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# PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

**Hundred and Forty-first Session**

**Rome, 3-7 November 2025**

**Follow-up report on the evaluation of FAO's support to life below water  
(SDG 14) [cf. [PC 137/3](#), [PC 137/3 Sup.1](#)]**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- FAO Management welcomes the recommendations and expresses its appreciation to the Evaluation team for the evaluation work and constructive suggestions, which have been duly taken into consideration.
- FAO Management appreciates the recognition of the Organization's unique role in advancing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, leveraging its technical expertise and convening capacity, particularly through the development and promotion of normative products and international standards.
- Regarding Recommendation 1, while alignment between certain targets and indicators could be improved, no methodological changes are planned for SDG indicator 14.6.1 as the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) has completed its Global Comprehensive Review, and there will be no further indicator revisions before 2030.
- Recommendation 2 was addressed with the recent release of the most extensive and participatory report on the status on fish stocks at global and regional level. Preliminary results on global fisheries sustainability assessments based on national reports closely match FAO's global estimate. FAO is driving further alignment through targeted capacity-building efforts, aiming for stronger consistency with national submissions by 2028.
- Recommendation 3 is being addressed by developing a Global Capacity Development and Training Programme to enhance Members' fisheries data and stock assessment capabilities. The initiative will be presented at the 2nd Session of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in February 2026, aiming to attract donor interest and support for implementation.
- Regarding Recommendation 4, FAO Members endorsed the first international Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA) at the 44th Session of the FAO Conference in 2025. FAO is accelerating uptake by hosting workshops worldwide and is partnering with the World Bank to launch a global training programme, driving rapid, coordinated progress in sustainable aquaculture.
- Recommendation 5 was addressed by embedding Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in FAO's official project cycle and template. All current and future FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture projects will include FPIC references, with implementation overseen by the Project Support Division (PSS), ensuring consistent application across FAO-supported initiatives.
- Regarding Recommendation 6, FAO is advancing social inclusion in fisheries by empowering small-scale fishers (SSF), integrating gender equality and promoting decent work. It supported SSF participation in global forums, backed six national action plans, and enhanced SDG 14.b reporting. Gender strategies were embedded across major programmes, while collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) is driving new guidance on eliminating child labour in the sector, and embedding social responsibility, decent work and gender equality in the GSA.
- In accordance with FAO's policy on evaluations, this document provides an update from FAO Management on the implementation of the actions outlined in the Management Response to the Evaluation of FAO's support to life below water (SDG 14).
- FAO Management confirms that the recommendations are being implemented and results are becoming evident.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

- The Programme Committee is invited to review the content of the document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.

Draft Advice

**The Committee:**

- **welcomed the Follow-up report on the Evaluation of FAO's support to life below water (SDG 14) and the progress made so far, while acknowledging that some evidence of impact is too early to be demonstrated;**
- **encouraged continued efforts to improve alignment of national and global FAO sustainability assessments, especially through capacity-building and technical support;**
- **supported the ongoing development and implementation of the Global Capacity Development and Training Programme to strengthen Members' fisheries data and stock assessment capabilities;**
- **recommended sustained promotion and uptake of the new voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA); and**
- **encouraged FAO to further advance social inclusion, gender equality and decent work in fisheries and aquaculture.**

## I. Background

1. The Evaluation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)'s support to Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14: Life below water) reviewed FAO's contribution to four indicators under its custodianship: combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (14.4), fisheries subsidies (14.6), small-scale fisheries (14.b) and economic benefits to Small Island Developing States and least developed countries (14.7). It also examined FAO's contributions to broader SDG 14 targets. The Evaluation assessed the relevance of FAO's Blue Transformation roadmap 2022-2030<sup>1</sup>, which provide the strategic framework for FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture (Document [PC 137/3](#)).
2. Management welcomed the comprehensive Evaluation of FAO's work on SDG 14 and appreciated its interactive engagement with stakeholders and personnel across headquarters and Decentralized Offices. It valued the recognition of FAO's key role, particularly as custodian of four Tier 1 indicators (14.4, 14.6, 14.7 and 14.b), noting this achievement could have been more strongly reflected in the Evaluation. Management further acknowledged the conclusions that FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 is well aligned with SDG 14 and responsive to Members' needs and requests expressed in the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and it welcomed the positive feedback on the flagship report on the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA), FAO's normative work, and the strong partnerships built to advance progress under SDG 14 (Document [PC 137/3 Sup.1](#)).
3. The Programme Committee, at its 137th Session, welcomed the Evaluation and appreciated Management's Response, recognizing FAO's unique technical expertise and convening power in advancing SDG 14. The 174th Session of the Council (Rome, 4-8 December 2023) endorsed the conclusions of the Committee contained in the Report of its 137th Session (Document [CL 174/8](#)).

## II. Overall progress in the implementation of the recommendations

4. In line with FAO's policy on evaluations, this section provides an update on the implementation of the actions and recommendations set out in the Management Response. The Report provides a Management Action Record Scoring (MAR Score) on a six-point scale, in which FAO Management self-assessed the level of adoption and implementation of recommendations.
5. **Recommendation 1: Submit a request to the next 2025 Comprehensive Review of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.** *This request should entail a comprehensive review of the utility, validity and alignment of SDG 14 targets and indicators under FAO's custodianship. The proposal should specifically include the review of indicator 14.6.1 or the framing of one additional indicator related to fisheries subsidies under target 14.6.*
6. **Progress:** The comprehensive review of the utility and validity of indicators under FAO's custodianship) appears to be beyond the mandate of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division (NFI) but could be considered by the Office of the Chief Statistician.
7. In relation to SDG 14 indicators under FAO custodianship, it was noted that alignment between certain SDG targets and indicators could be strengthened, especially as new information becomes available. For example, future implementation of the recently agreed World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies may provide an opportunity to develop an additional indicator in support of SDG 14.6. However, given the strict requirements for data availability and established methodologies, it is not currently possible to propose such an indicator via the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) comprehensive review at this time, nor is it clear that FAO should lead development of an indicator specific to the WTO Agreement. In this context, it is worth noting that during the most recent indicator update process conducted by the IAEG-SDGs, 53 out of 68 proposals for revisions were

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<sup>1</sup> FAO. 2022. Blue Transformation - Roadmap 2022–2030: A vision for FAO's work on aquatic food systems. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0459en>

rejected, primarily due to the “lack of internationally agreed methodology and uncertainty regarding data availability.”

8. Consequently, with respect to SDG indicator 14.6.1, FAO has not proposed changes to its methodology within the IAEG-SDG framework, as it would break the time series and would require inclusion of other instruments not currently covered by the indicator nor enforced at the time of the submission. Nevertheless, Management wishes to clarify that the current methodology already accounts for cases where a State implements the provisions of an agreement without being a Party to it. For example, a State may apply relevant measures through the conservation and management requirements of a regional fishery management organization. States that are not Parties to any of the relevant agreements and have no intention of joining would still be classified within band 5 (the highest category) if they had fully implemented all relevant provisions.

9. On 12-13 May 2025, NFI presented updated information on indicators 14.4.1, 14.6.1, 14.b.1, and 14.7.1 to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) Expert Group Meeting. This presentation formed part of the preparatory process for HLPF 2025 and contributed to the global review of progress towards SDG 14. By providing the most recent data and analytical updates, FAO supported in assessing trends, identifying challenges and informing discussions on future priorities for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

10. **Recommendation 2. Improve the quality of SDG 14 data published.** *This requires reconciling discrepancies in fish stock status reporting by different sources (national data by governments versus regional and global data by SOFIA), addressing data gaps in small-scale fisheries, improving communications on the status of fish stocks and, to the extent possible, sustaining partnerships established as part of the Illuminating Hidden Harvests global initiative to extend the coverage of data on small-scale fisheries and support to countries providing data.*

11. **Progress:** In June 2025 FAO released its most comprehensive report<sup>2</sup> on the state of world marine fishery resources at the 3rd UN Ocean Conference, including information on 2 600 stocks, many small-scale fisheries. The report has been very well received by Members.

12. FAO continues to request countries' self-assessments of their fisheries sustainability status through standardized questionnaires. The latest questionnaire, with a submission deadline of August 2025, has so far yielded responses from 95 countries, compared to 87 in 2019 and 99 in 2022. Reporting increased in Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, remained stable in Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania, but decreased in Europe and Northern America, Northern Africa and Western Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Each submission is reviewed by FAO and either approved or rejected depending on the methodology applied and the availability of supporting data. While the most recent data is still under assessment, preliminary global results show strong alignment: national reports indicate that 63 percent of stocks are sustainably exploited, compared to 65 percent in FAO's own analysis. Nonetheless, notable regional discrepancies persist, partly because some national submissions did not pass a second round of quality assurance. Over time, FAO's calculations are expected to converge with Members' reports, though perfect alignment will remain unachievable given differences in the stocks included. To support greater consistency, FAO is conducting capacity-building activities from 2025 to 2027, with the goal of significantly improving alignment by 2028.

13. Reconciling such discrepancies is not a primary objective, as differences may stem from both technical issues (e.g. different list of stocks included) and more complex factors. FAO's analysis is the only recognized global index and FAO focuses on ensuring this index continues to evolve and improve, making it increasingly useful for countries to use it to guide their own national reports.

14. **Recommendation 3. Create a sustainable programme to build national capacity for fisheries data collection and robust stock assessments.** *This requires leveraging FAO's experience*

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<sup>2</sup> Sharma, R., Barange, M., Agostini, V., Barros, P., Gutierrez, N.L., Vasconcellos, M., Fernandez Reguera, D., Tiffay, C., & Levontin, P., eds. 2025. Review of the state of world marine fishery resources – 2025. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper, No. 721. Rome. FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd5538en>

*and expertise in fisheries data collection and stock assessment, developing a sustainable funding strategy, and building effective partnerships to accelerate progress.*

15. **Progress:** As requested, FAO has developed a draft concept note of a Global Capacity Development and Training Programme to strengthen Members' capacity in fisheries data collection and stock assessment. Once finalized, the note will serve as a basis for discussions with potential donors. The 2nd Session of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), scheduled to meet in person in February 2026, will provide an opportunity for FAO to present the programme with a view to generating donor interest. This initiative is closely linked to Recommendation 2 and FAO considers that pursuing both in tandem will enhance the likelihood of success for each.

16. **Recommendation 4. Continue to lead a shift to “better” food production by developing an intersectoral approach that addresses tradeoffs posed by aquaculture intensification and reduces risks of food production systems to oceans.** *This approach may include strengthening existing strategies, guidelines and policy; leading the development of rigorous global standards and indicators for aquaculture sustainability; and promoting an aggressive consumer awareness strategy to empower consumer choices that promote sustainability of marine ecosystems.*

17. **Progress:** At the 44th Session of the FAO Conference in 2025, Members endorsed new voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA),<sup>3</sup> the first normative document specifically focused on sustainable aquaculture development.

18. GSA specifically addresses this recommendation in full, with Members committing to establish clear standards and processes for evaluating trade-offs in aquaculture. To support uptake of this milestone guidance, FAO has organized a series of global and regional workshops: Mediterranean and Black Sea (4–5 December 2025, Greece), North America (8 March 2025, United States of America), Latin America and the Caribbean (23–24 June 2025, Panama), sub-Saharan Africa (23–24 June 2025, Uganda), Europe (22–24 September 2025, Spain), Asia (10 November 2025, India), Oceania (November 2025, New Caledonia, date to be determined), and a global GSA communication expert workshop (28–29 October 2024, FAO headquarters, Italy). In addition, FAO is in discussions with the World Bank on developing a global GSA training programme under its auspices.

19. Going forward, all FAO technical support in this area will be guided by the GSA.

20. **Recommendation 5. Embed free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) in FAO's project cycle ensuring that it is designed, implemented, monitored and reported in all relevant projects.** *This may be included as one of the elements of the action plan recommended below but is a priority that requires immediate action.*

21. **Progress:** FAO confirms that the Project Support Division (PSS) has embedded the FPIC in FAO's project cycle and it is reflected in the current, official FAO project document template. All FAO projects utilize this template and it is confirmed that current and future FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture projects will include FPIC references in the relevant areas of their project documents, as determined and overseen by PSS. Implementation, monitoring and reporting of FPIC are therefore ensured across all applicable projects.

22. **Recommendation 6. Engage to empower key stakeholders – including women, youth, people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples – to maximize their active participation in, and contributions to, SDG 14-related work.** *To this end, develop an action plan that values and leverages the knowledge, capacities and needs of different groups—such as people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples. Elements of this action plan may include, for example, embedding FPIC in the project cycle; mapping and developing strategies to address gaps in SDG 14 normative frameworks; strengthening data collection and reporting for monitoring; and possibly expanding FAO's efforts in social protection and decent work in fisheries and aquaculture.*

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<sup>3</sup> FAO. 2025. *Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd3785en>

23. **Progress:** In addition to embedding FPIC in projects as described above, significant efforts were made to strengthen the engagement and empowerment of small-scale fisheries (SSF) organizations and communities over the reporting period. Support was provided to enable their participation in key global and regional processes, including the Small-Scale Fisheries Summits and the FAO Committee on Fisheries. Capacity development initiatives advanced the implementation of six National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF). In addition, opportunities were created for SSF representatives to contribute to expert meetings on reporting for SDG 14.b, ensuring that their perspectives inform global monitoring and policy discussions.

24. Work also progressed on integrating gender equality and social inclusion into SDG 14-related activities. The GloLitter Project (SDG 14.c and 14.a) incorporated gender analysis and piloted capacity development activities in West Africa. The Common Oceans Programme (SDG 14.c) embedded tailored Gender Action Plans into its projects, while the EAF-Nansen Programme updated its Gender Strategy and initiated the establishment of Gender Desks in ministries of fisheries. Together, these efforts contributed to strengthening the role of women and marginalized groups in fisheries governance and practice.

25. In parallel, important strides were made in expanding social protection and promoting decent work within the sector. Collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) resulted in the development of guidance on eliminating child labour in fisheries and aquaculture. Efforts were also undertaken to align sectoral practices with the ILO Decent Work Agenda. Furthermore, the new Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture feature a dedicated section on social responsibility, decent work and gender equality, marking a step forward in embedding these principles into global aquaculture standards.

*Follow-up report on the evaluation of FAO's support to life below water (SDG 14) - Matrix*

Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Sub-recommendation	Actions agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d) <sup>4</sup>	Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions (e)
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b>  <b>Submit a request to the next 2025 Comprehensive Review of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.</b></p>	<p>This request should entail a comprehensive review of the utility, validity and alignment of SDG 14 targets and indicators under FAO's custodianship. The proposal should specifically include the review of indicator 14.6.1 or the framing of one additional indicator related to fisheries subsidies under target 14.6.</p>	<p>FAO intends to start this process by conducting an internal review of all the indicators under its responsibility, and the identification of possible alternative actions to take for this improvement. The request for the Comprehensive review will be informed by this deeper analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FAO has not proposed changes to its methodology for the SDG Indicator 14.6.1 to the IAEG-SDG because it would break the existing time series, and it would have to refer to instruments not yet in force at the time of the request (e.g. WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies).</li> <li>▪ FAO presented updates on indicators 14.4.1, 14.6.1, 14.b.1 and 14.7.1 to the Expert Group Meeting in preparation for HLPF 2025.</li> </ul>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are no prospects for further additions, deletions, or modifications to the Global Indicator Framework, including those related to SDG 14 indicators, as no further changes can be made until the conclusion of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</li> <li>▪ By providing the most recent data and analytical updates, FAO supported in assessing trends, identifying challenges and informing discussions on future priorities for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b>  <b>Improve the quality of SDG 14 data published.</b></p>	<p>This requires reconciling discrepancies in fish stock status reporting by different sources (national data by governments versus regional and global data by SOFIA), addressing data gaps in small-scale fisheries, improving communications on the</p>	<p>FAO agrees with the Evaluation report on the importance of reconciling national reports on fish stock status with regional and global estimations provided in the FAO SOFIA report. However, it has to be recognized that rather than discrepancies what the Evaluation has identified are two different processes (one that started in 1974 and the second only in 2020) that over time should provide consistent information. The Fisheries and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FAO released its most comprehensive report on the status of fish stocks at the 3rd UN Ocean Conference.</li> <li>▪ FAO continues to request national self-assessments of fisheries sustainability status: 95 submissions received in 2025 (vs. 87 in 2019 and 99 in 2022).</li> <li>▪ Full alignment unlikely due to differing stock lists; FAO running capacity-building activities in</li> </ul>	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Review of the state of world marine fishery resources – 2025 reports on the biological sustainability of 2 570 individual fish stocks, a major increase from previous editions. Informed by over 650 experts from more than 200 institutions and over 90 countries, this participatory and inclusive report analyses trends across all FAO marine fishing areas and</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> **Management Action Record (MAR) Score:** 1 - **None:** no action was taken to implement the recommendation; 2 - **Poor:** plan and actions for implementation of the recommendation are at a very preliminary stage; 3 - **Inadequate:** implementation of the recommendation is uneven and partial; 4 - **Adequate:** implementation of the recommendation has progressed; there is no evidence yet of its results on the intended target; 5 - **Good:** the recommendation has been fully implemented and there is some initial evidence of its impact on the intended target; 6 – **Excellent:** there is solid evidence that the recommendation has had a positive impact on its intended target.

Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Sub-recommendation	Actions agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d) <sup>4</sup>	Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions (e)
	status of fish stocks and, to the extent possible, sustaining partnerships established as part of the Illuminating Hidden Harvests global initiative to extend the coverage of data on small-scale fisheries and support to countries providing data.	Aquaculture Division has already identified the issue and is working in this direction. A proposal for a medium-term project to build capacity of countries to report on the multiple indicators associated with SDG 14 will be prepared, with a wide participation, and submitted to potential donors for funding.	2025–2027 to improve alignment by 2028.		<p>offers the clearest picture to date of how global marine fisheries are faring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Global results of fisheries sustainability status are well aligned: 63 percent (national reports) vs. 65 percent (FAO analysis) of stocks sustainably exploited. Regional discrepancies remain, as some national submissions did not pass a second quality assurance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 3: Create a sustainable programme to build national capacity for fisheries data collection and robust stock assessments.</b></p>	This approach may include strengthening existing strategies, guidelines and policy; leading the development of rigorous global standards and indicators for aquaculture sustainability; and promoting an aggressive consumer awareness strategy to empower consumer choices that promote sustainability of marine ecosystems.	The Fisheries and Aquaculture Division is preparing a proposal for a programme for supporting the development of the capacity of member countries on the production of fisheries management advice, that includes collection, management and analysis of data, and the assessment of fish stocks and fisheries. This process will be accelerated and is expected to be working in the next biennium.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division drafted a Global Capacity Development and Training Programme to strengthen Members’ capacity in fisheries data collection and stock assessment.</li> <li>▪ FAO plans to present the programme at the COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (February 2026) to attract donor interest.</li> </ul>	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Empower Members with the tools, knowledge and skills needed to adopt effective evidence-based, adaptive management approaches tailored to diverse fishery contexts, including data- and capacity-limited and high-seas fisheries.</li> <li>▪ The Programme objectives are: a) strengthen institutional capacity; b) develop expertise in fisheries data collection and statistics, and fish stock assessment; and c) encourage and reinforce regional cooperation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 4: Continue to lead a shift to “better” food production by developing an intersectoral approach that addresses tradeoffs</b></p>	This approach may include strengthening existing strategies, guidelines and policy; leading the development of rigorous global standards and indicators	FAO has been working with its Members in the development of FAO Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA), following the COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture call for “...new and ongoing inclusive sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members endorsed the GSA at the 44th Session of the FAO Conference.</li> <li>▪ FAO workshops to facilitate GSA uptake across regions (2024-2025): Mediterranean and Black Sea, North America, Latin</li> </ul>	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The GSA is the first global normative framework for sustainable aquaculture development. It will now serve as the foundation for all FAO technical support on sustainable aquaculture development,</li> </ul>

Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Sub-recommendation	Actions agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d) <sup>4</sup>	Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions (e)
<p><b>posed by aquaculture intensification and reduces risks of food production systems to oceans.</b></p>	<p>for aquaculture sustainability; and promoting an aggressive consumer awareness strategy to empower consumer choices that promote sustainability of marine ecosystems.</p>	<p>aquaculture development programmes”. These Guidelines, endorsed in May 2023 by the FAO COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, make several references to the importance of reducing environmental risks in the development of aquaculture and considering tradeoffs. As the first global agreement on sustainable aquaculture, a properly funded programme for implementation of these Guidelines will specifically respond to this recommendation. Furthermore, aquaculture intensification and expansion are relevant to several Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, where the tradeoffs would be considered at intersectoral level, consistent with the recommendation.</p>	<p>America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, Asia, Oceania, plus global communication workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FAO is discussing with the World Bank to co-develop a global GSA training programme</li> </ul>		<p>ensuring coherence and consistency across countries and regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members committed to establishing clear standards and processes for evaluating trade-offs in aquaculture, strengthening governance and accountability.</li> <li>▪ FAO workshops will help to raise awareness, build technical knowledge and support early implementation of the GSA.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 5: Embed FPIC in FAO’s project cycle ensuring that it is designed, implemented, monitored and reported in all relevant projects.</b></p>	<p>This may be included as one of the elements of the action plan recommended below but is a priority that requires immediate action.</p>	<p>FPIC allows Indigenous Peoples to provide or withhold/withdraw consent, at any point, regarding projects impacting their territories. FPIC also allows Indigenous Peoples to engage in negotiations to shape the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects. FAO will ensure compliance with its commitment to FPIC in relation to relevant projects, but also flags that this requires the allocation of dedicated resources and timing in funding mechanisms provided by FAO’s development partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FAO’s Project Support Division (PSS) has embedded FPIC into the official project cycle and in the current document template.</li> <li>▪ All NFI projects utilize this template, ensuring FPIC is included in current and future projects where relevant.</li> </ul>	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The institutionalization of FPIC strengthens consistency and safeguards within FAO’s project design and implementation processes, allowing Indigenous Peoples to provide or withhold/withdraw consent, at any point, regarding projects impacting their territories.</li> </ul>

Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Sub-recommendation	Actions agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d) <sup>4</sup>	Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions (e)
<p><b>Recommendation 6: Engage to empower key stakeholders – including women, youth, people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples – to maximize their active participation in, and contributions to, SDG 14-related work.</b></p>	<p>To this end, develop an action plan the values and leverages the knowledge, capacities and needs of different groups—such as people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples. Elements of this action plan may include, for example, embedding FPIC in the project cycle; mapping and developing strategies to address gaps in SDG 14 normative frameworks; strengthening data collection and reporting for monitoring; and possibly expanding FAO efforts in social protection and decent work in fisheries and aquaculture.</p>	<p>FAO is already working extensively in relation to empowering women in fisheries, in particular in relation to SDG14.b. Following a 2022 gender stock taking exercise NFI will be implementing the NFI Gender Action Plan, develop the NFI Gender Help-Desk and continue internal trainings and capacity building of staff, as well as increasing fund-raising, visibility and collaborations. Similarly, FAO is already upscaling efforts to empower Indigenous Peoples and youth. FAO is also developing an Action Plan to engage and empower youth in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The call to expand efforts in social protection and decent work in fisheries and aquaculture, which is particularly relevant for people with disabilities, is welcomed.</p>	<p>Small-scale fisheries (SSF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support small-scale fishers participation in SSF Summits, FAO COFI and SDG 14.b Expert Meetings.</li> <li>▪ Build capacity for six National Plans of Action on SSF (NPOA-SSF).</li> </ul> <p>Gender and social inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ GloLitter Project integrated gender analysis and piloted capacity development in West Africa.</li> <li>▪ Common Oceans Programme embedded specific Gender Action Plans.</li> <li>▪ EAF-Nansen Programme updated its Gender Strategy, establishing Gender Desks in ministries of fisheries.</li> </ul> <p>Social protection and decent work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of Guidance on eliminating child labour in the fisheries and aquaculture sector with ILO.</li> <li>▪ Integrating ILO Decent Work Agenda into fisheries and aquaculture.</li> <li>▪ Specific section on “Social Responsibility, Decent Work and Gender Equality” in the GSA.</li> </ul>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhanced participation of small-scale fishers organizations and communities in global and regional processes.</li> <li>▪ Strengthened national capacity to implement the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on SSF.</li> <li>▪ Progress in integrating gender equality and social inclusion into SDG 14-related programmes and activities.</li> <li>▪ Expanded social protection and promotion of decent work within the fisheries and aquaculture sector.</li> </ul>