

Project Evaluation Series

**Terminal evaluation of
"Global sustainable fisheries
management and biodiversity
conservation in the areas beyond
national jurisdiction"
ABNJ Tuna project**

**Project code: GCP/GLO/365/GFF
GEF ID: 4581**

Management response

Overall response to the evaluation

The Project Management has been impressed, and is very grateful, for the ability of the team to complete and delivery of the evaluation of such a complex project in time to meet the conditions for submitting a proposal for a second phase of the Project to GEF. Undoubtedly, the familiarity of Dr Hazin with the RFMO processes and realities, both scientific and political, was a contributing factor to this success, together with the support provided by the OED team.

We found many of the conclusions of the evaluation in agreement with our own assessment of the lessons learned during the implementation of the Project. The interactions with the evaluation team has been the source of constructive suggestions to be put in practice during the design and implementation of a subsequent second phase of the Project. This is evident by the high degree of agreement of Management with the recommendations submitted, as reflected in the Table below.

It is clear that FAO has learned and evolved from the implementation of the GEF-5 Common Oceans ABNJ Program and that, combined with the suggestions provided by the Program and Projects evaluations, will be to provide a better framework to achieve Program goals during a second phase.

Management response to the terminal evaluation of "Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the areas beyond national jurisdiction" ABNJ Tuna project					July 2020
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) Accepted, Partially Accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Time frame (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<p>Recommendation 1 to GEF-FAO.</p> <p>The shortcomings observed during the project design and consultations held for the preparation of the ProDoc (Project Document) for the first phase, should be avoided and rectified in the preparation of the follow-on Project. In particular, to ensure a proper consultation with key stakeholders, enough time and financial resources must be allocated to this task. Therefore, the financial balance of the project, close to USD 2 million, should be used mainly for this purpose. Furthermore, the consultation and engagement of stakeholders, to the extent possible, should go beyond</p>	Accepted	<p>This was a design shortcoming that had been already identified by the PMU, and partly due to the PPG budget having been unexpectedly curtailed. In contrast, the consultations towards a second phase have been broad and inclusive, with two workshops to develop a programmatic Theory of Change incorporating most prospective stakeholders. A call for proposals resulted in over 40 proposals submitted by prospective partners and reviewed with proponents during the last Steering Committee. Members of the tuna RFMOs have been and will continue to be consulted (e.g. ICCAT in 2018). Private sector and CSO are part of the core partnerships that continue from the first phase.</p>	PMU	2020	N

<p>the t-RFMOs Secretariats, moving down to the member states and private sector. Proper consultation with national stakeholders (RFMO members) during the design phase should also help to leverage a proper allocation of co- financing.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 2 to the Fisheries Department senior management and to the FAO-GEF coordination unit.</p> <p>It is recommended to stress the importance of implementing the FAO's Strategic Results Framework recommendation on an "administrative environment fit for purpose". This evaluation considers it essential for FAO, in order to continue to be able to fully implement and execute GEF project of this magnitude. In particular, the hard limits on the travels imposed on staff engaged in the coordination of such projects need to be waived.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The GEF-5 Common Oceans ABNJ Program was one of the first partnership-based programs that FAO implemented, and, as such, there was little understanding of the special requirements. As a consequence, a number of new implementation modalities have been developed that will facilitate future Programs. Also the current FAO management has exhibited more flexibility in the application of some rules that could impede an efficient implementation of programs. The FAO-GEF Unit concurs with the above response and adds that -in this time of covid-19- all of FAO is undergoing a major re-think regarding how best to reach our stakeholders most effectively via web-based technologies and/or travel.</p>	<p>Fisheries Department senior management, FAO-GEF coordination unit.</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 to the PMU (Project Management Unit)</p> <p>Linked to Recommendation 1, a proper Theory of Change</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Two workshops were conducted with the participation of partners and stakeholders to develop a programmatic ToC for the second phase. From it, a ToC for the future second phase of the Project was derived, presented to, and agreed by the partners at the last Project Steering Committee conducted in January 2020.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2019-2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>(ToC) should be constructed this time prior to the definition of the several outputs and activities to be undertaken by the project, in order to ensure they will be guided by and stem from the priorities identified in the ToC, in order to maximize the chances of achieving project outcomes and objectives, and not the other way around.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 4 to the PMU. A proper allocation of financial and human resources to management and communication of knowledge should be ensured for the next phase, under formally, clearly established and interconnected “lessons-learnt” & “communication” strategies</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>In the plans for the second phase of the Program, knowledge management and communications play a key and prominent role, with support and resources to be provided at Project-level and Program level (via the Global Coordination Project). A Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy will be developed, to guide the implementation of these activities in line with FAO and GEF policies and strategy objectives.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Y (as part of second phase)</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 to the PMU A much better communication, interaction and integration, not only between the different outputs/ activities of the ABNJ Tuna Project, but also between all the projects included in the Common</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>For the future Program, a completely different structure has been proposed, with a well-resourced Global Coordination Project (GCP) as an integrating mechanism. The GCP will facilitate communication and sharing of knowledge and lessons learnt across projects in areas of common interest, improve integration of activities across projects, provide more harmonized communications to increase efficiency and integrate messages to reach a wider audience, and provide consistency and support to M&E approaches across Projects.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Y (as part of second phase)</p>

<p>Oceans Program should be ensured, so that opportunities for synergic gains are not wasted. As already recommended by the MTE (Recommendation 7.v), the preparation for the next phase should include a review/ evaluation on how the ABNJ Tuna Project, together with all other projects, could better integrate their efforts to maximize their chances to achieve the ideated goals.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 6 to the PMU. In order to avoid some of the sustainability problems faced by the ending project, as recommended by the MTE (Recommendation 8.i), during the next phase, a Sustainability Plan should be developed and formally included in the project, setting out project efforts to ensure the uptake and continued use of its results, after it finishes. As also noted by the Program evaluation, a co-financing strategy should be targeted to enhance sustainability, noting that recurring public expenditures hold the key to sustainability of technology and innovation funded from GEF grants. Therefore, in interventions</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Sustainability considerations will be included in all outputs. For some outputs, sustainability is not of concern because the implementation of the output would result in new regulations that will persist beyond the life of the Project.</p> <p>Also, upfront commitments will be sought by proposing that capital investments (such as equipment) be financed through non-grant instruments or loans by the prospective partners, whenever possible. In particular, upfront commitments by the private sector will be sought for interventions in which they participate.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>that fund capital goods and assets requiring recurrent operational costs on part of beneficiaries, it is important to secure upfront commitments of recurrent public expenditure as a specific component of co-financing, before irreversible expenditures are undertaken.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 7 to the PMU. The ABNJ Tuna Project for the next phase, as also recommended by the MTE (Recommendation 6.v), should develop a Gender Action Plan (GAP), together with all the executing partners, to enhance the contributions by the project to the achievement of FAO gender policy objectives. The implementation of the GAP should be closely monitored and reported. The Project efforts in this regard should go well beyond just taking note of the number of women participating in Project activities, the fact that the tuna fisheries is indeed strongly dominated by men should not be used as an excuse to waive such an obligation. On the contrary. It should prompt an even more proactive attitude by the</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>A specific GAP will be developed for the second phase with external consultation. The low participation of females in the industry is due to structural and historical reasons that are beyond the reach of the second phase of the Project. However, as it was the case during the first phase, as result of the actions of the Project in the first phase, new opportunities opened up for females (e.g. land-based observer in the EMS teams; compliance officers in the Pacific). The second phase will identify new such opportunity as part of a cohesive plan for advancing gender issues.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Y (as part of PPG)</p>

<p>project to rectify, to the extent possible, the serious problem of gender imbalance.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 8 to the PMU. The ABNJ Tuna Project was developed in all oceans of the world, involving the 5 t-RFMOs, making, therefore, the coordination of the different project/ activities with a multitude of partners quite complex. Notwithstanding, the project should be very careful to ensure that the language problems faced during the first phase, such as in some of the HS workshops, are not repeated in the second phase, including by securing a proper budget to cover all the required languages in any project event.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>Whenever possible, language-specific versions of events were provided, following the usual requirements of the t-RFMOs. In ICCAT and IATTC, French- Spanish-speaking courses were provided as needed. Simultaneous interpretation would not work well, and it would interfere with the necessary fluid dialogue among participants.</p> <p>For the second phase, there will be more reliance on online information products that can be produced in a number of different languages, to reach a wider audience with consistent messages.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 9 to the PMU. Recommendations on changes to or suggested follow up actions needed on specific outputs, should they be continued in the second phase of the project</p>	<p>Accepted</p>		<p>PMU</p>		
<p>Outputs 1.1.1 & 1.1.4 The activities covered under these outputs and related to the development of HS,</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>We agree that they should be merged and work closer with the existing teams in each t-RFMO, to ensure that the support was in line with the path of each t-RFMO. The goal has been always to support adoption of HS by familiarizing decision makers with the tenets of HS and MSE. However, the first phase has also contributed to the</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>should be merged under a single one, with both strategies included in the activities foreseen, but with the workshops dedicated to member countries carried out in much closer cooperation/ interaction with tuna RFMOs. Furthermore, the focus should gradually change from the promotion of the use of HS in the 5 t-RFMOs, to actually help in their scientific development.</p>		<p>scientific development when it was necessary (e.g. in IOTC) and through the support for global collaboration (e.g. the meetings of the Kobe joint WG on MSE).</p>			
<p>Output 1.1.3 The possibility of upscaling the crew-based observer program (CBOP) to other countries in the region should be pursued in the next phase of the ABNJ Tuna Project. The outstanding reductions of bycatch achieved in the Pakistani tuna gillnet fleet should be independently verified, as a matter of urgency, including by using simple electronic monitoring systems, such as affordable CCTV and/ or shellcatch cameras. The purportedly spread of the bycatch reduction methods for neighbouring countries, such as Iran and India, should also be evaluated in the next</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>Before promoting CBOPs (which are indistinguishable from logbook programs) the ability of the fishermen to fulfil their obligations and record data accurately at the same time, needs to be verified by concurrent presence of EMS and comparison of data obtained. We agree that the outstanding reductions of bycatch due to re-configuration of the gear need to be confirmed by independent means and properly documented. We are approaching carefully the testing of alternative gears, but a limited pilot will be needed to generate interest and proof of concept in the fishing communities and the government to enter into a significant capital investment in gear, especially if we will encourage that they request loans to cover that investment. From a regulatory point of view, there is an incentive for a switch to other gears, as all the nets beings used far exceed the maximum length allowed of 2.5 km.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020-</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>phase of the project.</p> <p>As it was already cautioned by the MTE (Recommendation 3.v), the feasibility of the conversion of gillnets to longline fishing should be carefully pondered, before it is tried, including by considering alternative options, such as stationary FADs, handline fishery, etc. The evaluation team strongly advises the Project Coordination not to start such an experiment, unless proper financing in the second phase of the ABNJ Tuna Project is secured.</p>					
<p>Output 1.1.5</p> <p>With respect to the promotion of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), in the next phase, the project should focus its efforts in continuing to enhance the dialogue and to developing the science required to its formal adoption/implementation in the future, including analyses on possible ways to incorporate socio-economic and governance dimensions.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Fully agree with an advice that is consistent with our plans for the second phase.</p>	<p>PMU</p>		

<p>Output 2.1 5</p> <p>On the development of the Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels- CLAV, the ABNJ Tuna Project, in its next phase, should evaluate the possibility of developing a Consolidated List of IUU vessels. This would require, among other things, the need to secure agreement by all RFMOs to adopt or at least to endorse the IUU lists adopted by other RFMOs, which is far from simple.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Fully agreed. The presentation of the lists could contain additional information that would allow the user to identify the process by which a vessel was deemed to be IUU.</p> <p>Although the t-RFMOs are still developing processes to adopt other RFMOs IUU listings, there are already mechanisms to exchange that information, as the website www.tuna-org.org shows by publishing each individual list.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Output 2.2.1</p> <p>Regarding the pilot trials of an electronic observer system (EOS) aboard tuna longline vessels in Fiji, it is absolutely crucial and urgent that the private sector is given prompt access to the images acquired by the cameras installed in their boats. In the next phase, the project should make efforts in liaising with relevant government institutions to accomplish this.</p> <p>The land-based observers should not endeavor to analyze 100% of the trips. A much wiser strategy would be to cover only 20% or so of the recorded trips, chosen</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Agreed on the access to images by the private sector. The PMU has already discussed the issue, citing the example of the EMS in Ghana where vessel owners are considered co-owners if the information supplied by the EMS in their own vessels.</p> <p>On the sampling of trips, we fully agreed, and we have discussed a number of possible scenarios that could be applicable to various fleets. Sampling a proportion of the trips would work if they whole fleet is fitted with EMS, or if the EMS is portable enough so that they can be moved randomly between boats at a convenient interval. In some fleets (e.g. Gillnet with > 700 vessels) it might be impossible to fit every vessel, so exchange of equipment will be necessary. We are talking with providers about this.</p> <p>We have also indicated to suppliers that, in the future, we will favor systems that have open formats, to improve inter-operability (not a popular request with suppliers).</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>randomly, but having a much more up-to- date monitoring of the fishing operations.</p> <p>If the FIJI EOS System continues to be supported by the project in its next phase, it is recommended to assign, for instance, extra points for suppliers that provide the image data in an easy-to-share format and use open-source software, so that, for example, the cameras could be bought from one supplier and the computers and the processing software from another one. It would also be important that the EOS be combined with VMS, and with an electronic reporting system, all in one, with a significant reduction of costs and gains in efficiency.</p>					
<p>Output 2.2.3</p> <p>In increasing MCS capabilities at national and regional levels to conduct fisheries intelligence analyses, in FFA countries, previous shortcomings, related to the lack of a proper feedback mechanism should be addressed.</p> <p>A better coordination,</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>We note the lack of feedback to FFA members, and we will address this issue with our FFA partners.</p> <p>As we plan to replicate the Certificate IV course in other oceans in a second phase with a further regionalization of the course contents, the TCN RFMO officers will be invited to participate in the design of the regional curricula and comment on the appropriate issues to tackle in each region.</p> <p>We agree that the TCN should still be informed of all MCS ABNJ initiatives that are pertinent to the work of the involved RFMOs.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>2020-</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>interaction and cooperation between this MCS activity and the IMCS/ TCN should also be pursued, as well as between the IMCS/ TCN and the MCS Certificate IV course on Fisheries, Enforcement and Compliance.</p>					
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