



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



Report of the Seventh Project Steering Committee:

Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the ABNJ

27-28 January 2020
Rome, Italy

ABNJ-Tuna-2020-PSC-Rep



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List of Acronyms

ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
ACAP	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
BMIS	Bycatch Management Information System
CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
CLAV	Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels
CMM	Conservation and Management Measures
EAFM	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management
EMS	Electronic Monitoring System
ERS	Electronic Reporting System
EU	European Union
FAD	Fish Aggregating Device
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	Pacific Islands Fisheries Forum Agency
FFIA	Fiji Fishing Industry Association
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTA	Ghana Tuna Association
HS	Harvest Strategy
IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IMCSN	International Monitoring Control and Surveillance Network
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IPNLF	International Pole and Line Foundation
ISSF	International Seafood Sustainability Foundation
IUU fishing	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
IWC	International Whaling Commission
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSE	Management Strategy Evaluation
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (US)
OED	FAO's Office of Evaluation
OPAGAC	Organización de Productores Asociados de Grandes Atuneros Congeladores
OPIM	Operational Partners Implementation Modality
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
SPC	Pacific Community
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TCN	Tuna Compliance Network
ToC	Theory of Change
ToRs	Terms of Reference

t-RFMO	One of the tuna RFMOs, i.e. CCSBT, IATTC, ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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I. Opening of the Meeting

Opening remarks and introductions

1. The seventh meeting of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) of the Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project was held in FAO Headquarters in Rome from 27-28 January 2020. A total of 44 participants attended the meeting. The list of participants is provided in Annex I.
2. Alejandro Anganuzzi, Global Tuna Coordinator, opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

Election of the Chairperson

3. Alexandre Aires-da-Silva, IATTC, was elected Chairperson of the PSC meeting.

Adoption of the agenda and housekeeping matters

4. The chair introduced the agenda and highlighted the opportunity to review the project impacts and to allow the PSC to take a look into the future by building a potential second phase of the Project.
5. The PSC adopted the Agenda provided in Annex II.
6. Alejandro Anganuzzi reported on recent changes in FishCode and the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department including
 - i. Retirement of Jacqueline Alder as FishCode Manager in August 2019 (Nathanael Hishamunda acting since early January) and as Program Coordinator (with Anganuzzi and Emerson acting and Anganuzzi Budget Holder); and
 - ii. Árni Mathiesen's departure as Assistant Director General of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (Manuel Barange acting).

II. Presentation of Project Impacts

7. This agenda item was included to allow the presentation and discussion of the Project impacts by the PMU. However, it was noted that a discussion of the impacts was central to the presentation of the terminal evaluation, in the fourth point of the agenda. Therefore, to avoid duplication, it was agreed to defer the discussion until after the presentation of the impacts by the terminal evaluator.

III. Summary of Project Communications and Visibility

8. Emelie Martensson, FAO, presented a communications update and a summary of communication activities. She introduced the campaign *Not a drop on the Ocean*, which was launched on 29 January 2020 including:
 - i. A leaflet *Not a drop in the ocean* summarizing key successes of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program <http://www.fao.org/3/ca7317en/ca7317en.pdf>;
 - ii. A video *Not a drop in the ocean* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWiVVMzmyzI> published on FAO's YouTube channel;
 - iii. A story *Four major achievements in helping protect our oceans* published on the FAO homepage <http://www.fao.org/fao-stories/article/en/c/1258280/>;
 - iv. A press release *Overfishing of the world's major tuna stocks going down, bycatch and pollution reduced and 18 new areas protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems established* <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1258859/icode/> distributed through FAO's media channels; and
 - v. Additional support to distribution through posts on Twitter and LinkedIn and a special edition of the Common Oceans Newsletter.
-

IV. Terminal Evaluation of the Project/Program

Introduction of the scope and evaluation approach of the terminal evaluation by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED)

9. Lavinia Monforte, from FAO OED, presented the overall scope and approach to the terminal evaluation of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program, which consisted of the simultaneous evaluation of the full-sized Tuna and Deep-Sea projects, the medium-sized Capacity project, and the evaluation of the Program as a whole.
10. She informed the PSC that
 - i. the project terminal evaluations are meant to inform the Program level evaluation and serve as an input for the second phase of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program under GEF-7;
 - ii. each evaluation is presented in a separate report (GEF requirement); and
 - iii. OED and the Evaluation team are currently working on finalizing robust draft of all reports to be widely circulated for comments.
11. The PSC noted the methodology of the evaluation as follows:
 - i. Desk reviews of project and program related documents;
 - ii. Key informant interviews of approximately 125 people;
 - iii. Surveys of the Regional Leaders Program and the Fisheries Enforcement and Compliance Certificate beneficiaries;
 - iv. Attendance at key events: New York, Rome, North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission;
 - v. Field missions: Pakistan, Fiji, Washington DC USA;
 - vi. A theory of change using GEF RotI model; and
 - vii. Assessment emphasis on transformational changes at sea.

Presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the terminal evaluation focused on the tuna project by the Independent Evaluation Consultant

12. Fabio Hazin, Evaluator, presented key findings of the evaluation of the project's effectiveness for the three thematic components:
 - i. Component 1
 - a. During the implementation of the ABNJ Tuna Project the number of stocks managed under a harvest strategy (HS) or having a HS being developed increased from one to fourteen, while the number of overfished stocks decreased by more than 60%;
 - b. The percentage of stocks fished at a sustainable level almost doubled, increasing from 43% to 78%; and
 - c. Although it is not possible to objectively assess how much of this progress can be attributed to the ABNJ Tuna Project, the project efforts undoubtedly have contributed significantly to this outcome.
 - ii. Component 2
 - a. The number of CMM related to MCS adopted by the 5 t-RFMOs increased sharply during Project implementation, clearly showing a much stronger commitment to MCS by contracting parties;
 - b. The number of initiatives related to electronic monitoring systems and electronic reporting systems quintupled; and
 - c. Although the exact contribution from the Project can't be measured, it did have a catalyst effect, helping to disseminate and to showcase the benefits of EMS+ERS and to boost MCS improvement efforts overall.

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- iii. Component 3
 - a. The data available on sharks, sea turtles and seabirds in t-RFMOs were not only integrated in various ways, but greatly enhanced;
 - b. The status of several shark stocks was successfully assessed, based on data provided entirely or partially by the Project;
 - c. The engagement of the private sector, mainly through the ISSF, in the ABNJ Tuna Project was unparalleled, greatly contributing to the adoption of best practices for bycatch mitigation by tuna fishing boats worldwide;
 - d. The Project contributed to improving the quality of the data on the tuna gillnet fishery in the northern Indian Ocean, allowing, for the first time, an estimation of the bycatch: based on the data generated by the Project, the introduction of gear modifications in this fishery resulted in a decrease of cetacean bycatch by 98.5% (to be confirmed);
 - e. These are outstanding achievements that irreversibly transformed the management and conservation of bycatch species caught in association with tuna fisheries, entailing an unprecedented degree of international and inter t-RFMO cooperation in the management of bycatch; and
 - f. Overall, it is unquestionable that the ABNJ Tuna Project did succeed in promoting a transformational change in the way bycatch issues are managed by t-RFMOs, in a global scale, significantly reducing the impact of tuna fisheries on bycatch species and in the marine ecosystem.
 - 13. The PSC noted key findings of the evaluation with regard to
 - a. Efficiency
 - a. Problems with new financial and administrative systems are presumably over;
 - b. There remain procurement policies and procedures that are impediments to the efficient implementation of projects in FAO (e.g. biodegradable FADs in Ghana, longline in Pakistan);
 - c. Limits on the number of days of travel are a serious impediment to promoting the results of the project with RFMOs and Regional Seas Programmes and maintaining partnerships; and
 - d. Communications and coordination (between projects and outputs) largely failed (e.g. many output leading agencies only met at PSCs, once a year).
 - b. Sustainability
 - a. The major results of the tuna project were sustainable, with some important exceptions (e.g. Electronic monitoring in Ghana and Fiji).
 - c. Stakeholder engagement
 - a. Despite the very large number of partners involved in Project execution and implementation, the ample partnership was considered one of the project strengths (despite the clear need for better communication and coordination); and
 - b. The strong participation by the private sector, mainly through ISSF, was also very positive, helping to foster sustainability.
 - 14. The PSC noted key recommendations for a potential phase II of the Project
 - i. The construction of the Phase II project should seek a much stronger participation of stakeholders in the planning/ prioritizing of activities, going down from RFMO Secretariats to member States;
 - ii. A much stronger/ better strategy for communication and coordination within the Tuna Project (i.e. between different outputs) and within the Program (i.e. between projects) should be devised for Phase II, including a proper budget; and
 - iii. The Tuna Project communication strategy should be significantly strengthened, including by a proper budget and focus (i.e. going beyond the general public/ social media, but also addressing more the actual changes at sea than the performed activities).
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15. The PSC

- i. Welcomed the comprehensive terminal evaluation and its findings; and
- ii. Inquired
 - a. Whether there were specific findings of the evaluation in terms of a revitalization of the Kobe process and stronger engagement of member States, whilst avoiding the known pitfalls of the Kobe process;
 - b. To what extent changes could effectively be attributed to the Project as they were taking place in a complex environment with strong investments by several stakeholders;
 - c. Whether clarification could be provided about strengthening communications related to actual changes at sea;
 - d. Whether procurement could be out-sourced to partners in the future; and
 - e. What would be the expected benefits of a stronger engagement with member States.

16. The Evaluator and the Global Tuna Coordinator clarified that

- i. The Kobe process was revitalized as a way to improve coordination of tuna RFMOs from a technical point of view through support to activities that would bring together information and facilitate exchange of experiences on technical issues of relevance in all oceans e.g. joint meetings on bycatch, the Tuna Compliance Network, the CLAV and the BMIS.
- ii. Attribution of the Projects contributions to results cannot be objectively assessed, but estimates in terms of minor/medium/strong can be provided, increased market pressure towards certification could be considered an important driver as well;
- iii. With regard to strengthening communications related to actual changes at sea, a stronger communication to key audiences (e.g. GEF, RFMO member States) about project achievements and experiences was intended engagement with member States took place through different means e.g. attendance of RFMO meetings, exchanges between pilot countries and regular newsletters, but still requires further strengthening.
- iv. FAO's Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM) developed during recent years defines arrangements for funds to be disbursed for intended purposes and in accordance with financial and administrative procedures and systems of partners, which comply with international standards;
- v. Stronger engagement with member States could improve potential outcomes e.g. through championing proposals in the RFMO as well as help to address concerns of States which might block proposals changes at sea would also require increased ownership by the member States.

17. The PSC noted

- i. That the Government of Fiji agreed to continue the EMS activities on Fijian tuna longline vessels; and
- ii. The complexity of the EMS pilots and the difficulties created by the choice of a single Service Provider without the possibility to de-couple data gathering from data analysis and the need to ensure interoperability of image files across systems.

18. The PSC highlighted the future need for

- i. Stronger coordination within and across projects and appropriate funds and mechanisms to facilitate this, learning e.g. from the Coastal Fisheries Initiative;
- ii. Stronger buy-in and political support from member States, which could also happen throughout implementation and might require a diversified strategy to reach the key audiences for different issues;
- iii. Increased agility in problem-solving;
- iv. Overcoming the FAO limitations on travel;
- v. Stronger and more visual communications based on a solid communications strategy;
- vi. More strategic use of partners based on their comparative advantages and clear roles and commitments of each partner;

- vii. Improved planning of Phase II work starting from an agreed Theory of Change and the opportunity to learn from the experiences of the current phase;
 - viii. A focus on work that
 - a. Is aligned with priorities of the respective Commission;
 - b. Would strengthen cooperation and coordination across tuna RFMOs and
 - c. Would showcase successful approaches and catalyze further investment; and
 - ix. Increased consideration of virtual meetings in the face of climate change and carbon budgets;
19. The Evaluator thanked the PMU and all individuals who contributed to the terminal evaluation.

V. Development of a Second Phase

Draft Theory of Change for the second phase of the Tuna Project, connections to the programmatic ToC and brief description of the second phase of the Program

Proposed components, outcomes and outputs

- 20. The Global Tuna Coordinator presented the draft Theory of Change (ToC) for the Tuna Project, which was developed based on the ToC for the current phase reconstructed by the mid-term evaluation team and in alignment with the programmatic ToC.
- 21. The PSC provided comments and inputs to the ToC, which were taken into account in the version included in Annex III.
- 22. The draft Child Concept Note for Phase II was shared with the PSC and members were invited to provide comments by Mid February 2020.
- 23. With regard to the Child Concept Note for Phase II, the PSC highlighted the need
 - i. To make sure that activities will benefit all regions and to keep the geographic focus open for now; and
 - ii. To take into account RFMO rules for the development of standards for certification.
- 24. The Global Coordinator clarified that socio-economic considerations in the framework of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management would be mostly addressed at the national level.

Budgeting and co-financing arrangements and additional funding mechanisms

- 25. The PSC noted that the support requested from GEF for pPhase II will be under the IW Focal Area, Objective 2 - Improve management in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ), funds under the GEF STAR allocation were not envisaged.
- 26. The PSC noted
 - i. The targeted co-financing ratio for GEF-7 of 7:1 and that additional organizations supporting the Project could be brought in to reach and exceed the required amount;
 - ii. That co-financing commitments expressed through co-financing letters would be required at the time of CEO Endorsement at the end of the Project Preparation Phase; and
 - iii. The suggested use of non-grant instruments for proposals requiring substantive financial resources, where FAO could act as a facilitator. More information would be required on this.
- 27. The PSC raised several questions with regard to co-financing and expressed the need for further clarifications in that regard through the GEF Unit and GEF Secretariat.

Timeline and next steps

28. The PSC noted the progress made since its sixth meeting with regard to the
- i. Formulation of the Impact statement (including PSC comments) and delivery to GEF Secretariat;
 - ii. Completion of a programmatic concept note including the programmatic ToC and a narrative with broad description of interventions;
 - iii. Ongoing work on Phase II capsules including merging of proposals, clarifications on budgets and additional proposals; and the
 - iv. Ongoing work in the preparation of the Child Concept note for a Phase II of the Project with the assistance of the Project Design Team composed of
 - a. Shelley Clarke;
 - b. Random Dubois,
 - c. Gerald Scott; and
 - d. Kim Stobberup.
29. The PSC noted the timeline for the preparation of a Phase II of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program and the Tuna Project as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Timeline for the preparation of a phase II of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program and the Tuna Project

Item	Date
Program Framework Document with Concept Notes for all five Child Projects. Submission to partners and internal FAO.	February 2020
Completion of the Terminal Evaluation for all Projects + Program	February 2020
Submission of PFD to GEF Secretariat for comments	March 23, 2020
Submission to GEF Council for endorsement	June 2020
Program bridging arrangements agreed on the basis of savings	Until March 2021
Target date for submission of project document	June 2021
Possible start for the second phase	beginning of 2022

30. The PSC noted
- i. The capsule meetings planned following this meeting to discuss Phase II proposals with most capsule meetings open to all organizations planning similar activities, whilst some would be restricted to the Project Design Team and the proponents;
 - ii. Regarding criteria for selecting proposals, GEF Secretariat signalled that FAO would be in charge of designing Phase II of the Tuna Project whilst GEF Secretariat might still prioritize certain activities related to e.g. climate change and possible adaptation in all oceans; gender aspects; carbon footprint of the value chain; generally, cooperation on technical issues benefitting as many oceans as possible as well as developing countries would be more relevant than focussing on particular geographic areas.
 - iii. A broad framework of the outcomes and outcomes of the Project would be required by Mid-February 2020 and detailed activities could be developed later, and
 - iv. Potential delays of projects that might not allow for submission by the March 23, 2020 deadline could be addressed by dropping these Projects or by delaying the submission by six months for the following GEF Council.
31. The PSC noted the current proposals for the five Child Projects under Phase II of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program under GEF-7:
- i. Sustainable management of tuna fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the areas beyond national jurisdiction – Phase II (FAO implemented);

- ii. Deep sea fisheries under the ecosystem approach (FAO implemented);
 - iii. Strengthening the stewardship of an economically and biologically significant high seas area – the Sargasso Sea (UNDP implemented);
 - iv. Building and Enhancing Sectoral and Cross-Sectoral Capacity to Support Sustainable Resource Use and Biodiversity Conservation in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (UNEP implemented);
 - v. Global coordination project for the Common Oceans ABNJ Program (FAO implemented).
- The detailed Child Project proposals would be shared and discussed during the Global Steering Committee Meeting from 29-30 January 2020

VI. Any Other Business

32. No other business

VII. Meeting Closure

33. The Chair and the Global Tuna Coordinator thanked everyone involved in the preparation and implementation of the Project for their collaboration and the meeting was closed by the Chair.

Annex I. List of participants

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Christine Bogle
Executive Secretary

Birdlife International

Cleo Small
Head of Global Seabird Programme

European Commission

Angela Martini
Policy Officer

FAO - PMU

Alejandro Anganuzzi
Global Tuna Project Coordinator

Janne Fogelgren
Senior Fishery Officer

Kathrin Hett
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

Emelie Mårtensson
Communications Expert

Kim Stobberup
MCS Expert

FAO

Jacqueline Alder
Consultant

Genevieve Braun
Programme Officer

Nicolas Gutierrez
Fisheries Officer and Lead Technical Officer
Tuna Project

Glenn Hurry
Fisheries Management / Policy Specialist

Kuena Morebotsane
Programme Officer
FAO GEF Unit

Maarten Roest
Communication Specialist

Fiji, Government of

Netani Tavaga
Coordinator Fiji EMS Pilot

Fiji Fishing Industry Association

Nilesh Navin Ram
Financial Controller, Sunshine Fisheries

Ghana, Government of

Michael Arthur-Dadzie
Director of Fisheries, Fisheries Commission

Richard Yeboah
Fisheries Officer

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

Christopher O'Brien
Executive Secretary

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

Alexandre Aires-da-Silva
Coordinator of Scientific Research

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

Camille Jean Pierre Manel
Executive Secretary

International MCS Network

Mark Young
Executive Director

International Seafood Sustainability Foundation

Susan Jackson
President

Victor Restrepo
Vice-President, Science

Marine Stewardship Council

Bill Holden
Senior Tuna Fisheries Outreach Manager

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Rachel O'Malley
Office of International Affairs

Ocean Outcomes

Ross McLeod Wanless
Asia Tuna Manager

OPAGAC

Miguel Angel Herrera
Deputy Manager

Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency

Matthew Hooper
Deputy Director General

**Western and Central Pacific Fisheries
Commission**

Feleti Teo
Executive Director

WWF

Lauren Spurrier
Vice President, Ocean Conservation

Vishwanie Maharaj
Manager, Marine Portfolio

Rab Nawaz
Director WWF Pakistan

Project Design Team

Random Dubois
Project Design Specialist

Gerald Scott
Fisheries Expert

Shelley Clarke
Fisheries Bycatch and Ecosystem Expert

Observers

Global Ocean Forum

Miriam Balgos
Senior Associate

Biliana Cicin-Sain
President

Vanessa Knecht
Associate

International Pole & Line Foundation

Roy Bealey
Fisheries Director

Evaluation Team

Lavinia Monforte
Evaluation Specialist
FAO Office of Evaluation

SV Divaakaar
Evaluator

Fábio Hissa Vieira Hazin
Evaluator

Annex II. Agenda of the Meeting

SEVENTH PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

*FAO, Rome –Mexico Room (D-213Bis)
27-28 January 2020, 9:00-17:00 hours
Opening 27 January at 9:00am
Coffee breaks: 10:30-11:00, 15:00-15:30
Lunch breaks: 12:30-14:00*

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

- a. Opening remarks and introductions
- b. Election of the Chairperson
- c. Adoption of the agenda and housekeeping matters

2. PRESENTATION OF PROJECT IMPACTS

3. SUMMARY OF PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY

4. TERMINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT/PROGRAM

- a. Introduction of the scope and evaluation approach of the terminal evaluation by FAO's Office of Evaluation
- b. Presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the terminal evaluation focused on the Tuna Project by the Independent Evaluation Consultant

5. DEVELOPMENT OF A SECOND PHASE

- a. Draft Theory of Change for the second phase of the Tuna Project, connections to the programmatic ToC and brief description of the second phase of the Program
- b. Proposed components, outcomes and outputs
- c. Budgeting and co-financing arrangements and additional funding mechanisms
- d. Timeline and next steps

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7. MEETING CLOSURE

Annex III: Theory of Change for proposed Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project

