

Results and achievements

OF THE BOBLME PROJECT



Norad



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Achievements

The BOBLME Project has:

- Produced a **Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)** that identifies the major shared issues affecting the Bay of Bengal ecosystem, and a **Strategic Action Programme (SAP)** that sets out the actions needed to address these issues and their causes
- Boosted regional cooperation and stakeholder participation
- Increased knowledge, understanding and awareness of the BOBLME
- Enabled and developed capacity
- Strengthened governance

Lessons learned

- The implementation of the ecosystem approach requires dedicated strategic interventions that promote understanding and develop capacity at community, mid-level management and policy levels. Particular effort is required to foster, promote and maintain interaction between the different agencies responsible for coastal and marine resource management – in particular the environment and fisheries agencies.
- It is important to find a balance between the often-expressed desire for more research or information and the need to achieve the project's objectives relating to collaborative management. While some information needs clearly had to be addressed (e.g. on the structure of fish stocks), agreement on collaborative management measures should make use of the best available information – as required by the precautionary approach. It is even more important to address barriers to effective collaboration, including the science-to-policy interface.
- In order to extend the reach of a GEF-funded LME project and have a positive impact on entrenched government practices, such as a lack of inter-ministerial collaboration, it is important to develop strategic partnerships. Working with central government officers can achieve results on a national level, but the absence of effective links to state, province or local government is a hindrance to implementing effective management systems, such as EAFM, on the ground. This is a particular challenge in countries with decentralized coastal or fisheries management authorities.
- Interaction with other GEF-funded projects, in particular those in the International Waters portfolio, offers essential opportunities for learning and exchange of best practices. Cost savings may be achieved by following the lead of other projects.



The SAP has laid the foundation

Highlights

- The successful completion of an eight country consultative process to develop and agree to a TDA
- A well-designed, highly inclusive and collaborative process to develop a SAP
- The endorsement of the SAP by the ministries for fisheries and environment in project countries
- Collaborative activities carried out with a large number of partners to enhance regional cooperation, share best practices and resources and avoid duplication of effort
- Participation in resource management processes at international, national and community levels
- Studies and reviews of a wide range of topics – results disseminated through publications, brochures, newsletters and a dedicated website
- Production of cornerstone documents
- Working groups established for fisheries statistics; marine protected areas; ecological indicators; pollution; oceanography; and two transboundary fish stocks
- Consultative processes and policy analyses to strengthen coastal resources management and governance of transboundary fisheries and critical habitats
- An assessment of governance in the BOBLME
- The first ever regional fisheries advisories based on scientific assessments of hilsa shad and Indian mackerel
- Strengthened National Plans of Action for sharks – leading to a draft Regional Plan of Action
- The first ecosystem survey of Myanmar marine resources in 30 years – conducted from the R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*
- A wide range of training in natural resource management, oceanography and governance
- Improved skills in science communication
- A comprehensive training course supporting the ecosystem approach to fisheries management developed and launched with partners



for a brighter future for the region!

The Bay of Bengal Project Total budget =

US\$ 58.2 million



Total cash =

US\$ 18.5 million

Total in-kind =

US\$ 39.7 million

Co-financing far exceeded expectations

Cornerstone documents

- An ecosystem characterisation of the Bay of Bengal. BOBLME-2015-Ecology-13
- Assessing, demonstrating and capturing the economic value of marine and coastal ecosystem services in the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem. BOBLME-2014-Socioec-02
- Assessment of transboundary governance architecture in the Bay of Bengal LME. BOBLME-2015-Governance-07
- Assessments of the Indian mackerel and hilsa shad fisheries in the BOBLME countries. BOBLME-2011-Ecology-09
- ICM for the Bay of Bengal: a review on best practices and lessons learned from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand. BOBLME-2010-Socioec-02
- Review of community-based ICM: best practices and lessons learned in the Bay of Bengal – South Asia. BOBLME-2011-Socioec-01
- Mainstreaming gender in the BOBLME Project. BOBLME-2012-Socioec-02
- Performance in managing marine resources in the Bay of Bengal. BOBLME-2011-Ecology-17
- Report on BOBLME Indian mackerel genetic data analysis. BOBLME-2015-Ecology-29
- Status of marine protected areas and fish refugia in the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem. BOBLME-2011-Ecology-10

Available at: www.boblme.org

The Bay of Bengal



Number of countries

185 million



Combined coastal population

3.7 million



Number of fishers

415 000



Number of boats

6 million tonnes /
US\$ 4 billion

Marine and coastal ecosystem services in the BOBLME are estimated to be worth over

US\$ 72 billion
a year



Aquaculture

US\$ 9.4 billion



Fisheries

US\$ 32.4 billion



Tourism

US\$ 18.7 billion

Project outputs

- 1 Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
- 1 Strategic Action Programme
- 300 publications



A plan for the future with

4 themes:

- marine living resources
- critical habitats
- water quality
- social and economic considerations



Activities

- 95 meetings
- 201 workshops
- 120 training events
- 2 230 people trained
- 298 contracts, 70% to the region

Looking to the future

The Bay of Bengal is threatened by overexploitation of living resources, degradation of habitats and increasing pollution and declining water quality. All have negative impacts on poverty, food security and the nutrition of the coastal communities of the region.

The vision of the BOBLME SAP is "a healthy ecosystem and sustainable use of the marine resources for the benefit of the people and countries of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem."

The themes and their Ecological Quality Objectives (EQOs) are:

1

Theme:
Marine living resources

EQO: Fisheries and other living marine resources have been restored and are managed sustainably

2

Theme:
Critical habitats

EQO: Degraded, vulnerable and critical habitats are restored, conserved and maintained

3

Theme:
Water quality

EQO: Coastal and marine pollution and water quality are controlled to meet agreed standards for human and ecosystem health

4

Theme:
Social and economic considerations

EQO: Social and economic constraints are addressed, leading to increased resilience and empowerment of coastal people

The SAP specifies the reforms, activities and interventions, as well as the financial and institutional arrangements required to achieve change in the long-term.

SAP Implementation

It is proposed that a Consortium for the Conservation and Restoration of the BOBLME (CCR-BOBLME) will promote information exchange and capacity development, monitor BOBLME health and status and monitor progress with SAP implementation.

Investing in the SAP and achieving its objectives will help safeguard ecosystem services worth around US\$ 240 billion over the next 25 years – services that will be lost if action is not taken to halt current rates of marine and coastal ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss.





The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project

Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand are working together through the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project to lay the foundations for a coordinated programme of action designed to better the lives of the coastal populations through improved regional management of the Bay of Bengal environment and its fisheries.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the implementing agency for the BOBLME Project.

The Project is funded principally by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Norway, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the FAO, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the USA.

The BOBLME Project was implemented through the national fisheries and environmental agencies of the participating countries.



BANGLADESH: Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock • Ministry of Environment and Forests
• Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute



INDIA: Ministry of Agriculture - Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries
• Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change • Fishery Survey of India



INDONESIA: Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries - Directorate General of Capture Fisheries
• Ministry of Environment and Forestry - Coastal and Marine Environmental Degradation Control



MALAYSIA: Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry - Department of Fisheries • Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment - Department of Environment • Fisheries Research Institute



MALDIVES: Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture • Ministry of Environment and Energy - Environment Protection Agency • Marine Research Centre



MYANMAR: Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development - Department of Fisheries
• Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry



SRI LANKA: Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development • Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment



THAILAND: Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives - Department of Fisheries • Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment - Department of Marine and Coastal Resources