



INTERNATIONAL WATERS EXPERIENCE NOTES

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SAP Development and Endorsement Process: Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem and Adjacent Regions



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SAP Development and Endorsement Process: Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project

Experience of the GEF - sponsored

GEF/UNDP: Sustainable Management of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) and Adjacent Regions

GEFID: XX, GEF Agency Project ID: 3706

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The “Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem and Adjacent Project” (shortly referred to as the CLME Project) was a five year project (2009-2013) which sought to contribute to the “sustainable management of the shared living marine resources of the Caribbean LME and adjacent areas through an ecosystem-based management approach to meet the WSSD target for sustainable fisheries.” A total of 26 countries participated in the project along with a number of regional and sub-regional organizations. Participating countries included: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela, United States of America.

The project area is considered one of the most geopolitically diverse and complex sets of LMEs in the world. Twenty-six independent States and more than 15 dependent territories border or are located within the marine area covered by the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LMEs. These culturally diverse countries and territories range from among the largest (e.g. Brazil, United States of America) to among the smallest (e.g. Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis), and from the most developed to the least developed in the world.

The CLME Project worked towards: increasing trust, partnerships, coordination and cooperation among all participating countries; enabling robust resources governance and management arrangements at the regional, sub-regional, national and local levels; whilst at the same time laying the foundations for an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. The specific project objectives included: 1) To identify, analyze and agree upon major transboundary issues, root causes and actions required to achieve sustainable management of the shared living marine resources in the Caribbean LME; 2) To improve the shared knowledge base so that sustainable use and management of transboundary living marine resources could be possible; 3) To implement legal, policy and institutional reforms regionally and nationally to achieve sustainable transboundary living marine resource management; and 4) To develop an institutional and procedural approach to LME level monitoring, evaluation and reporting for management decision-making.

The CLME Project was designed around four main components which included: 1) Analysis of transboundary issues relating to management of the living marine resource and the identification of needed actions; 2) Strategic Action Programme (SAP) development and identification of reforms and investments for management of shared living marine resources; 3) Targeted projects aimed at strengthening the policy cycle and early implementation of the SAP; and 4) Cost effective project management arrangements.

The total project budget was US \$52 million of which US \$7million was GEF grant and the remaining US \$45million was co-financing contributions from countries and regional organisations. The project implementing agency was the United Nations Development Programme and the project was executed jointly by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO).

THE EXPERIENCE

Issue

The development of a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LMEs, covering approximately 4.4 million km² with twenty-six independent States and over 15 dependent territories could have proven to be a challenge, particularly as the SAP had to be developed and endorsed by the countries at the political level within a 12 month period. Development and endorsement of a SAP during such a short timeframe was unheard of in GEF IW projects, particularly as SAPs are usually negotiated documents. Unfortunately, due to some implementation challenges faced by the CLME Project during its first two years of implementation, including constraints associated with project cost, it was not possible to extend the SAP development and endorsement process. (For detailed more information on the implementation challenges faced by the CLME Project, please refer to International Waters Experience [Notes 2013-0??](#)).

The development of a Strategic Action Programme is required to be widely consultative, involving all stakeholders, so as to ensure broad support and ownership of the document by the region. In light of this, it was apparent that thought needed to be given to the best approach for developing the CLME SAP, which would allow for effective and timely participation of all project stakeholders.

Further, due to the late start of some of the pilot projects and case studies implemented as part of the CLME Project it was clear that these projects would not be completed on time to support SAP development. In light of the foregoing innovative approaches for including results and best practices from the pilot projects and case studies had to be considered by the Project Coordinating Unit in consultation with project partner organizations.

Provide a short paragraph describing the transboundary waters management issue[s] this project addressed. *For example, the X stress is affecting X ecosystem in the following way, with the following consequence. The project proposed to mitigate the problem by...X.*

Addressing the Issue

Strategic Action Programme Development

Type of SAP

A Strategic Action Programme as defined in the TDA/SAP manual is a negotiated policy document that establishes clear priorities for action to resolve priority problems identified in the TDA. With twenty-six countries participating in the CLME Project, the development of a SAP with very specific actions could have proven difficult, especially if the intention was to have all twenty-six countries endorse the document within the allocated time. In light of this, it was felt that the best approach for obtaining wide endorsement of the SAP by the countries would be to write a very broad document that outlines the approach required for the improved governance and management of the region's shared living marine resources, but without the specificities of how this would be implemented. Such specifics, it was felt, could be better defined during the preparation phase for next phase of the project which would be CLME+ SAP Implementation. This approach was deemed to be the most appropriate given the geopolitical complexities of this region.

Stakeholder Involvement and Participation

Recognizing that the development of the CLME+ SAP needed to be consultative in nature, but also being mindful that this could prove to be somewhat complicated to accomplish in such a complex region as the

wider Caribbean the CLME PCU developed “*Terms of Reference for the development and endorsement of the CLME Strategic Action Programme (CLME SAP)*”.

The TORs outlined the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved in the SAP development and endorsement process. The roles and responsibilities of the following stakeholders were elaborated in the TORs:

- CLME Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) had the overall responsibility for coordinating SAP development.
- SAP Core Development Team (CDT) in collaboration with the CLME PCU contributed to the development of the CLME SAP through preparing and reviewing certain sections of the document.
- Case Study and Pilot Project Implementing Agencies/Organisations and their Partners provided results and best practices from the pilot projects and case studies to guide CLME SAP development.
- SAP Formulation Endorsement and Support Team (FEST) reviewed and provided insight on the iterative drafts of the CLME SAP before it was sent out to the National Focal Point for their review.
- CLME National Focal Points were responsible for ensuring that all information pertaining to the CLME SAP was made available to all stakeholders at the national level.
- National Inter-sectoral Committees (NICs) or equivalents provided a forum which allowed for inter-sectoral (government, civil society, private sector) consultation on the contents of the CLME SAP at the national level.
- CLME Project Advisory Group (PAG) was responsible for reviewing the progress on the CLME SAP development and providing advice regarding further steps relating to the CLME SAP development, endorsement and implementation process.
- CLME Steering Committee (SC) was responsible for, amongst other things, adopting the CLME SAP before it was distributed to Ministers for their formal endorsement.
- Ministers were responsible for endorsing the CLME SAP at the country level.
- Senior International SAP Expert worked with the CLME PCU and the SAP CDT in drafting sections of the CLME SAP to be reviewed by project stakeholders.

Involving twenty-six countries and a number of regional and sub-regional organizations in the development of the CLME SAP could have proven to be a complicated issue if guidelines outlining their roles and responsibilities were not established very early in the SAP development process. It was also apparent that if the CLME SAP was to attain wide buy-in and support from the region, it would be necessary to involve the stakeholders from very early in the SAP development process and keep them engaged throughout the entire process.

In light of the foregoing, attempts were made by the CLME PCU to continuously undertake consultation with stakeholders during the CLME SAP development process. Notwithstanding the continuous “informal” consultation undertaken during the CLME SAP development process efforts were also made to undertake more formal consultative processes. Such milestones, as they were referred to, where formal consultation was required were outlined in the “*Terms of Reference for the development and endorsement of the CLME Strategic Action Programme (CLME SAP)*” commencing with the development document’s Table of Contents.

It should be further noted that the CLME PCU took advantage of a number of regional meetings hosted by project partners, during the time when the SAP was being developed, to present the contents of the SAP as well as discuss certain sections of the draft document with the National Focal Points. These informal “one-on-one” meetings with National Focal Points proved to be very instrumental in getting feedback on the Strategies and Actions being proposed in the document, and also helped with the overall SAP adoption process.

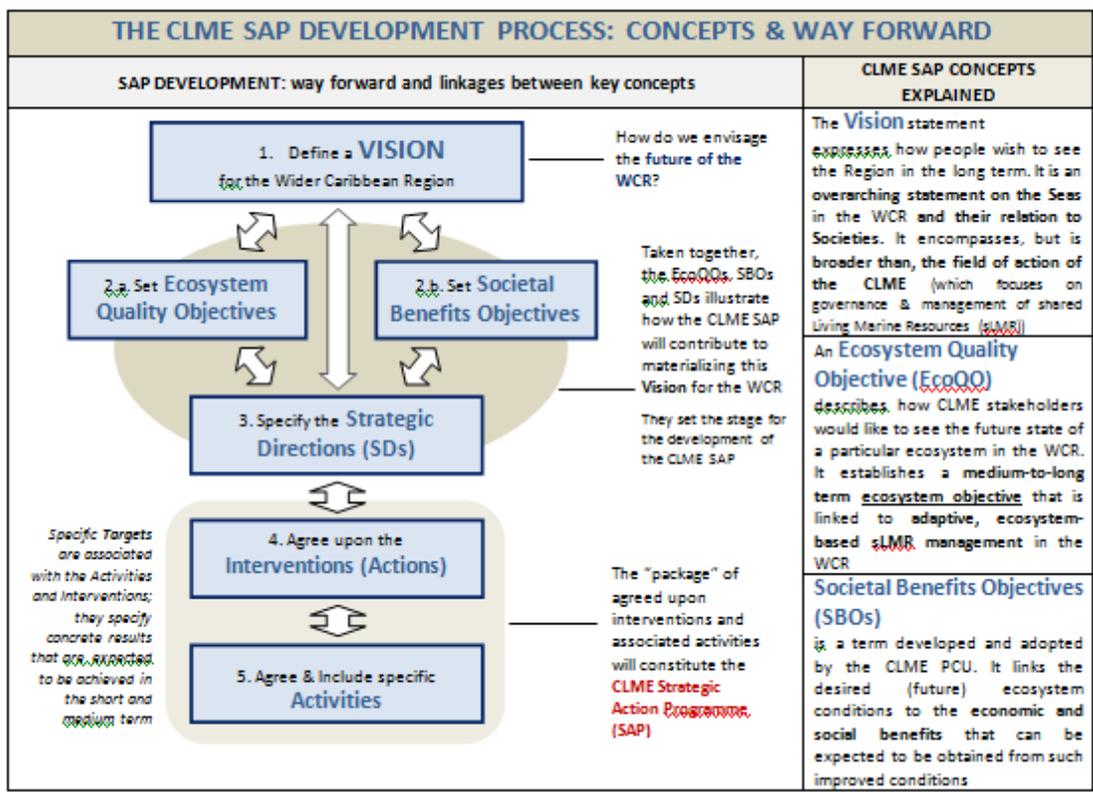
Pilot Projects and Case Studies

As has been indicated above, the case studies and pilot projects were critical to the CLME SAP development process. They were expected to fill data and information gaps identified during the TDA process which would then be used to inform the CLME+ SAP. Many of the pilot projects and case studies should have been finalized before the commencement of the SAP development process; however due to the late start of many of these initiatives much of the information expected to inform SAP development was not readily available.

In light of foregoing, an alternative approach needed to be identified for incorporating the outputs from the pilot projects and case studies into the SAP. This involved the establishment of a SAP Core Development Team. The SAP CDT encompassed key representatives from the regional organizations implementing the pilot projects and case studies. The SAP CDT was responsible for preparing, along with the CLME PCU, content for specific (sub) chapters or sections of the CLME SAP particularly as they related to outputs and/or recommendations emanating from the case studies and pilot projects under their respective responsibility. The decision to establish the SAP CDT was taken during the third CLME Steering Committee meeting. Three face-to-face meetings of the SAP CDT and the CLME PCU took place in an eight month time-frame to advance work on the CLME SAP.

Logical Steps in the Development of the CLME+ SAP

The flowchart below details the logical steps which were used when defining critical concepts and sections of the CLME+ SAP. This flow chart was used during consultations with stakeholders to explain the rationale behind the use of certain terms such as Ecosystem Quality Objectives and Societal Benefit Objectives, as well as how the actions defined in the CLME+ SAP are linked to achieving the long-term vision for the region. The approach outlined in the flowchart was also used when working on the development on the CLME+ SAP. The region commenced with first trying to define the long-term vision. Once this was done the vision was used to inform the Ecosystem Quality Objectives and Societal Benefit Objectives, as well as the Strategic Directions which orientated the direction of the Strategies and Actions: the core of the CLME+ SAP.



SAP Endorsement

The CLME+ SAP was adopted by the Project Steering Committee at the Fourth Steering Committee Meeting which took place in Cartagena, Colombia 5-6 March, 2013. It was also at that meeting that the Steering Committee agreed to the need for timely endorsement of the CLME+ SAP at the political level. By 31st May 2013, the CLME+ SAP had been endorsed by eighteen countries making it the first time in history that such a large quorum of countries had endorsed a SAP under a GEF International Waters Project.

The success of the CLME+ SAP endorsement process can be attributed to the dedication and commitment of the project's National Focal Points and partners who lobbied their Ministers to endorse the document. Countries also expressed an interest in seeing the work which commenced under this phase of the project continue, and as such were keen to have the next phase of the project: SAP Implementation commence as soon as possible.

Provide multiple paragraphs on the specific actions undertaken by the project to address the issue. These might be sequential or simultaneous interventions.

RESULTS AND LEARNING

A number of lessons were learnt by the CLME Project Coordinating Unit during the CLME+ SAP development and endorsement process and include the following:

- The importance of the early engagement of stakeholders in the SAP development process. The CLME+ SAP development process was highly consultative and efforts were taken to ensure that stakeholders were involved in the SAP development process from very early, including the development of the SAP Terms of Reference and the long-term vision. During all phases of the CLME SAP process stakeholders were kept engaged. This went a long way in ensuring buy-in and ownership of the document particularly at the national level.
- The involvement of regional and sub-regional organizations in the CLME Project and by extension the SAP development process also contributed to the successful adoption and endorsement of the SAP by the countries. The decision to establish the SAP Core Development Team, consisting of the project partners responsible for implementing the pilot projects and case studies under the project to assist in the development of the CLME SAP proved instrumental to the CLME+ SAP development and endorsement process. The SAP CDT meetings also provided an opportunity for increased collaboration and coordination amongst regional and sub-regional organizations on the management of the region's shared living marine resource. Further, the fact the CLME+ SAP document was supported by the regional partner organizations also contributed increased buy-in of the document at the country level.
- The ability to effectively adapt to changing conditions and circumstances is critical in project management. The CLME PCU faced a number of challenges at the beginning of the CLME+ SAP development process that could have hindered the development and endorsement of the CLME+ SAP. These challenges included: a large number of participating countries; a time frame of less than a year to develop the CLME+ SAP; and incomplete information from the pilot projects and case studies which were to inform SAP development. Notwithstanding the challenges alluded to above, the project was able to put in place mechanisms to allow for the successful development and endorsement of the CLME+ SAP. The decision to develop a broad SAP in the place of a document that outlined specific activities for improved governance and management of the region's shared living marine resources was able to limit the amount of time negotiating the content of the document by the participating countries. Further the decision to establish a SAP Core Development Team comprising of the regional and sub-regional partners implementing the pilot projects and case studies, ensured that information (best practices and lessons learnt) from these projects were able to inform the CLME+ SAP in the absence of formal project reports.

Summarize the impacts of this experience on the issues, the project and its partners. What was learned from this experience? Moreover, please attempt to include technical information and references to your project's indicators where possible. For example, *as a result of the X intervention, discharge of X into X was reduced by X%. The outcome of this activity is that the affected-population will realize X benefits. This intervention demonstrates that given an investment of \$X can leverage \$X of cost-savings.*

REPLICATION

Whilst the process utilized in the development of the CLME Strategic Action Programme may not be relevant to all GEF IW Projects; it can however be considered for projects with a large number of participating countries. The development of a SAP with very specific and clear priority actions for this project, with twenty-six participating countries, would have been a very difficult and complicated process due to the differing priorities and economic status of the countries within this region. In light of this, the approach utilized in the CLME Project where the SAP outlines broad actions related to the governance and management of shared living marine resources was regarded as necessary for such a complex region as the CLME+. It is anticipated that the actions outlined in the SAP will be further defined as specific activities during the PPG phase of CLME+ SAP Implementation.

Another key factor that proved useful was the development of "*Terms of Reference for the development and endorsement of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP)*" which outlined the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders involved in the CLME SAP development and endorsement process. The presence of these terms of reference prevented any confusion that might have ensued between stakeholders during the SAP development and endorsement process. It is also believed that the presence of these TORs from very early during the SAP development and endorsement process contributed to the rapid endorsement of the CLME+ SAP by countries.

Finally, the ability to adapt to a changing environment is extremely important if projects are to succeed. The ability of the CLME Project to establish the SAP Core Development Team, which included representatives from organizations implementing the case studies and pilot projects, was critical to CLME SAP development. The members of this group were able to contribute best practices and lessons learnt from the pilot projects and case studies to inform the CLME+ SAP development even though formal documentation from these projects was unavailable during the time of CLME SAP development.

What implementation challenges should others expect to encounter when replicating this experience? Highlight specific conditions needed for others to replicate or benefit from this experience. *For example, the strategy pursued in this case only works given the following (climatic, socioeconomic, political) conditions...*

SIGNIFICANCE

The endorsement of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP) at the political level represents the first time that a GEF IW project has had over 20 countries agree on a short and medium term road-map for improved governance and management of their marine and coastal resources. It further represents the first time that the countries of the Caribbean and North-Brazil Shelf LME have agreed on a road-map towards the governance and management of their shared living marine resources.

The CLME Project's success is largely attributed to the commitment of the participating countries and regional and sub-regional organizations to the project objectives. Although the project experienced some challenges during the first half of its implementation, it was able to overcome these due to stakeholder commitment. Such commitment to the project's objectives can be attributed to the fact that work on the CLME Project began some ten years before the project was officially approved under the GEF IW Portfolio. This resulted in strong ownership and commitment by the region to this project.

Why is this experience significant to GEF IW projects and to transboundary water resources management? For example, *this experience represents the first time a GEF IW project has done X.*

REFERENCES

For more information on the CLME Project, please visit www.clmeproject.org.

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How can someone interested in using or adapting this experience get more information? Please provide relevant website(s), documentation and contact information. If you have further materials otherwise unavailable, GEF IW:LEARN is happy to post them to iwlearn.net

KEYWORDS

What 2-5 keywords could be used to help others search and find this experience note? Please provide at least one of each of the following:

- ◆ Large Marine Ecosystem
- ◆ Strategic Action Programme
- ◆ Adaptive Management
- ◆ Stakeholders
- ◆ Consultation

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