

Project Evaluation Series

**Terminal evaluation of the project
“Sustainable management of bycatch in
Latin America and Caribbean trawl
fisheries”**

**Project code: GCP/RLA/201/GFF
GEF ID: 621538**

Management response

Management response to the terminal evaluation of the project “Sustainable management of bycatch in Latin America and Caribbean trawl fisheries”				04/2022	
Evaluation recommendation	Management response Accepted, Partially accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection	Responsible unit	Time frame	Further funding required (Y or N)
<p>Recommendation 1.</p> <p>To FAO, project countries and co-executing partners of REBYC-II LAC. Within one to two years after project closure, implement actions to build on the foundation created by REBYC-II LAC to facilitate progress towards long-term impact (GEO and PDO).</p> <p>The project has established an enabling environment for achievement of long-term impact and generated significant momentum in the region and the countries. However, the momentum can be quickly lost and the enabling environment, though generally robust, can be undermined by unforeseen developments. Therefore, it is recommended that actions are taken in a timely manner (within one to two years after project closure, depending on the activity) to build on the project results and promote sustainability and the achievement of long-term impact, by, among others, showcasing and sharing results and experiences including to decision makers and trawl fishing communities; upscaling and mainstreaming results; maintaining partnerships; continuing key activities (including through FAO ongoing programmes, technical cooperation projects); accelerating the endorsement and implementation of pending legislation and management plans; continuing to build capacity in the region for implementation of EAF through legal and policy instruments (by, for example, using the tools and guidelines developed by FAO Law Division); providing</p>	Accepted	<p>All the countries defined continuity commitments and follow-up Working Groups. Follow-up meetings will be promoted within the framework of WECAFC. National partner institutions (INVEMAR, INAPESCA, INCOPECA, etc) have agreed to keep collecting data and relevant information after the project is closed, to ensure that changes introduced by the project are still in place, or modified whenever is pertinent.</p> <p>There are a number of products derived from the project that also contribute to the sustainability of the achieved impact; such as national legal frameworks, officially adopted follow up and participatory country sectoral planning mechanisms. FAO will coordinate closely with national governments to ensure that any needed further assistance is timely provided so that pending legislations are finally passed.</p> <p>At an international level, the Bycatch Reduction Strategy being adopted by WECAFC will also be an important information and experience sharing mechanism that will continue to feed the momentum achieved by the project.</p> <p>A number of ongoing and in-pipeline- FAO led projects will continue addressing some the core areas of REBYC-LAC-II. REBYC-III will build on existing results and ensure that bycatch reduction and more sustainable fishing practices are consolidated and rooted in</p>	FAO-SLC	31/12/2023	No

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incentives to stakeholders; pursuing commercialization of the new value added products; and continuing to build trust among stakeholders.		several countries of the Caribbean, including those involved in REBYC-II. FAO is already assisting countries throughout the region, to incorporate the EAF within legal frameworks, sectoral planning instruments and policies. While implementation approaches vary depending on local circumstances, EAF is becoming an important element of fisheries planning and regulatory frameworks.			
<p>Recommendation 2.</p> <p>To FAO GEF Coordination Unit, FAO technical divisions and GEF. To improve the design and implementation of future projects including REBYC-III CLME+, the following are recommended:</p> <p>Project design/follow on projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Set more realistic GEO and PDO, with associated ‘SMART’ indicators; and ensure the development of an adequate theory of change during the design stage. ii. Incorporate other measures and gear modifications for minimizing trawling impacts on benthic habitats and benthos (e.g. gear modifications that reduce physical contact and the penetration depth of the gear into the seabed, and that minimize ghost fishing). iii. Place more focus on gender and livelihoods, private sector engagement/co-management, incentives for adoption of alternative fishing 	Accepted	<p>These recommendations will be shared with the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit; FAO technical divisions, GEF and those responsible for the design of new projects, including the REBYC III LAC. This is with the intention that the recommendations of Project design/follow on projects; Institutional arrangements and administration; and Stakeholder engagement and partnerships will be considered and monitored.</p> <p>1.1. FAO’s continuous improvement approach is reflected in a series of quality control steps along the project cycle. This ensures that the theory of change of projects is solid and realistic, and indicators are SMART. However, there is always room for improvement and this recommendation will be conveyed to all of the sub-regional, regional and global QA groups. It is difficult to foresee external shocks such as the pandemic or climate-related disasters, therefore indicators are as realistic as these unpredictable factors allow.</p>	FAO-SLC and FAO GEF Coordinating Unit		No

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<p>gear, ghost fishing, and fundamental differences between small-scale and large-scale trawl fisheries in the design of bycatch reduction strategies and other management measures.</p> <p>iv. Align REBYC-III CLME+ with other planned regional projects (PROCARIBE+, EAF4SG) to avoid duplication and build synergies; and minimize the time lag between the end of REBYC-II LAC and start of REBYC-III CLME+.</p> <p>Institutional arrangements and administration</p> <p>i. Where appropriate, consider institutional arrangements for execution in which a technical or academic institute with the required competence is designated to work alongside the government co-executing agency.</p> <p>ii. Promote South-South cooperation between the appropriate countries such as those with high capacity and those with low capacity in specific thematic areas.</p> <p>iii. As recommended by the MTE to FAO, continue to streamline and accelerate administrative and operational mechanisms in order to be more efficient in project implementation and harmonize administrative issues at the various levels at which the project operates (to be completed within one year of project closure).</p>		<p>1.2. REBYC-III focuses the development and piloting of smart-gear modifications for both trawl and non-trawl gears (such as gillnets and longlines) for more size- and species selective fishing practices. Also on strengthening governance for better bycatch management. This will ensure continuity and expansion of REBYC-II achievements. Also FAO is developing guidelines for global reduction of ghost fishing, through voluntary guidelines whose elements are already been applied by industrial fishing organizations in LAC. Bycatch reduction and management in small-scale fisheries are now part of sectoral legislation in Colombia, Costa Rica and Brazil, as a result of REBYC-II. Also new projects will build on these results.</p> <p>1.3. FAO’s gender policies are widely and strictly observed throughout the organization and this includes project formulation. Just as REBYC-II focused on improving fishing dependent women’s access to value addition and better markets in some countries (i.e. Colombia and Costa Rica), FAO will continue to promote and incorporate these issues in future projects, in particular but not exclusively, in the REBYC-II countries.</p> <p>2. A common practice in technically-oriented projects is to engage academic institutes. REBYC-II was not different. Specific examples include the partnership developed with the Rural Federal University of Pernambuco in Brazil; the National Fisheries and Aquaculture</p>			

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<p>Stakeholder engagement and partnerships</p> <p>i. Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan and allow adequate time at project start for stakeholder engagement, establishment of partnerships, institutional strengthening, and fostering trust among stakeholders before the start of on the ground activities.</p> <p>ii. Adopt operational modalities that may be more efficient, such as Operational Partners Agreements instead of LOAs. This would allow the engagement of partners from the project design stage and on a long-term basis.</p> <p>iii. Appoint a dedicated consultant to manage stakeholder engagement and partnerships (the knowledge management expert may be able to also serve in this role). Such responsibility should also be included in the terms of reference for the Regional Project Coordinators and national coordinators, if they are to support these processes.</p> <p>iv. Make provisions in the project budget for incentives to increase participation by local communities, especially women, including designating male and female members as community champions.</p>		<p>Institute of Mexico and the Marine Research Institute of Colombia, which were in fact national co-executing agencies. FAO will continue to engage, right from the design stage and where pertinent, academic institutions in project formulation and execution.</p> <p>FAO has a very dynamic SSC strategy whereby technical and policy exchange is facilitated both directly among countries and through technical cooperation projects. REBYC-II had a number of SSC actions. Future projects will continue enhancing capacity building through SSC at institutional and resource users level.</p> <p>3. FAO will continue to promote stakeholder engagement and appropriation of the project by target groups and partners, is done before executing field activities.</p> <p>Whilst there is a careful actors mapping and selection of target groups and potential community champions, there is still room for improvement and the recommendation of having a consultant dedicated to stimulate and manage stakeholder engagement, is well received. FAO will also advise national fisheries authorities and other relevant partners, the importance of adopting it.</p>			

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<p>Recommendation 3.</p> <p>To Participating countries, FAO GEF Coordination Unit and GEF. Support the continuation of initiatives started under REBYC-II LAC for enhanced livelihoods and empowerment of women fish workers under follow-on projects and programmes.</p> <p>These initiatives should build on the results, studies, lessons and experiences of REBYC-II LAC, with replication and upscaling as feasible. Where the required capacity of the co-executing partners is limited, involve the appropriate government agencies and institutions with the relevant mandate and expertise related to gender and livelihoods in the design and implementation of these initiatives. The effects of bycatch reduction on women and other vulnerable groups should be monitored and appropriate measures to mitigate potential negative impacts identified.</p>	Accepted	<p>The information generated by the project will be available through partners in the countries and at FAO for use and learning. Ensuring that new legislation frameworks include these aspects. The pursuit of gender equity and livelihood improvement will continue to be promoted and prioritized in FAO and partner projects. As well as the monitoring of their implementation in practice and effectiveness. Training, sensitization and expert participation on gender and livelihoods in project design, implementation and monitoring will be included in further projects.</p> <p>Already a number of projects, including REBYC-III are building on REBYC-II’s results and experiences. FAO will continue to work closely with national counterparts and strategic partners, both institutional and academic or civil organizations, to ensure that the achievements and positive changes reached by REBYC-II are consolidated and rooted in fishery and policy practices. There are a number of technological, socioeconomic and policy REBYC-II-derived documents that have been already published globally, containing numerous lessons learned, technical results, evidence and experiences, that will certainly serve as a reference and a basis for replication in other countries, particularly those of the Large Marine Ecosystems where REBYC-II operated. FAO will make sure that in future</p>	FAO GEF Coordinating Unit, Country, Sub-Regional and Regional Offices.		Yes

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		projects, monitoring of the effects of bycatch reduction on women, are incorporated.			
<p>Recommendation 4.</p> <p>To the FAO GEF Coordination Unit. Develop an appropriate risk management plan with an adequate budget, and incorporate flexibility in the design of new projects to mitigate the potential impacts of any delays in project start up or unexpected political and institutional changes in the participating countries or co-executing agencies.</p> <p>In the time period between project approval and the start of project implementation, which can be extended, and during project implementation, political, institutional, and social changes might occur that could affect the project context and implementation. Adapting to these changes may require certain modifications to be made, for example, to specific targets and institutional arrangements, to mitigate any potential negative impact on project implementation.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>It is necessary to assume the fundamental need for time and budget for this item by the funders. This is not the first time that this issue has appeared in a Final Project Evaluation.</p>	<p>FAO will ensure adequate consideration of the risk of potential externalities that might delay the realization of project activities and consequently the achievement of some of the products and targets. We will propose to donors some margin for time flexibility, should external shocks impose delays. FAO will continue strengthening risk analysis processes to propose the most suitable mitigating actions.</p> <p>While there are many activities that depend partially or exclusively on local official decisions, there are others that can be realized without government approval. FAO will incorporate in future project, implementing arrangements with national counterparts, that reduce unnecessary delays once the project is approved, to carry out the required activities.</p>			No
<p>Recommendation 5.</p> <p>To FAO GEF Coordination Unit and GEF. Make adequate provisions in the project budget for communication and knowledge management throughout project implementation, including:</p> <p>i. Hiring of a dedicated project communication/knowledge management expert from the start of implementation and engaging local communication/knowledge</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>This will depend on the willingness of the funders to allocate resources for this.</p>	<p>FAO project formulators will incorporate a clear communication strategy and knowledge management plan including associated provisions in the budget.</p>	<p>Relevant FAO Representations and GEF Coordinating Unit</p>		No

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<p>management experts and local 'champions' at the country level for communication with local communities.</p> <p>ii. Preparation of a communication/knowledge management strategy at the start, which includes capacity building in this area for project personnel and partners.</p> <p>iii. Allocation of an adequate budget for translation, communication and knowledge management activities.</p> <p>iv. Where the Regional Project Coordinator and National Coordinators are expected to support knowledge management, this responsibility should be included in their respective terms of reference.</p> <p>v. Production and dissemination of knowledge management products that are targeted for the general public and local stakeholders.</p> <p>vi. Greater utilization of newsletters and mainstream media (e.g., embedding television personnel with the project).</p>					

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