

# Amazing Ocean Fact File

## The ocean is a vital support system for our planet

- It plays a major role in the water cycle
- Marine plants and algae produce over 50% of the oxygen we breathe
- Marine habitats help to store carbon, which is incredibly important in the fight against climate change
- The ocean regulates our climate and weather systems
- Coastal habitats help to protect coastal communities and towns from storms and flooding by reducing wave energy
- Seafood provides a source of food and protein for millions of people
- Millions of people have jobs in marine industries
- The ocean is important for our health and wellbeing, with millions of people using the ocean and coastline recreationally and creatively



Coastal seagrass habitat  
© Benjamin L. Jones via  
Unsplash



Surfer © Sebastian Staines  
via Unsplash

## Helpful terms

**Ecosystem services** – the benefits people derive from ecosystems

**Habitat** – a habitat is the natural home or environment in which an animal, plant or organism lives. A habitat contains all an organism needs to survive such as food and shelter. A microhabitat is a small area within a larger habitat which is home to a species

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## Ocean diversity



70% of the Earth's surface is covered by the ocean

The ocean is incredibly diverse and is home to 50-80% of all life on Earth. The majority of this diversity is found in productive shallow seas



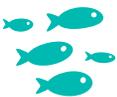
In the UK we have around 7,723 miles of coastline, with sandy bays, rugged shores, caves and cliffs. Beneath the waves are varied landscapes too, with undersea cliffs, caves, plains and dunes



Our coastal seas host a range of habitats like colourful reefs, kelp beds, rockpools and seagrass meadows, which provide sanctuary to thousands of plants and animals



The biodiversity of species in our ocean is extraordinary, from microscopic bacteria and algae to enormous whales



Biodiversity is important for ecosystem health. An ecosystem with greater diversity is much more likely to recover from damage from external factors compared to an ecosystem with little diversity

## Helpful terms

**Species** - a group of living organisms consisting of similar individuals that share common characteristics and are capable of interbreeding

**Adaptation** - the process of evolutionary change in which an organism becomes suited to its environment

**Biodiversity** - a broad term meaning the variety of plant and animal life. Biodiversity refers to diversity within species, between species and within an ecosystem