

# Global Commons

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## In News

Global commons have been traditionally defined as those parts of the planet that fall outside national jurisdictions and to which all nations have access. International law identifies four global commons, namely the High Seas, the Atmosphere, Antarctica and the Outer Space.

## More About Global Commons

- The governance of the global commons represents a specific aspect of global environmental governance. Stewardship of the global commons cannot be carried out without global governance.
- The global commons are guided by the **principle of the common heritage of mankind**.
- The implementation of the common heritage principle and common responsibilities relates directly to the four key enabling factors which have been identified as cornerstones of the Post-2015 development agenda:

- . **inclusive social development**
- . **inclusive economic development**
- . **environmental sustainability**
- . **peace and security**

## Governing Authorities of Global Commons

The international community acknowledges the need to conserve these resource domains for development and human well-being, and has adopted a number of conventions and treaties to govern global commons:

- The **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**, first

initiated in 1956 though not legally in force until 1994, is the primary international treaty regarding the sea, laying out rules for territorial boundaries (22km from shore), resource management and the rights of states within their exclusive economic zones (370km from shore).

- The **International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)**, created by UNCLOS, has the power to resolve disputes by States Parties.
- The **UN International Migratory Organization (IMO)**, created in 1948, regulates international shipping and rulings on safety, environmental and technical cooperation issues.
- The **Antarctic Treaty System (ATS)** ensures the protection of the Antarctica fauna and flora.
- A multitude of international environmental treaties administer and protect the atmosphere and deal with the air pollution and atmospheric depletion, like the **UNFCCC and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer**.
- The **UN International Telecommunications Union (ITU)** allocates radio spectrum and satellite orbits and develops international technical standards.
- The 1967 **Outer Space Treaty**, signed by all space faring nations, provides the minimal framework for activities in space, banning weapons of mass destruction and preventing states from claims to celestial bodies.