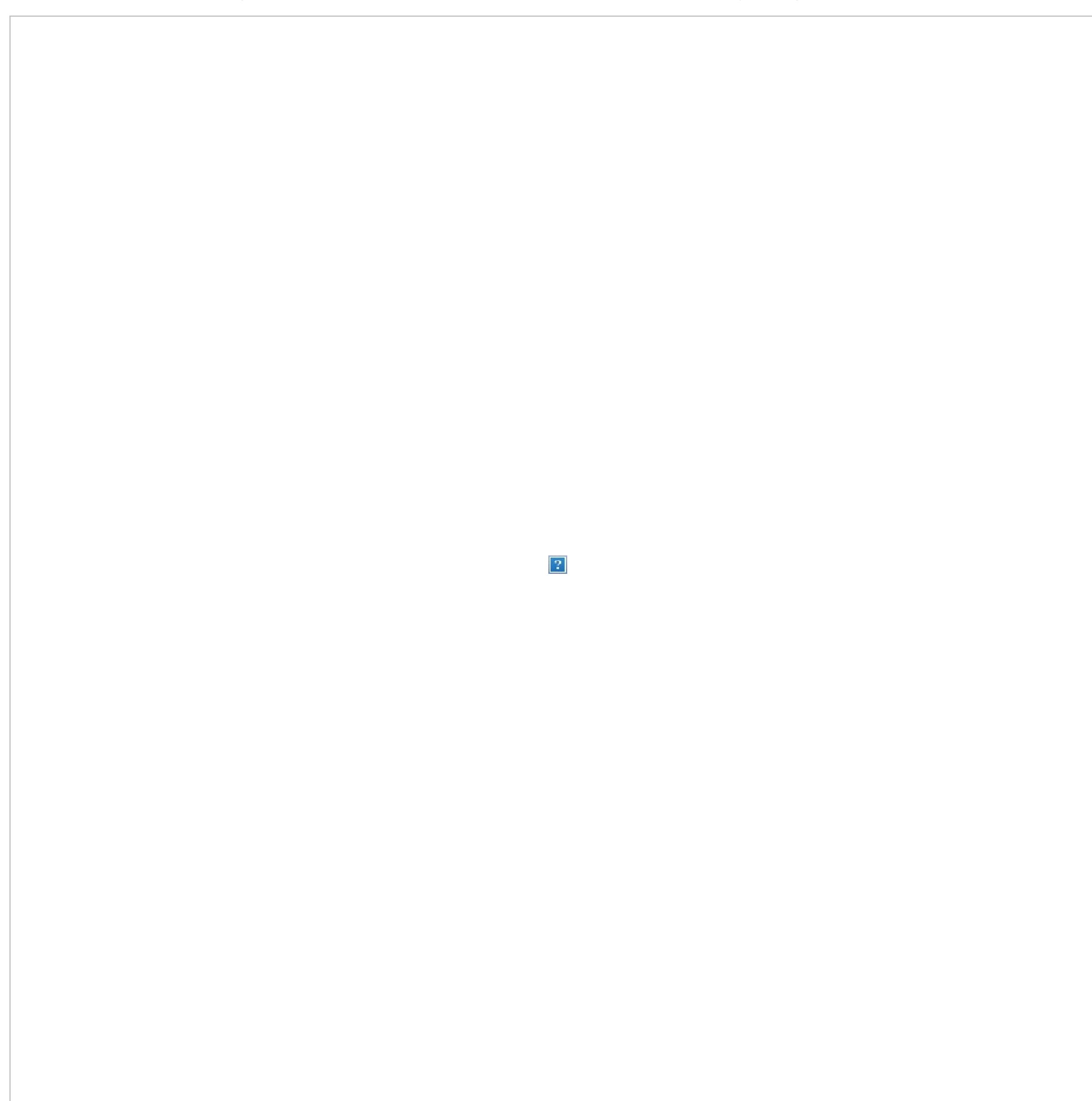


The 2016 Ocean Health Index scores are available for the same 220 Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) that were measured in 2012-2015. New to the Index in 2014 were scores for the Antarctica and the High Seas.

The 2016 Ocean Health Index global score for the EEZs is 71 out of 100. Below are a few of the key findings.



Source: NCEAS, UC Santa Barbara, 2016

Petal diagram of the 2016 Ocean Health Index scores.

THE 2016 GLOBAL OCEAN HEALTH INDEX

The 2016 study assessed the marine waters under national jurisdiction, the coastlines and oceans (out to 200 nautical miles) of all 220 coastal countries and territories. These regions total 40% of the ocean and provide most benefits to people, but also incur most pressures from human activities. The Antarctica and 15 sectors of the High Seas were assessed in 2014, but not this year.

The overall score, 71 is unchanged from 2015, 2014 and 2012, with a temporary one point rise in 2013. Rapid change in year-to-year global level scores is not expected, since change in most conditions usually cannot take place that quickly.

The overall score sends a message that the ocean isn't 'dying' as many people may think. However, the score remains far from 100, indicating that marine life would fare better and we would gain more benefits if we used the ocean in more sustainable ways.

FIVE-YEAR TRENDS

This is the 5th year of measuring global ocean health, and the 5-year global average for all 220 regions is 71 out of 100. Most scores have not changed much from 2012 to 2016.

An increase in the score for the Lasting Special Places sub-goal likely reflects the designation of new large scale Marine Protected Areas. Slight increases also occurred for the Artisanal Fishing Opportunities goal and Species Condition sub-goal, whereas the Natural Products, Coastal Protection and Clean Waters goal scores appear to be declining.

The regions with highest average scores during the 5 years from 2012-2016 are Jarvis Island (91), Howland Island and Baker Island (91), Palmyra Atoll (86), Germany (85) and South Georgia and the Sandwich Island (85). The regions with lowest average scores are Guinea (46), Ivory Coast (46), Liberia (45), Sierra Leone (43) and Libya (43).

Regional level scores rose most quickly in Mozambique, gaining nearly 2.5 points per year, followed by Prince Edward Islands and Samoa that both gained 2.3 points per year. The scores fell most quickly in Eritrea, which lost more than 4 points per year, followed by Estonia and Equatorial Guinea that both lost around 3 points per year.

GOAL HIGHLIGHTS IN 2016

Goal scores from lowest to highest:

- Natural Products (48);
- Tourism & Recreation (49);
- Food Provision (54) -subgoals: Fisheries (54) and Mariculture (32);
- Sense of Place (62) -sub-goals: Iconic Species (67) and Lasting Special Places (58);
- Clean Waters (74);
- Artisanal Fishing Opportunities (77);
- Carbon Storage (79);
- Livelihoods & Economies (82) -sub-goals: Livelihoods (77) and Economies (88);
- Coastal Protection (87);
- Biodiversity (91) -sub-goals: Species (92) and Habitats (91).

The lowest scoring sub-goal was Mariculture (32, which contributed to the low score for Food Provision). The Biodiversity score (91) is deceptively high, since the decline in current extent and condition of assessed habitats has occurred over only about three decades.

REGION HIGHLIGHTS IN 2016

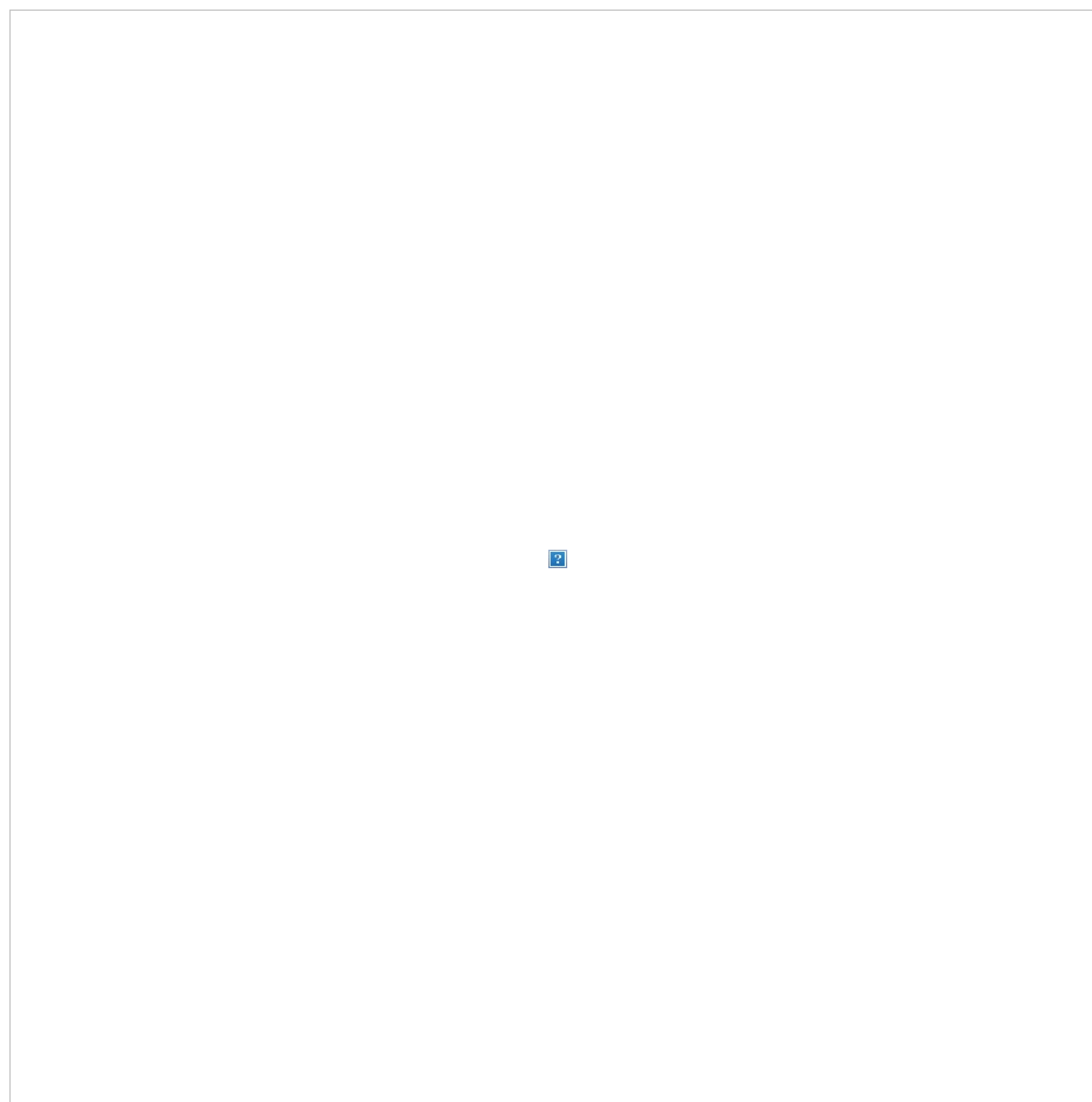
Regional scores ranged from 44 (Libya and Sierra Leone) to 91 (Howland Island and Baker Island).

Five of the highest scoring regions are: Howland Island and Baker Island (91), Jarvis Island (90), South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (88), Palmyra Atoll (85), Germany (85).

In total, twenty-one (21) regions scored 80 or above, many of which are remote islands with few or no human inhabitants showing that despite the Ocean Health Index's emphasis on benefits to people, relatively pristine locations can still score very high. Germany (85) and Australia (80) were the only regions with populations exceeding one million to score 80 or above. Both of these are countries with stable and effective governance, good environmental management and attention to social well-being.

Five of the lowest scoring regions are: Democratic Republic of the Congo (47); Guinea (45) and Ivory Coast (45); Libya (44) and Sierra Leone (44).

In total, thirteen (13) regions scored 50 or below, and 11 of these are in Africa, one in Central America and one in the Middle East. Regions that are poor and have a recent history of conflict, dictatorship or other challenges generally score poorly.



Source: NCEAS, UC Santa Barbara, 2016

Geographic distribution of scores for the 2016 Ocean Health Index