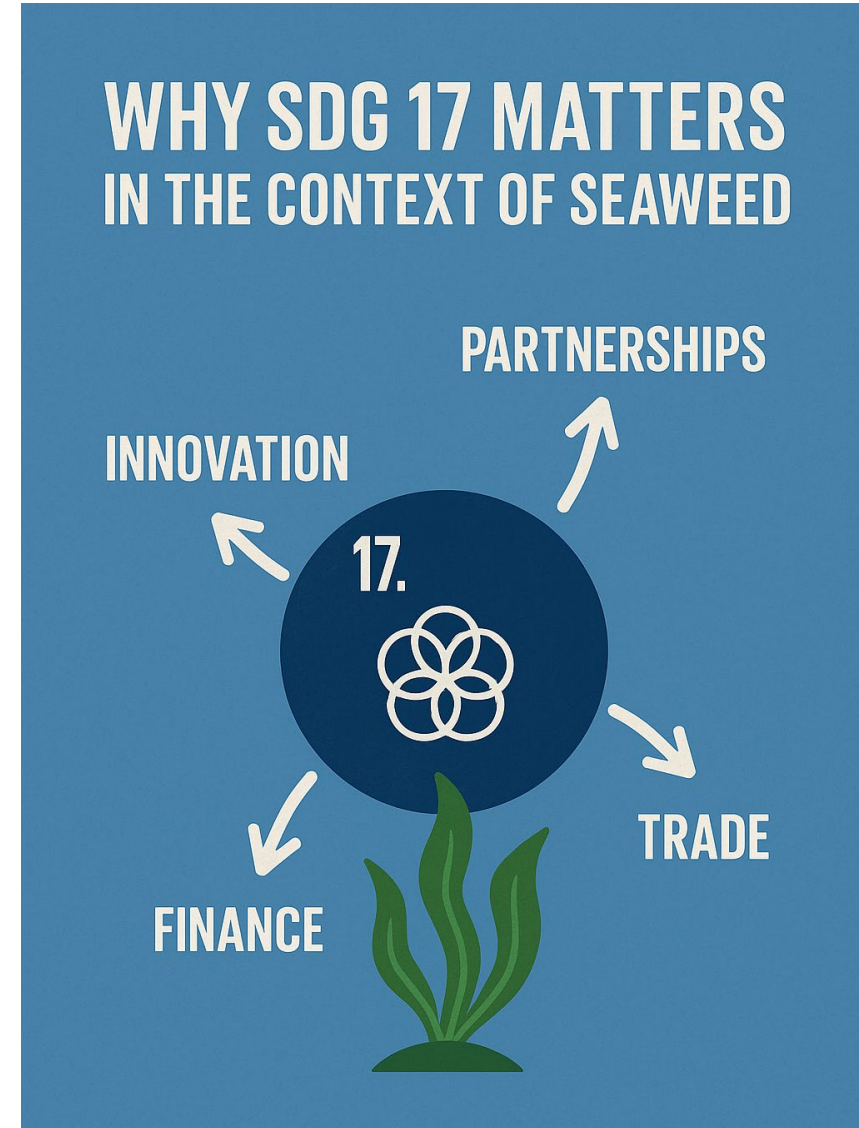
TARGET 17.9

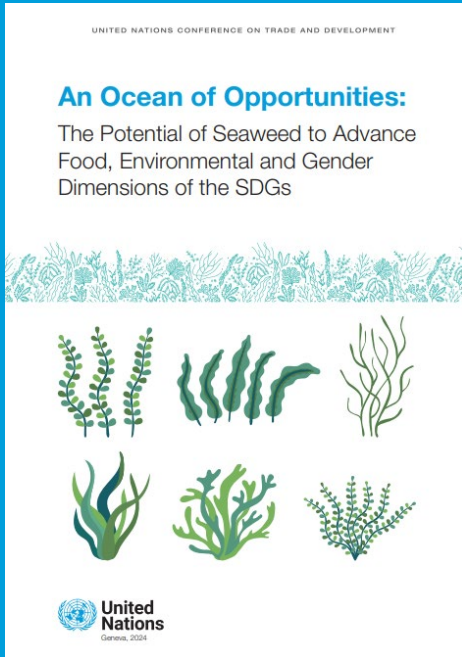
ENHANCE SDG CAPACITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

➤ A response to SDG 17

- The UNGSI is a **Member States and UN-backed platform** for policy coordination and scale.
- It supports **trade, investment, innovation, and regulatory alignment**.
- Promotes **inclusive participation** from LDCs, SIDS, women, and small producers.
- Operationalises SDG 17 through targeted action.





Thank you

