

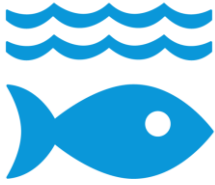
REPORT OF SDGs 14: LIFE BELOW WATER

USK's Commitment to Marine and Freshwater Conservation



UNIVERSITAS SYIAH KUALA
SUSTAINABILITY REPORT
2023

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



USK's Commitment to Marine and Freshwater Conservation

Universiitas Syiah Kuala (USK) is actively engaged in preserving and sustainably managing marine and freshwater ecosystems, in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, "Life Below Water." USK fosters marine biodiversity protection, encourages sustainable fishing, and raises awareness of the critical role of aquatic ecosystems in Aceh through its educational programs, community outreach, research initiatives, and advancements in technology.

1. Educational Programs on Aquatic Ecosystems and Conservation

USK offers robust educational programs centered on the sustainable management of freshwater and marine resources. Courses such as the Bachelor's in Aquaculture, Master's in Land Resources Conservation, and Master's in Integrated Coastal Resource Management equip students and community members with essential skills in sustainable fisheries management and water conservation. These programs cover key topics, including water resource management, conservation, and responsible aquaculture, empowering local communities to safeguard their water resources effectively.

To broaden its impact, USK conducts outreach initiatives promoting sustainable fisheries and eco-friendly tourism. In partnership with Special School SLB YPCC, the Faculty of Marine and Fisheries provides practical training in bucket fish farming (Budikdamber) for students with disabilities. This sustainable aquaculture method helps participants build valuable skills while encouraging environmentally friendly fish farming practices.

2. Community Engagement in Sustainable Fishing Practices

To reduce the impact of overfishing and harmful fishing practices, USK works closely with local fishing communities. In Aceh Besar, USK's Faculty of Marine and Fisheries, through the LPPM Community Service initiative, collaborated with the Lhok Paroy Fishermen's Group to introduce environmentally friendly fish traps. These durable and corrosion-resistant traps offer an alternative to traditional methods that can damage marine habitats. By educating fishermen on sustainable techniques, USK

contributes to the preservation of fish populations and the long-term health of marine ecosystems.

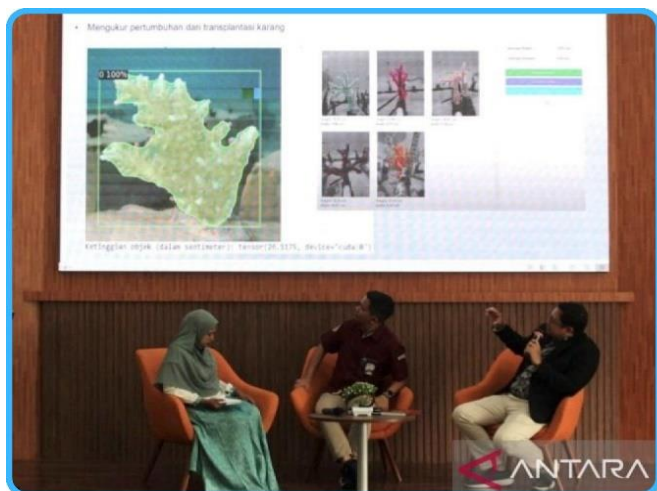
USK also supports broader conservation awareness through its annual International Conference on Fisheries and Aquatic Ecosystem Sustainability (ICFAES). This conference brings together experts from various countries to discuss best practices in marine conservation, promoting knowledge sharing and collaborative efforts to protect marine biodiversity. ICFAES exemplifies USK's commitment to fostering global cooperation in marine conservation and supporting SDG 14.



3. Innovative Technology for Coral Conservation and Marine Monitoring

USK leads in applying technology to enhance marine conservation, partnering with BPSPL Padang to create AICOM, an AI-driven application for coral monitoring. This tool streamlines coral health assessments by providing essential data on coral growth and ecosystem conditions, supporting effective reef preservation. AICOM has improved the efficiency of these assessments by 50%, allowing for timely monitoring and contributing significantly to the protection of endangered coral ecosystems in Aceh.

USK also supports marine restoration through the deployment of artificial reef structures as part of its community service initiatives. These structures aid in restoring marine habitats, functioning as both conservation sites and educational tourism spots. By engaging local communities in reef maintenance, USK promotes environmental stewardship and fosters eco-tourism, helping to strengthen local economies impacted by coastal degradation and declining fish populations.



4. Policy and Action on Campus for Sustainable Marine Resource Use

USK has established policies to promote sustainable practices both on campus and in the community. In compliance with Aceh's sustainable fisheries regulations, the university ensures that all seafood consumed on campus is sourced from sustainable harvesting methods.

This approach aligns with local conservation efforts and supports the protection of Aceh's aquatic resources.

To further address environmental impact, USK launched the Waste Bank initiative in 2019 to reduce plastic waste on campus. This program educates students and staff on waste reduction and management, aiming for a plastic-free campus and reinforcing sustainable consumption practices in line with SDG 14.

5. Monitoring and Restoration of Local Aquatic Ecosystems

USK also engages in local ecosystem monitoring and restoration through the Ocean Diving Club (ODC), which conducts coral health assessments and participates in reef restoration. Through the "Reef Check Day" program, in collaboration with Reef Check Indonesia and local partners, the ODC works on reef conservation activities to preserve marine biodiversity.

In addition, USK's Faculty of Marine and Fisheries partners with local government and communities to promote sustainable watershed management. By performing flood risk assessments and offering targeted recommendations, USK aids in minimizing flood impacts on river ecosystems, demonstrating a comprehensive commitment to the resilience and biodiversity of local aquatic environments.

