

UNOPS

**CATALYZING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC
ACTION PROGRAM FOR THE SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF SHARED LIVING MARINE RESOURCES
IN THE CARIBBEAN AND NORTH BRAZIL SHELF LARGE
MARINE ECOSYSTEMS
(CLME+)**

MID TERM REVIEW

October 2018

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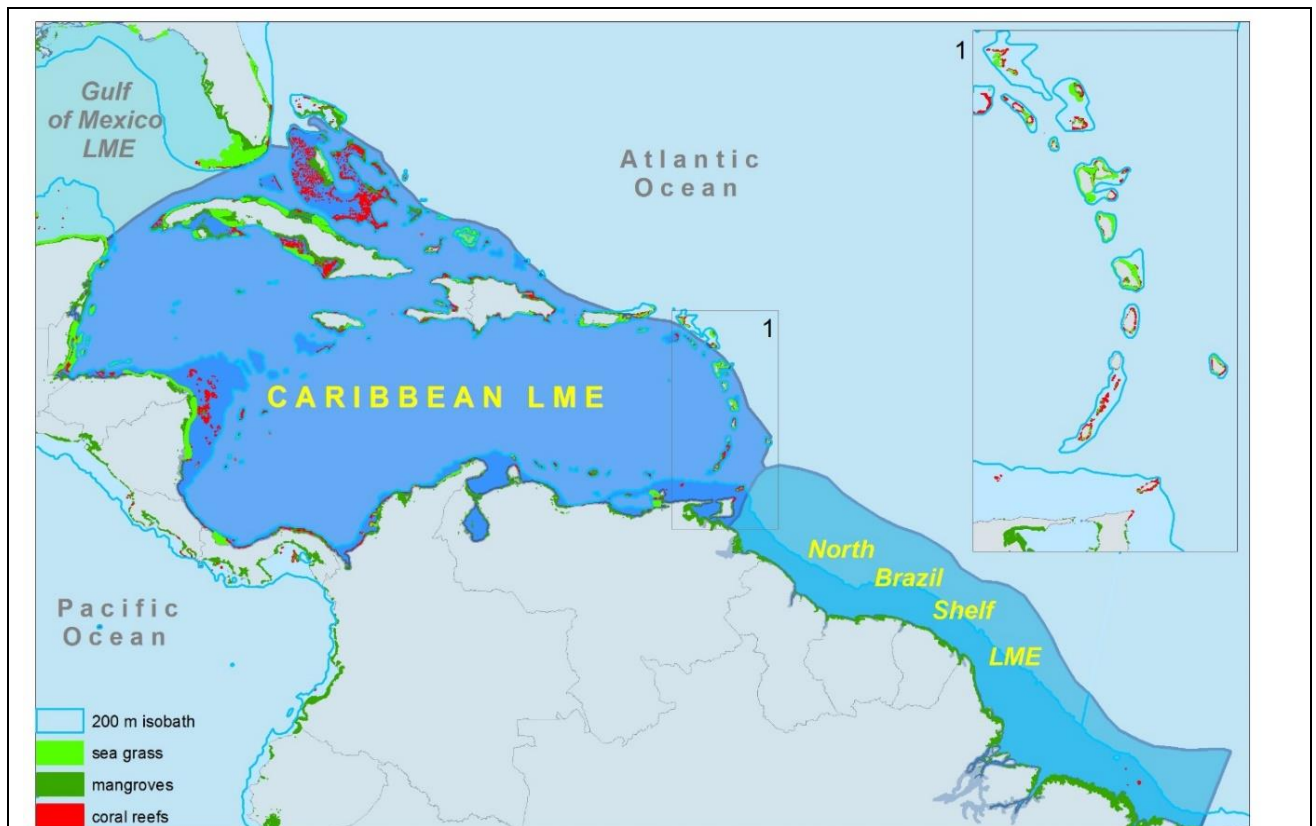
PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS MATRIX

UNDP-GEF MTR REPORT AUDIT TRAIL

Project Title	Catalyzing Implementation of the Strategic Action Program for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems		
GEF Project ID (PMIS #)	00093351 5247	PIF approval date	November 1 st , 2013
ATLAS Business Unit, Award # Project ID:	00085866	ProDoc Signature date	March 4 th , 2015
Countries	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, [Nicaragua] ¹ , Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago Non GEF eligible country: USA	Date Project Manager Hired	May 1 st , 2015
Region	LAC	Inception Workshop Date	24-26 January 2016
Focal Area	International Waters	Med-term Review Completion Date	October 30 th , 2018
GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective	IW 2 (GEF 6)	Plan Closing Date	April 2020
Trust Fund	GEFTF	Proposed New Closing Date	August 2020 ²
Executing Agency	UNOPS		
Other Execution Partners	UNESCO IOC, UN Environment, FAO WECAFC, CRFM, OSPESCA, OECS Commission, CERMES, CANARI, GCFI		
Project financing	At CEO Endorsement US \$	At Mid-Term Review US\$	
GEF Financing	12,500,000	12,500,000	
UNDP Contribution	2.619.579		
Governments	98.117.248		
Other partners	33,416,868	18,555,000	
Total Co-financing	134,153,695		
Project total cost	146.653.695		

¹ Nicaragua is a signatory of the PIF, but has not yet signed the Project Document

² This date - not yet formalized - corresponds to a *de facto* agreement. A new proposed completion date is under discussion and will be defined in early 2019.



The Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (jointly referred to as “the CLME+ region”) are two of the world’s 66 Large Marine Ecosystems. Together, they cover a total marine area of ± 4.4 million km². This vast marine space is a major contributor to regional socio-economic development and is key to many globally important ecological processes. The CLME+ region is bordered by over 35 States and Territories and is therefore considered one of the most geopolitically diverse and complex marine regions in the world. These culturally diverse countries and territories range from among the largest (e.g. Brazil, USA) to among the smallest (e.g. Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis) and from the most developed to the least developed in the world.

Fisheries and tourism are two key economic drivers in the region that are highly dependent on the health of these marine ecosystems. Over the past decades, pollution, habitat degradation and unsustainable fishing practices have increasingly impacted ecosystem health in the CLME+ region. In 2014 countries bordering the region endorsed a 10-year Strategic Action Programme (SAP) which provides Governments and Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) with a roadmap to reverse degradation of the marine environment and to secure its important resource base. By October 2017, the SAP had been endorsed at the political level by 35 Ministers representing 25 countries and 6 overseas territories from the region.

A US\$ 12,5 million grant was released by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) -through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)- to support the execution of a new 5-year Project (the “CLME+ region Project”: 2015-2020). This project is seeking to catalyze the implementation of the larger 10-year, region-wide “CLME+ region SAP.

1. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The MTR team consisted of one independent consultant with experience and exposure to IW projects and evaluations globally and in the region of the project. The MTR was developed through the following steps:

- 1) Following contract signature (April 30th, 2018), The MTR consultant first conducted a review of project documents (i.e. Project Document, PIF, ESSP, PIRs, Project Executive Group meeting minutes, etc.) provided by the Project Team and Commissioning Unit.
- 2) He then participated in an online MTR initiation briefing to clarify his understanding of the objectives and methods of the MTR, producing the MTR inception report thereafter.
- 3) Following this, from June 2nd to June 9th, 2018 the consultant undertook an MTR mission to the project's headquarters in Cartagena (Colombia), where he had interviews with the Project Team and other project stakeholders.
- 4) The Mid Term evaluator was then asked to participate to the project's mid-term face to face Steering Committee Meeting in Panama City from June 17th to June 20th 2018, and present the early findings of the Review.
- 5) Preparation of the MTR draft report (August 2018).

Summary MTR objective and methodological approach	
Objectives	The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy, its risks to sustainability.
Approach and methodology	The MTR will provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR evaluator will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The evaluator will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that should be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

Field visits	<p>Visit to the PCU, in Cartagena, Colombia from June 2nd to June 9th</p> <p>Participation to the Steering Committee Meeting held in Panama, June 18th to 20th</p>
Interviews and interviewees selection criteria	<p>Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including executing agencies (UNOPS, IOC UNESCO, FAO, UN Environment, CERMES etc.) senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc.</p>

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND CONTEXT

The CLME+ region Project covers two of the world’s 66 Large Marine Ecosystems or LMEs: the Caribbean LME (CLME) and the North Brazil Shelf LME (NBSLME). Jointly referred to as the CLME+ region, this vast marine environment is characterized by globally significant levels of biodiversity and provides critical goods and services that support enhanced livelihoods, human well-being and sustained socio-economic development in this region and well beyond. The CLME+ region’s marine ecosystems and associated living marine resources are particularly important for fishing and tourism, 2 key drivers of the region’s economies.

Table 1. Countries and territories sharing the CLME+ region

Independent Continental States	Independent Island States	Overseas dependent territories, associated states, outermost regions, departments and island with a special status ¹²
Belize ¹³ Brazil Colombia Costa Rica Guatemala Guyana ¹³ Honduras Panama Mexico Nicaragua Suriname ¹³ Venezuela United States of America	Antigua & Barbuda ¹³ Bahamas, the ¹³ Barbados ¹³ Cuba ¹³ Dominica ¹³ Dominican Republic ¹³ Grenada ¹³ Haiti ¹³ Jamaica ¹³ St. Kitts & Nevis ¹³ Saint Lucia ¹³ St. Vincent & the Grenadines ¹³ Trinidad & Tobago ¹³	Anguilla ¹³ (<i>United Kingdom</i>) Aruba ¹³ , Curaçao, St. Maarten ¹⁴ British Virgin Islands ¹³ (<i>United Kingdom</i>) Cayman Islands (<i>United Kingdom</i>) French Guiana ¹⁵ (<i>France</i>) Guadeloupe ¹⁵ (<i>France</i>) Montserrat ¹³ (<i>United Kingdom</i>) Martinique ¹⁵ (<i>France</i>) Puerto Rico ¹³ (<i>United States of America</i>) Bonaire, St. Eustatius, Saba ¹⁶ St. Barthélemy (<i>France</i>) St. Martin ¹⁵ (<i>France</i>) Turks and Caicos (<i>United Kingdom</i>) U.S. Virgin Islands ¹³ (<i>United States of America</i>)

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses (TDAs) conducted under the IW foundational CLME Project identified three distinct ecosystem types supporting the most important fisheries and biodiversity: the reefs and associated ecosystems, the pelagic ecosystem, and the continental shelf ecosystem. They also showed substantial scientific evidence pointing to three inter-linked, key environmental problems with severe socio-economic impacts across the CLME+ region and beyond:

- (i) unsustainable fisheries, resulting in over-exploited and collapsing fish stocks;
- (ii) habitat degradation and community modification; and
- (iii) marine pollution.

The diagnostic assessments concluded that in the absence of mitigation and adaptation measures, the impact of these problems will become further exacerbated as a consequence of climate change and associated sea-level rise, leading to a potentially profound environmental-economic crisis in the CLME+ region by mid-century, if not earlier.

Unsustainable fisheries, habitat degradation, pollution and climate variability and change are hence the most important problems impacting the societal benefits obtained from key marine ecosystems. Most fisheries are fully or over-exploited, and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing still remains an important issue in the region. Habitat degradation and pollution

severely impact the region's tourism potential and the sustainability of its' fisheries and increase the region's vulnerability to climate variability and change. Habitat degradation and pollution affect all ecosystem types but are especially evident in the coastal zone.

The CLME+ region constitutes one of the most geopolitically diverse and complex sets of LMEs in the world: being shared by 26 independent States and more than 10 dependent territories, the geopolitical fragmentation of the CLME+ region is indicative of the highly transboundary nature of both the marine resources as well as of the problems affecting these resources. At the same time this level of fragmentation is indicative of the crucial importance of enhancing the cooperation among CLME+ region countries and stakeholders in the identification and implementation of solutions for the aforementioned problems and their root causes. In order to ensure sustainable societal benefits, both at the regional, national and local levels, it is therefore imperative that the region continues to progress towards the step-wise implementation of an integrative regional framework for shared living marine resources governance and management, based on the ecosystem approach.

The Vision and the SAP

Within the region, broad consensus has been achieved on:

- the need to implement an ecosystem approach (EBM/EAF) for LMRs management;
- the critical importance of addressing root causes of environmental degradation;
- the necessity of mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation considerations across all sectors with a stake in the marine environment.

This consensus has been largely achieved through the foundational capacity building support provided by the GEF during the period 2009-2014. In this same context, the following *long-term Vision* for the marine environment in the CLME+ region was developed and adopted:

“Healthy marine ecosystems that are adequately valued and protected through robust, integrative and inclusive governance arrangements at regional, sub-regional, national and local levels, which in turn effectively enable adaptive management that maximizes, in a sustainable manner, the provision of goods and services in support of enhanced livelihoods and human well-being”.

This long-term vision informed the Strategic Action Program (SAP) development process implemented during the foundational project. Through this SAP, the countries sharing the CLME+ region committed to promote the sound governance of the shared living marine resources (sLMR) by adopting the following main Strategic Directions:

- SD1. Establishment and implementation of coordinated and cost-effective fisheries governance and inter-sectoral management arrangements that are broadly supported, based on adequate consultation, use the best scientific evidence available, and are equipped to implement the precautionary and ecosystem approaches to fisheries*
- SD2. Establishment and implementation of coordinated and cost-effective governance and inter-sectoral planning and management arrangements that are broadly supported, based on adequate consultation, use the best scientific evidence available and safeguard the health of the marine environment in the CLME⁺*

In order to foster the adoption and implementation of EBM/EAF additional Strategic Directions were incorporated under the SAP. Among them, three on which the CLME+ region project is devoting particular attention because of their high relevance and the likelihood of success:

- *Implementing EBM/EAF of the Guianas-Brazil continental shelf, with special reference to the shrimp and groundfish fisheries;*
- *Enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach for spiny lobster fisheries;*
- *Enhance the governance arrangements for implementation an ecosystem approach for flyingfish fisheries.*

The CLME+ region Project consists of five complementary and inter-linked components. The 5 components reflect the Project Rationale and Strategy, and are designed to collectively deliver the Project's objective: Facilitating EBM/EAF (Ecosystem-based Management/ Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries) in the CLME+ region for the sustainable and climate resilient provision of goods and services from shared living marine resources. They are:

- Consolidating the institutional, policy and legal frameworks for sustainable and climate-resilient shared living marine resources governance in the CLME+ region
- Enhancing the capacity of key institutions and stakeholders to effectively implement knowledge-based EBM/EAF for sustainable shared living marine resources use in the CLME+ region
- Implementing EBM/EAF in the CLME+ region
- (Pre-)Feasibility assessments to identify major high-priority investment needs and opportunities in the CLME+ region
- Monitoring & assessing progress of and results from the overall implementation of the CLME+ region SAP, and experience sharing with the global LME community.

Barriers

(i) The highly transboundary nature and the fragmentation of management approaches in the CLME+ region lie at the basis of the identified priority environmental problems impacting marine ecosystems, habitats and the varied range of shared living marine resources and fish stocks. As stated in the Project Document, with the people and economies of the CLME+ region being so critically dependent on the goods and services provided by these threatened ecosystems and habitats, dealing successfully with these problems requires substantial expansion and enhancement of the gradually emerging, but still insufficient levels of coordination and collaboration among CLME+ region countries and organizations with a stake in the marine environment.

(ii) The limitations of human and financial resources in the region are recognized as an important root cause, hence the need for transitory incremental funding and coordination support to kick-start SAP implementation. This is even more so given the high discrepancies in development levels, and financial and logistical capacities of the CLME+ region States and Territories, which range from among the largest and most powerful countries in the region and even globally, to the smallest, least developed and most vulnerable States (including 22 SIDS).

(iii) Climate variability and change may offset the potential positive results of actions dealing with the priority issues described above, in particular with habitat degradation. Absence of the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation in sLMR governance decisions and management actions would therefore constitute an important potential barrier to achieving sustainable outcomes from SAP implementation.

(iv) Insufficient communication, co-ordination and information exchange among the myriad of sLMR-related projects, activities and initiatives that are underway or planned within the CLME+ region constitutes an important additional barrier to achieving the societal and environmental benefits expected from such substantial investments.

3. FINDINGS

A. The Project Strategy

The following table shows the theory of change at the basis of project design, as can be inferred from the Project Document.

Theory of Change

Table 2. Theory of Change

CLME+ region Project – From Outcomes to Impacts				
<i>Objective: Facilitating EBM/EAF in the CLME+ region for the sustainable and climate-resilient provision of goods and services from shared living marine resources, in line with the endorsed CLME+ region SAP</i>				
Outcomes (as formulated in the Project Document)	Assumptions and Drivers	Intermediate state	Impacts	
			Reduced environmental threats	Environmental and Socio- economic benefits
<p>1. Integrative governance arrangements for sustainable fisheries and for the protection of the marine environment.</p> <p>2. Enhanced institutional and stakeholder capacity for sLMR management at regional, sub-regional, national and local levels (with special attention to regional and sub-regional organizations with key roles in SAP implementation).</p> <p>3. Progressive reduction of environmental stresses, and enhancement of livelihoods demonstrated across the thematic and geographical scope of the CLME+ region SAP.</p>	<p><i>Assumption:</i> The many countries sharing the CLME+ region marine environment, and the many organizations and bodies with mandates over the living resources of the CLME and NBSLME, remain fully committed to the SAP vision and strategic objectives.</p> <p><i>Drivers:</i> Shared recognition of need to manage and protect the living marine resources of the region.</p>	<p>Best practices piloted by the project are being replicated.</p> <p>Monitoring data produced by countries and regional organizations show positive trends are fostering full SAP implementation</p> <p>National Inter-ministerial Committees and IGOs, that together constitute the CLME+ regional Governance</p>	<p>Mitigation of stress in critical fisheries (spiny lobster, groundfish, small pelagics).</p> <p>Full SAP implementation reverses degradation trends and enhances sustainability of key fisheries.</p> <p>Caribbean countries better prepared to face threats from global changes and climatic variability and change.</p>	<p>The sound management and the protection of globally significant living resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LMEs, foster environmentally sustainable development, enhance livelihoods and human well-being.</p>

<p>4. Financing catalyzed for the up-scaling of priority actions for the protection of the marine environment and for ensuring sustainable, climate-resilient livelihoods and socio-economic development from sLMR use.</p> <p>5. Regional socio-economic benefits and Global Environmental Benefits from SAP implementation are maximized through enhanced collaboration, planning & adaptive management, and exchange of experiences and lessons learnt.</p>	<p>Regional cooperation providing incentives and support structure.</p>	<p>Framework (RGF), take up responsibility for SAP implementation</p>		
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The CLME+ region Project Document presents a somewhat unsatisfactory definition of the outcomes that the project is expected to produce. In fact, most of the outcomes listed in the Results Framework of the Project Document, and reported in the table above, correspond in reality to the main outputs of the project, rather than to the changes that the outputs are expected to determine in the environmental conditions of the LMEs and their living resources.

In the table below, the consultant has attempted to reconstruct the Theory of Change “from outcomes to impacts”, modifying the formulation of the outcomes.

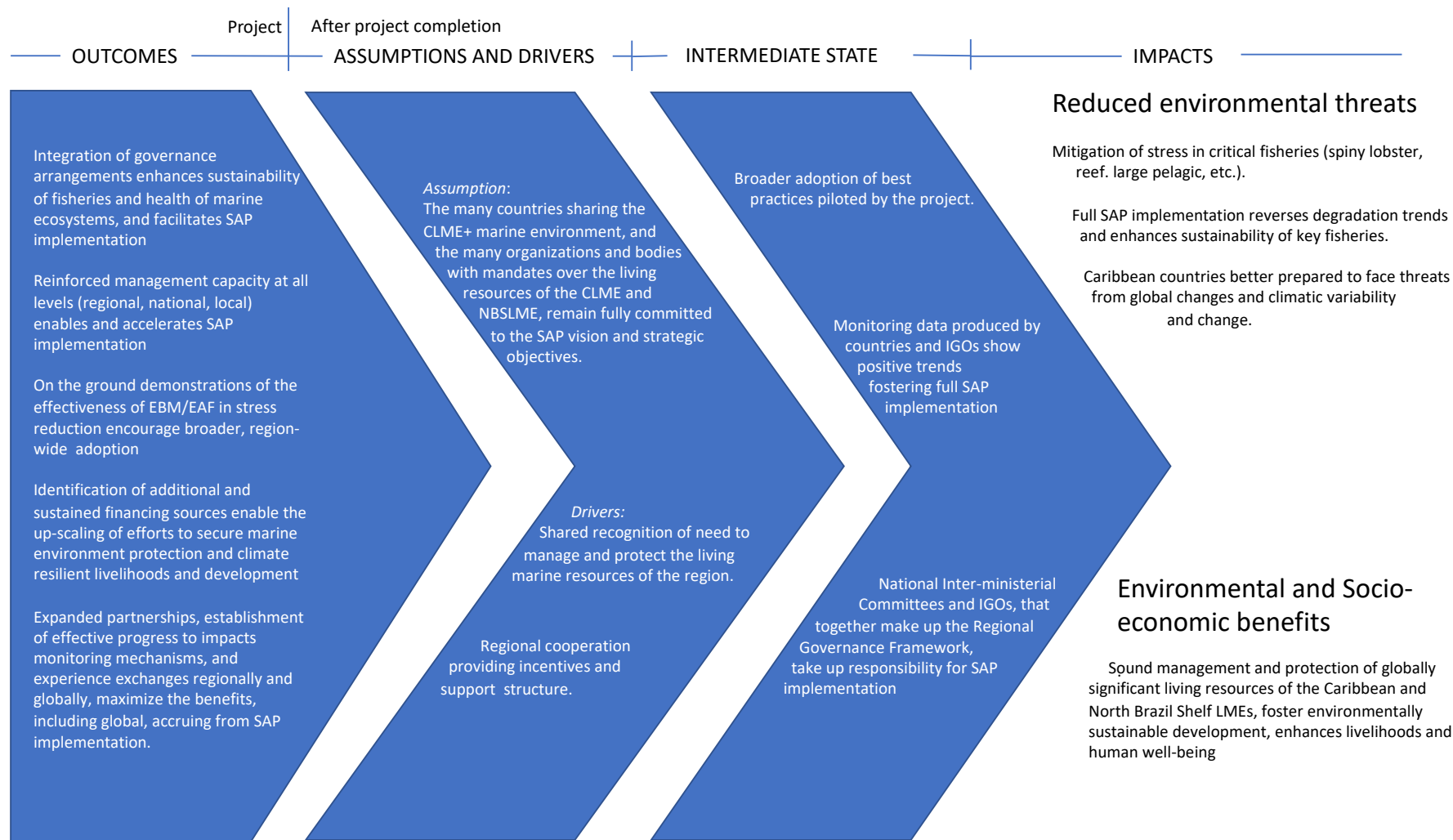


Figure 1: From Outcomes to Impacts

Project design

Overall, the design logic of the project is sound being based on the achievements obtained through the years of sustained efforts of the foundational phase, and well captured in the conclusions of the science-based assessments of the several straddling fish stocks and other high value living marine resources (TDAs) and translated by the participating countries into priority national and regional mitigation actions (SAP). The SAP provides the route and the processes that the countries have identified as feasible and most effective to move towards the intended results.

The project aims to address five key issues of concern which are putting at risk the sustainability of the shared living marine resources of the CLME+ region identified by the diagnostic assessments. It will do so by supporting the implementation of the related SAP actions:

- (i) The highly fragmented governance frameworks of the marine environment in general and of fisheries in particular, distributed across a number of sub-regional entities responding to different governing bodies and with different country representatives (SAP Strategies 1-3). The project design includes actions to overcome this barrier to sustainable management of the CLME+ region shared living resources:
 - Facilitating an agreement bringing Brazil – the main country sharing the NBSLME – into the Cartagena Convention mechanisms, thus expanding their area of influence to include the exchange processes existing between the two LMEs, a key step for overall sustainable governance of the CLM+ ecosystems.
 - Promoting the creation of an Interim Coordination Mechanism (ICM) for fisheries to be led by FAO-WECAFC, including in the first instance CRFM and OSPESCA (and possibly OECS) and covering the full CLME+ region, that will facilitate coordination among the different existing regional and sub-regional fisheries bodies, and all CLME+ region countries (incl. those not represented in any of the existing sub-regional arrangements), for the implementation of the different fisheries-related Strategies of the CLME+ region SAP. The ICM is expected to lead to formal multi-country decision on a robust, region-wide and long-term governance arrangement (or arrangements) for sustainable fisheries management.
 - As called for by the SAP, creating a wide-ranging interim mechanism³ for the coordination of actions towards more integrative ocean governance among participating countries, that is expected to evolve by the end of the project into a permanent, inclusive and sustainably financed policy coordination mechanism for sustainable and climate-resilient sLMR governance in the CLME+ region.
- (ii) The limited human/financial resources and capacity to implement/enforce governance frameworks, compounded by inadequate access to data and information, public awareness and

³ The SAP Interim Coordination Mechanism that consist of the agencies making up the Fisheries ICM and UN Env. UNESCO IOC, CARICOM Sec, CCAD and OECS commission, which by addressing the management and governance of the marine resources in the CLME+ region takes prominence over the Fisheries ICM.

participation, and consideration of the value of ecosystem goods and services. In line with the SAP, the project foresees a number of capacity barriers removal actions:

- Preparation and adoption of Regional Strategies and Action Plans for addressing three major transboundary issues of concern: Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing; Valuation, protection and/or restoration of key marine habitats in the CLME+ region; Reduction of impacts from excess nutrient loads on marine ecosystems.
- Preparation of stakeholders endorsed Civil Society Action Programme (C-SAP) and Private Sector Action Programme (P-SAP) aimed at strengthening the role, participation and ownership of civil society and private sector actors in achieving the SAP long-term vision; Establishment of a Small Grants coordination facility/mechanism to better coordinate and tailor the different small grants initiatives⁴ and projects in the region towards the specific needs and opportunities under the CLME+ region SAP and associated Action Programmes (C-SAP, P-SAP).
- Preparing an Overarching CLME+ region Communication Strategy, with central and decentralized components and responsibilities that will help securing a sufficiently broad support base and buy-in from the different societal sectors, and awareness among relevant stakeholder groups on the opportunities to contribute to the objectives of the SAP, through the many existing and forthcoming projects and initiatives in the region.
- Definition and validation⁵ of a Training Strategy based on an assessment of the needs and implementation of training activities focused on highest priority needs⁶.
- Prepare Research Strategies identifying high-priority research needs, i.e. the creation of knowledge most needed for enhanced decision-making and sLMR management by the IGOs (and their member countries) that constitute the RGF.
- for the expansion of the existing knowledge and enhancement of its use on key issues such as: ecosystem health, fish stock size, innovative environmental and stock assessment techniques, the social and economic value of ecosystem goods and services, and the impact of management options and decisions on ecosystems and fish stocks and other shared living marine resources.

(iii) Paucity of experience in the implementation of the Ecosystem-Based Management approach for key ecosystems and associated fisheries in the CLME+ region. The project will demonstrate the progressive reduction of environmental stresses when moving from business-as-usual to EBM/EAF, through the implementation of several sub-projects:

- “Facilitating Transition to an ecosystem approach for the Caribbean spiny lobster fisheries” with the purpose of enhancing the transboundary and cross-sectorial coordination arrangements and the capacity of sub-regional and national-level stakeholders to effectively implement full policy/decision-making cycles for Caribbean spiny lobster fisheries governance and management.
- “Facilitating the transition to an ecosystem approach for the shrimp and groundfish fisheries of the NBSLME” (Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French

⁴ Including an additional, modest small grants contribution from the CLME+ region Project itself

⁵ The Project Document does not describe – in this as well as in other cases - the validation process, nor the responsible entity.

⁶ During project implementation and following the prevailing views of regional actors, this activity – still to be developed - has evolved into a mechanism to link those providing training to those searching for training opportunities.

Guiana and Brazil) with the purpose of optimizing the transboundary coordination and collaboration for the sustainable management of shrimp & groundfish stocks on the NBSLME, and capturing and disseminating best practices and lessons learnt.

- Facilitating the transition to an ecosystem approach for the eastern Caribbean flyingfish fisheries (Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Martinique, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) with the purpose of optimizing the transboundary coordination and collaboration for the sustainable management of shrimp & groundfish stocks on the NBSLME, and capturing and disseminating best practices and lessons learnt.
- “Demonstrating the transition to an Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) approach at the sub-regional/site level in the CLME+ region” with the purpose of operationalizing the coordination and cooperation mechanisms established under Output 1.1., to test and demonstrate application of EBM principles at the intervention level⁷.

(iv) The insufficiency of financial resources for governmental action, recognized as an important root cause of the region’s limitations in terms of the scale at which actions to address environmental degradation and to support the development of a blue economy can currently be implemented. To help overcome this major obstacle to sustainable sLMR management, the Project will strive to provide insights on high-priority investment needs and opportunities to halt and reverse, at the regional scale, the loss of ecosystem goods and services, and stimulate sustainable, ocean-linked businesses and economic growth through the following steps:

- Assessment of the Baseline conditions on the needs and opportunities for investments for: the enhanced protection and restoration of key habitats, with special attention to coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves; the development & management of sustainable fisheries; the reduction of the impacts of pollution on human well-being and ecosystem health to safeguard the goods & services delivered by marine ecosystems and associated living resources to human society.
- Preparation of investment plans for large-scale action on habitat protection and restoration, for on-the-ground measures to support sustainable fisheries management & development (“blue growth”), for actions to reduce LBS pollution, with special attention to pollution sources known to cause substantial impacts on the provision of those ecosystem goods and services that are of critical importance for human well-being.

(v) The insufficient communication, co-ordination and information exchange among primary CLME+ region SAP stakeholders and among the myriad of existing and planned projects, activities and initiatives in the region, constituting an important barrier to fully capture the societal and environmental benefits expected from the project and other investments. The project will support countries and other stakeholders in enhancing cooperation and partnerships, monitoring progress towards SAP full implementation, and improving the flow of information at the regional and global levels, by implementing the following actions:

- Promotion of the “CLME+ region SAP Partnership” to expand cooperation (incl. through formal and/or informal frameworks and partnerships) among development

⁷ Originally two sub-projects, one focusing on the NBSLME and the other on the upgrading of ongoing non-GEF funded similar initiatives.

partners, programmes, projects, initiatives (PPIs) and countries/territories with a stake in the CLME+ region:

- Design and establishment of a CLME+ region ecosystem status and SAP implementation M&E mechanism consisting of: common, or compatible approaches and/or protocol(s) for the joint monitoring & assessment of overall SAP implementation (and CLME+ region status and conditions); a “CLME+ region SAP Monitoring & Evaluation” and “State of the Marine Ecosystems and shared Living Marine Resource in the CLME+ region” web portal(s) and reporting outline; a Sustainability Strategy/Plan for the periodic updating of the Report/Portals beyond the CLME+ region Project’s lifespan.
- Communication, twinning and knowledge exchange activities targeting the CLME+ region Partnership and global LME Community of Practice, to be implemented throughout the Project’s duration, will put in practice the corresponding elements of the over-arching Communication Strategy.

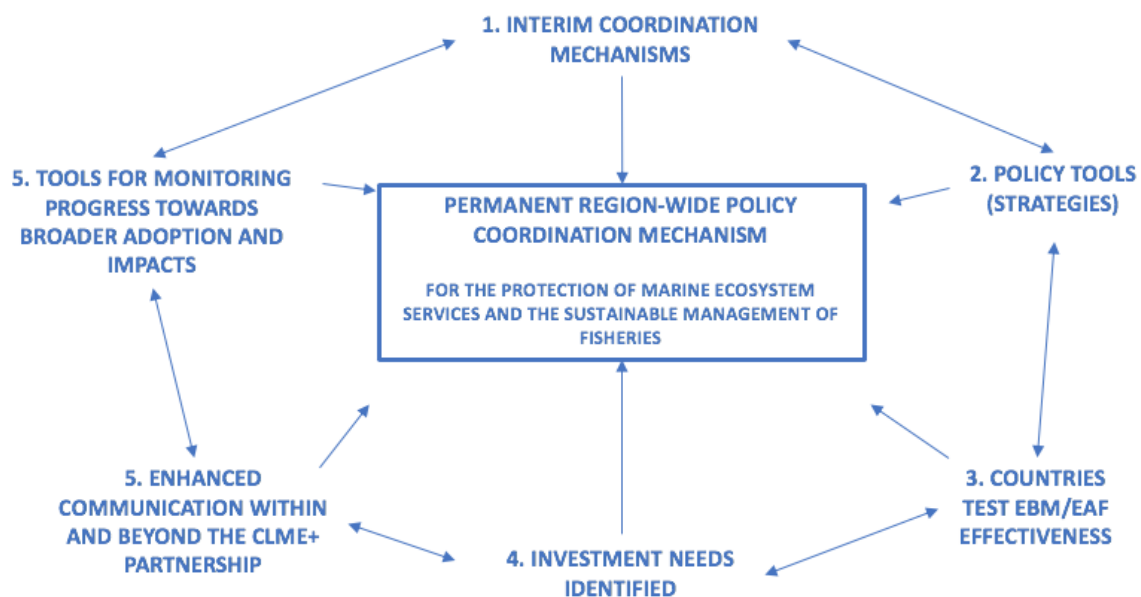


Figure 2: Intervention Logic

The extent to which lessons from other relevant projects were incorporated into the project design

The project design draws heavily from the experience gained during the foundational CLME project in terms of executing modalities and partnerships, thus ensuring continuity of action, and overall consistency, and also on the exchanges with the global LME COP facilitated through IWLEARN during the foundational CLME project.

The extent to which the project addresses country priorities and is country-driven

The project aim is to jump start the implementation of the SAP which was negotiated and agreed upon by nearly all the countries sharing the CLME+ region. It is hence country driven and aims

at securing sustainability of highly valuable fisheries, of priority importance for all project countries.

The sustainability and viability of the project

The objectives of the SAP, and consequently of the project, revolve around the improvement of the health of marine ecosystems and of the sustainability of the fisheries resources of the CLME+ region, through the removal of relevant barriers, first of all the fragmented governance structure and the lack of an ecosystem approach. While the actions that the project foresees, and the process of implementing them, seem in principle adequate to achieve the goal, much will depend on the sustained long-term commitment of the countries. The integrated governance frameworks - embracing the whole CLME+ region and covering pressures from both sLMR over-exploitation and environmental stresses from land-based sources - that the project is striving to create, will in fact require the countries' continued political, technical and financial support. Economic and political unrest in the region, and the often dramatic impacts of increased climatic variability, might jeopardize the long-term sustainability of the project's expected achievements.

Decision-making processes: involvement of project beneficiaries and other stakeholders

Project design appears to have been a highly participative process, with the contributions of the various sub-regional entities with jurisdiction over fisheries and marine environment, regional research and scientific organizations, and major NGOs, which were also identified as responsible for the execution of the relevant activities.

The extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design.

The assumption at the basis of the gender mainstreaming strategy of the project is that adopting the "Governance Effectiveness Assessment Framework" (GEAF) and promoting its systematic use as a planning and monitoring tool, will allow to systematically include the gender dimension. The Project Document sections on Results Based Management, Projects Indicators and Monitoring, and Stakeholder Involvement make specific reference to the gender consideration and to the GEF's "Results Framework for Gender Mainstreaming in GEF Operations". The Project design and Results Framework however, not being based on a gender analysis, do not contain a specific "gender" outcome /output /activity framework. Emphasis is instead on generic assurances that gender consideration will be present in all relevant activities and outputs.

The role of beneficiary countries

The main objective of the project is to protect the health of the marine environment in the CLME+ region thus improving the sustainability of shared fisheries resources in the region. To do so, one of the major actions identified in project design is preparing the ground for the establishment of an overarching regional coordination mechanism embracing both fisheries management and protection of the marine environment, thereby addressing all the various stresses impacting on fisheries resources, from over-exploitation, to nutrient over-enrichment, to

habitat degradation. Reaching this objective requires a sequence of steps all of them involving decisions from the countries sharing the CLME+ region resources: approval of documents and of monitoring frameworks and protocols, adoption of policy and institutional reforms at the national and regional levels, agreement on interim and permanent coordination mechanisms for SAP implementation etc. The Project Document highlights all these country “decision points”, without however providing details on the envisaged approval process and on the national entity responsible for the decision to be taken. In other words, the project lacks a clear identification of the counterpart in countries.

The MTE considers important to highlight the following three points related to country participation:

(i) The diagram below shows the various project related functions of national representatives, from Project National Focal Points⁸, to members of IGOs governing bodies, to GEF focal points. Country participation to the project appears to follow parallel lines without coordination or “meeting points”. This, compounded by the fact that the various country focal points and representatives belong to different ministries/national entities, is cause of fragmentation in the way’s countries participate, and of confusion on responsibilities on final decisions. In the absence of Inter-ministerial Committees (NIC), in place only in a limited number of countries, some level of “in country” coordination and information exchange between project focal point and representatives in IGOs (WECAFC, UNEP CEP, etc.) would be necessary and beneficial.

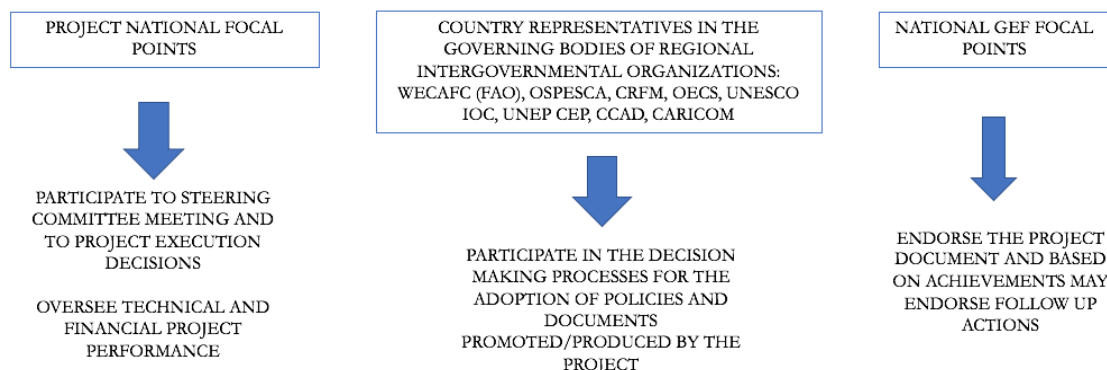


Figure 3: The roles of country representatives

(ii) A number of executing partners – in particular those involved in the execution of Component 3 sub-projects - interviewed as part of the MTR, have mentioned difficulties in dialoguing with countries and receiving responses and inputs from them. On the other hand, some countries national focal points complained of the lack of clarity of their role and relationships with NFPs of sub-projects and national representatives in IGOs, lack of involvement and of continuous flow of information on project advancements, and of clear

⁸ Sub Project NFPs have also been appointed under Component 3 of the CLME+ project in their countries. They have a more technical role and support implementation of sub projects.

allocation of responsibilities particularly with respect of the various IGOs executing sub-projects and other activities.

(iii) As mentioned above, in a number of instances many project targets call for “decision”, “approval”, “endorsement” or “adoption” by countries. No project however can commit to deliver on something that lies beyond its control, such as the political decision of a sovereign nation. The formulation of the targets calls hence for a clarification: when the target involves a political decision (policy or institutional reform etc.), the commitment of the project is limited to facilitating the process preparing the grounds for a decision by national governments or by the governing bodies of relevant IGOs.

B. The Result Framework

The Results framework of the project follows the UNDP standard sequence: Outcome/Output, Indicator, Baseline, Milestones and targets, Source of Verification, Risks and Assumptions. It is quite extensive, as it covers the 5 Components, 23 Outcomes, 69 Outputs, 151 Milestones/Targets and 66 Sub-targets of the project. It has to be noted that the majority of these outputs and targets (75%) belongs to the “sub-projects” of Component 3. While this large number of elements reflects the ambitious objectives of the project and the unavoidable complexity of its design, the large set of outputs and indicators identified (69 and 62 resp.) appears to be excessive and possibly cause of complication in the definition of the typology and timing of the 151 targets, and of reduced flexibility in project design.

Table 3. Project elements and targets

# Indicators	# Outcomes	# Outputs	# Targets/Milestones	# Sub-targets
	Component 1			
12	1	5	12	8
	Component 2			
12	1	6	15	17
13 (tot.)	Component 3			
	Sub-project Spiny Lobster			
	4	13	19	20
	Sub-project Shrimp & Groundfish			
	5	18	30	21
	Sub-project Flyingfish			
	6	17	48	-
	Sub-project EBM			
	3	4	14	-
	Small grants			
	1	1	1	
	Component 4			
9	1	2	7	-
	Component 5			
16	1	3	13	-
62	23	69	151	66

Moreover, the confusing formulation of the various elements: outcomes, outputs and in particular indicators (often not SMART), add to the complexity. For an example of how alternative formulations could have simplified the Logframe, see the table below.

Table 4. Example of re-formulation of logframe elements

Project Document	Alternative formulation	
	Outcome/output/indicator	target
Outcome 1: Integrative governance arrangements and institutional mandates for sustainable fisheries and the protection of the marine environment	Outcome 1: Integration of governance arrangements and of institutional mandates improves sustainability of fisheries and health of the marine environment	CLME+ region monitoring shows measurable stress reduction in the medium-term
Indicator Outcome 1: Solid transboundary and cross-sectoral governance arrangements in place	Indicator Outcome 1: Number of countries and regional IGOs agreeing to create an overarching permanent and sustainable policy coordination mechanism	All CLME+ region countries and IGOs agree to participate (consider participation) by PE
Output 1: Decisions on coordination & cooperation arrangements and institutional mandates	Output 1: Reforms of the regional/national coordination/cooperation and institutional arrangements aimed at the integrated protection of the marine environment and its living resources defined and submitted for adoption by governments	Interim mechanisms established by project Mid Term. Design of Permanent mechanisms and TORs submitted for government adoption by PE
Indicators: Output 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No CLME+ region countries are excluded from formal participation in the regional coordination mechanisms for the protection of the marine environment Coordination mechanism among the region-wide arrangements dealing with pollution and habitat degradation Interim region-wide coordination mechanism for sustainable fisheries management Region-wide permanent arrangement for sustainable, ecosystem- 	Indicators: Output 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of newly established or expanded regional cross sectorial interim and permanent coordination mechanisms and reformed institutions. Number of CLME+ region countries participating (consider participation) to newly established coordination mechanisms. 	# by MTE # by PE All CLME+ region countries

<p>based fisheries management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “SAP implementation” coordination mechanism, integrating the arrangements for sustainable fisheries and the protection of the marine environment• Permanent policy coordination mechanism		
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4. PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS

The project was endorsed by the GEF CEO on March 4th, 2015 and became fully operational about two months later, when the first disbursements occurred (see figure below). Administrative and organizational delays affected the first year of implementation, with only \$580k disbursed during the first 10 months. In view of this, the PEG agreed on an initial 4 months extension⁹, and is presently considering an additional 4 months extension to overcome the further delays in project execution experienced by some of the executing partners.

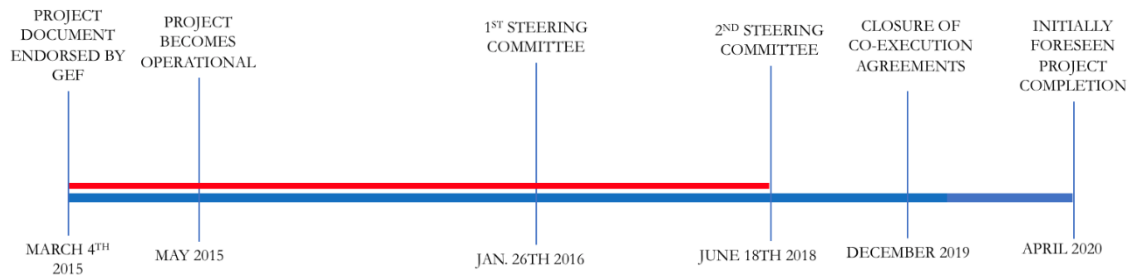


Figure 4: Project Timeline

The initial administrative delays and the slow pace in the execution of a number of activities have clearly hindered the progress of the project during the first three years of implementation. The result is that, in spite of having so far spent or transferred to partners 47% of the total budget, the project has met only a small fraction of the targets initially set at project mid-term, and only few of the activities have produced concrete outputs for MTE review. The lack of any progress detectable by the MTE in Components 2 (providing policy tools) and 4 (catalyzing investments) is discouraging.

The table below compares the original set of mid-term targets (31 in total, excluding Component 3 that does not foresee mid-term targets), with those actually met at the time of the Second Steering Committee Meeting in June 2018 (only 13).

⁹ This extension, agreed by the PEG but – wisely - yet to be submitted to the Project Steering Committee for formal approval (this is due to the fact that only one extension is admissible under present UNDP rules), has moved the project end date from April 2020 to August 2020.

Table 5. Evolution of mid-term targets and milestones (2nd Steering Committee Meeting)

Outputs	Initial Mid-Term Targets/Milestones	Mid-Term Targets/Milestones met at the time of the 2 nd SC	Targets to be reached after MTR
Output 1.1 - Decisions on coordination & cooperation arrangements and institutional mandates, in line with CLME+ region SAP Strategies 1 (environment), 2 (fisheries) and 3 (cross-sectoral policy coordination)	<p>1. Formal agreement between Brazil and the Cartagena Convention Secretariat for the coordination of actions relevant to the Convention and its Protocols, by Cartagena Convention COP 14 (2016)</p> <p>2. Decision on a modality for the coordination of actions under the SPAW and LBS Protocols, at Cartagena Convention COP 13 (2014); Roadmap for collaborative action on SPAW and LBS available by end of Project Year 1 (PY1)</p> <p>3. Decision among CLME+ region partners on the interim coordination mechanism for sustainable fisheries, by the end of the Project Inception Phase)</p> <p>4. Feasibility analysis (technical & economic feasibility, and political & social acceptance) of different region-wide governance arrangements for sustainable fisheries, available by Project Mid-Term (PMT)</p> <p>5. Interim mechanism to support coordinated SAP implementation, established by end of PY1</p>	<p>2 Roadmap for collaborative action on SPAW and LBS available by first quarter 2017.</p> <p>3 Decision among CLME+ region partners on the interim coordination mechanism for sustainable fisheries, by the beginning of 2016.</p> <p>4 Feasibility analysis (technical & economic feasibility, and political & social acceptance) of different region-wide governance arrangements for sustainable fisheries, available by July 2017.</p> <p>5. Interim mechanism to support coordinated SAP implementation formally established by end of first half of 2017</p>	<p>1 Formal agreement between Brazil and the Cartagena Convention Secretariat for the coordination of actions relevant to the Convention and its Protocols, in place by mid 2018¹⁰</p> <p>4 Formal multi-country decision on a robust, region-wide governance arrangement for sustainable, ecosystem-based management by end of 2019.</p> <p>5. Institutional arrangement(s) and operational mechanism to coordinate SAP implementation efforts beyond project life span, consolidated before end of 2019</p>

¹⁰ Gray shading indicates textual changes approved by the SC in 2018

			<p>6a Consensus among CLME+ region-participating countries on a permanent, inclusive and sustainably financed policy coordination mechanism for sLRM governance, by first trimester 2020</p> <p>6b Submission of the mechanism to countries of the CLME+ region region for adoption from the beginning of the second trimester of 2020</p>
Output 1.2 - National Inter-sectoral Coordination (NIC) mechanisms (including science-policy interfaces) in place.	1. Completed baseline analysis of NIC mechanisms, including identification of good practices, by end of PY1.	1. Completed baseline analysis of NIC mechanisms, including identification of good practices, by end of 2015.	<p>1. Analysis updated by 2019</p> <p>2. Sustainable NIC mechanisms operating in at least 60% of CLME+ region participating countries, by Project End</p>
Output 1.3 - Regional policies, declarations and/or regulations, and associated national-level legislation and/or plans, are appropriate to enable effective EBM/EAF in the CLME+ region	1. Strategy to support the mainstreaming of EBM/EAF concept and principles in policies, declarations, regulations, plans and legislation, available by PMT	1. Strategy to support the mainstreaming of EBM/EAF concept and principles in policies, declarations, regulations, plans and legislation, available by the end of 2017.	<p>1. EBM/EAF concepts and key principles integrated in at least 4 (sub)-regional policies relevant to the SAP, and in updated fisheries/environmental legislations/policies/plans in at least 60% of CLME+ region countries where such updates by 2019.</p> <p>2. Gender and youth concerns mainstreamed and incorporated in at least 3 (sub) regional policies relevant to the SAP, by end of 2019</p>
Output 1.4 - Data management, access & exchange arrangements support adaptive management and implementation of the CLME+ region Project and SAP.	1. MoUs and protocols to facilitate access to/exchange of national and (sub)regional data sets developed and adopted by at least 40% of the relevant CLME+ region partner organizations, by PMT	1. MoUs and protocols to facilitate access to/exchange of national and (sub)regional data sets developed and adopted by at least 40% of the relevant CLME+ region partner organizations, by mid 2017 .	1. MoUs and/or protocols to facilitate access to/exchange of national and (sub)regional data sets developed and adopted by at least 40% of the relevant CLME+ region partner organizations, by end of 2019

<p>Output 1.5 - Sustainable financing mechanism(s) to ensure short, medium and long-term operations of the sLMR governance arrangements</p>			<p>1. Sustainable financing plan (proposal), incl. evaluation and comparison of options, to be delivered by end of 2019</p> <p>2. Final version of the plan addresses feedback from CLME+ region partners on the initial proposal and is delivered by the end of first trimester 2020</p> <p>3. Support for the Sustainable Financing Plan confirmed by at least 14 CLME+ region countries, by first trimester 2020.</p>
<p>Output 2.1 - Regional Action Plans for the management, conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources and for the protection of the marine environment, taking into account the implications on gender and the possible impacts of climate change</p>	<p>1a. Regional Strategy and Action Plan against IUU developed, and approved at the 16th WECAFC Session in 2016;</p> <p>1b. Model National Plans of Action against IUU developed and disseminated among CLME+ region countries by PMT</p> <p>2. Regional Strategy and Action Plan for key marine habitats covers at least 50% of CLME+ region countries, by end of PY3</p> <p>3. Regional Action Plan for reducing nutrient loads covers at least 30% of CLME+ region countries and is adopted at the latest by LBS STAC 4 (2018)</p>		<p>1a. Regional Strategy and Action Plan against IUU developed, submitted to the WECAFC SAG by 2017 for review and approved at the 17 WECAFC Session in 2019</p> <p>1b. Model National Plans of Action against IUU developed and disseminated among CLME+ region countries by end of 2018</p> <p>2. Regional Strategy and Action Plan for key marine habitats adopted by at least 50% of CLME+ region countries, and reviewed by the SPAW Contracting Parties by end of 2018 and adopted by the SPAW COP (intersessionally) by June 2019</p> <p>3. Regional Action Plan for reducing nutrient loads adopted by at least 30% of CLME+ region countries and reviewed by Contracting Parties by 2018 and adopted by the LBS COP (intersessionally) by end of first quarter 2019</p>
<p>Output 2.2 - Civil Society and Private Sector Action Programmes (C-SAP and P-SAP), that are sensitive to gender concerns and</p>	<p>1. "C-SAP" document delivered and adopted by at least 8 CBO/FFO organizations, by PMT</p>		<p>1. C-SAP document delivered by June 2018, and adopted by at least 8 CSO organizations by end of 2018</p>

<p>complement and support the implementation of the CLME+ region SAP</p>	<p>2. Increase of resp. 30% and 50% of the number of women that are active members of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO), by PMT</p> <p>3. “P-SAP” document delivered by Project Month 28</p> <p>4. Small Grants coordination facility/mechanism operational by end of Project Month 18</p>		<p>2. Direct participation of at least 5 CSO/FFO/youth organizations in concrete stress reduction/ecosystem restoration activities, across the CLME+ region region, by 2019</p> <p>3. Increase of 50% of the number of women that are active members of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO), by end of 2019</p> <p>4. “P-SAP” document delivered by October 2019</p> <p>5. “P-SAP” adopted by at least 15 private sector organizations/partners (incl. direct participation in the implementation of SAP priority actions by at least 4 private sector partners, of which at least 2 multi-nationals, by end of 2019</p> <p>6. Direct participation in the implementation of SAP priority actions by at least 4 private sector partners, of which at least 2 multi-nationals, by end of 2019;</p> <p>7. Active private sector participation in SAP implementation in at least 5 CLME+ region countries, by end of 2019</p> <p>8. TORS and Workplan for Small Grants Coordination Mechanism developed by June 2018, with formal establishment of the Small Grants Mechanism by August 2019</p>
<p>Output 2.3 - Identification of good practices for data & information management (DIM), and of best available (innovative) technologies and tools, to support communication, awareness building (CAB)</p>	<p>1. Inventory of good practices for DIM/CAB/DM available by end of Project Inception Phase</p>		<p>1. Inventory of good practices for DIM/CAB/DM available by April 2019</p>

and decision-making (DM) processes	2. Innovative DIM/CAB/DM tools tested and results documented from at least 3 CLME+ region countries, by PMT		2. Innovative DIM/CAB/DM tools tested and results documented from at least 3 CLME+ region countries, by end of 2019
Output 2.4 - Overarching CLME+ region Communication Strategy	1a. First version of the Communications Strategy by end of PY1; 1b. By PMT, components of the (updated) Communications Strategy (“Sub-Strategies”) cover at least: communication arrangements among the CLME+ region Partnership; general awareness building among the broader CLME+ region stakeholder community; experience exchange with the global LME Practitioners Community	1. First version of the Communications Strategy by end of 2016;	1. By September 2018, components of the (updated) Communications Strategy (“Sub-Strategies”) cover at least: communication arrangements among the CLME+ region Partnership; general awareness building among the broader CLME+ region stakeholder community; experience exchange with the global LME Practitioners Community
Output 2.5 - Strategy for the training of selected stakeholders on issues of cross-cutting importance for the SAP Strategies.	1. Training Strategy document is developed by end of PY1		1. (Milestone) Establish Technical Task Team by end of August 2018. Portal established and online by July 2019. (Target B) Sustainability plan for portal available by December 2019 2 (Multi-lingual, where feasible) training materials made permanently available to CLME+ region stakeholders by July 2019
Output 2.6 - Targeted research strategies to address scientific demands from organizations dealing with fisheries and the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment	1. The Research Strategies will be expected to expand the knowledge base required to: (a) successfully implement the EAF approach in the CLME+ region; (b) support habitat protection and restoration efforts; (c) effectively reduce impacts from LBS pollution on key marine habitats. At least 1 regional Research Strategy developed, addressing the needs for at least 1 of the themes mentioned above, by end of PY2		1. The Research Strategies will be expected to expand the knowledge base required to: (a) successfully implement the EAF approach in the CLME+ region; (b) support habitat protection and restoration efforts; (c) effectively reduce impacts from LBS pollution on key marine habitats. Research Strategy addressing the themes mentioned above, developed by end of 2019;
Outputs 3.1 – 3.5	No MTR targets specified for this Component’s outputs	No MTR targets specified for this Component’s outputs ¹¹	No modifications with respect to Project Document
Output 4.1 - Pre-feasibility reports on			1. Feasibility Assessments/List of Investment Needs for Nutrients Reduction and Habitat Restoration to be completed by September 2019

¹¹ Component 3 includes 53 outputs and 112 targets/milestones

<p>major investment needs and opportunities (incl. budget estimates, scope of work, private sector involvement, potential benefits and required timescales)</p>	<p>1. At least 1 baseline & pre-feasibility report available by PMT. Proposed solutions are fully reflective of ecosystem values, climate change and gender considerations</p>		<p>2. Feasibility Assessment addressing the issue of unsustainable fisheries completed by end of June 2019</p>
<p>Output 4.2 Investment plans (incl. specifications for private sector and civil society involvement) to deal with key issues identified under the CLME TDAs</p>			<p>1. Investment Plans addressing Nutrients Reduction and Habitat Restoration completed by end of December 2019. Investment Plan addressing unsustainable fishing practices developed by end of December 2019</p> <p>2. Submission of the plans for endorsement to CLME+ region countries through the relevant IGOs by end of 2019</p> <p>3. At least USD 25 million committed by end of Project, to initiate implementation during 2020/2021</p> <p>4. Potential financing sources identified for at least 33% of the required budgets, by 2020</p> <p>5. Projected reduction at national/regional levels for key stressors: 15% and 30% within resp. the initial 5, and 10 years of implementation</p>
<p>Output 5.1 - Cooperation (incl. through formal and/or informal frameworks and partnerships) among development partners, programmes, projects, initiatives (PPIs) and countries/territories with a stake in the SAP (“CLME+ region SAP Partnership”)</p>	<p>1. Active involvement of min. 70% of CLME+ region countries in Project and SAP implementation, by PMT</p>	<p>1. Active involvement of min. 70% of CLME+ region countries in Project and SAP implementation, by end of 2017</p> <p>2. Active participation of at least 12 organizations with mandates highly relevant to the SAP, by end of 2017</p>	<p>1a. Involvement further up-scaled to 90% by 2019</p> <p>1b. Active involvement of min. 33% of CLME+ region overseas territories in Project & SAP implementation by end of 2019.</p> <p>2. Formal commitments from/active participation by major civil society and private sector partners: 13 by April 2019</p>

	<p>2a. Active participation of at least 12 organizations with mandates highly relevant¹² to the SAP, by PMT. 2b. Formal commitments from/active participation by major civil society and private sector partners; at least 8 by PMT</p> <p>3. at least 15% of identified PPIs are actively engaged in SAP implementation by end of 2017</p> <p>4. Coordination of PPIs towards SAP implementation results in a total “portfolio”/investment value of at least USD 180 million by PMT</p>	<p>3. At least 15% of identified PPIs are actively engaged in SAP implementation by end of 2017.</p> <p>4. Coordination of PPIs towards SAP implementation results in a total “portfolio”/investment value of at least USD 180 million by end of 2017</p>	<p>3. At least 30% of PPIs identified in database have been actively engaged in coordinated implementation of the SAP, by end of 2019</p> <p>4. Portfolio reaches USD 350 million by end of 2019</p>
<p>Output 5.2 - A prototype CLME+ region ecosystem status and SAP implementation M&E mechanism</p>	<p>1. CLME+ region indicator sets, monitoring approaches and/or protocols adopted (incl. assignment of long-term responsibilities) by at least 33% of the members of the “CLME+ region Partnership”, incl. all members of the interim SAP coordination mechanism, by PMT</p> <p>2. Table of Content for the “State of...CLME+ region” report and structure for the (network of) web portal(s) developed and adopted by all contributing parties (incl. all members of the interim SAP implementation coordination mechanism), by PMT</p>		<p>1. CLME+ region indicator sets, monitoring approaches and/or protocols adopted (incl. assignment of long-term responsibilities) by at least 33% of the members of the “CLME+ region Partnership”, incl. all members of the interim SAP coordination mechanism, by end of April 2019 and actively utilised by end of 2019.</p> <p>2. Table of Content for the “State of...CLME+ region” report and structure for the (network of) web portal(s) adopted by all contributing parties (incl. all members of the interim SAP implementation coordination mechanism), by end of 2018</p> <p>3. CLME+ region M&E Sustainability Plan approved and adopted by at least 60% of the key “State of...” contributors, by end of 2019; responsibilities of contributors aligned and compatible with contributors’ formal mandates under the RGF and/or recognized long-term roles in the region</p>

<p>Output 5.3 - Communication, twinning and knowledge exchange activities targeting the CLME+ region Partnership and global LME Community of Practice (COP).</p>	<p>1. Project website(s) with relevant content & functionality online by end of PY1</p>	<p>1. Project website(s) with relevant content & functionality online by end of first quarter 2017</p>	<p>1. Project after-life plan by end of 2019. 2. First “State of ……” report by at the latest end of 2019 3. Content developed & online for CLME+ region SOMEE and SAP M&E web portal(s) and first SOMEE report launched by the end of April 2020. 4. Active participation of CLME+ region in: 2 LME Conferences (2015-17-19); min. 3 LME Consultative Group Meetings; min. 2 LME: LEARN Twinning/exchanges; min. 2 regional LME: LEARN workshops 5. (Target A) Min. 3 Experience Notes on SAP implementation, and 4 on EBM/EAF in the CLME+ region 6. Min. 1% of CLME+ region GEF grant dedicated to IW: LEARN-related dissemination, twinning & exchange activities</p>
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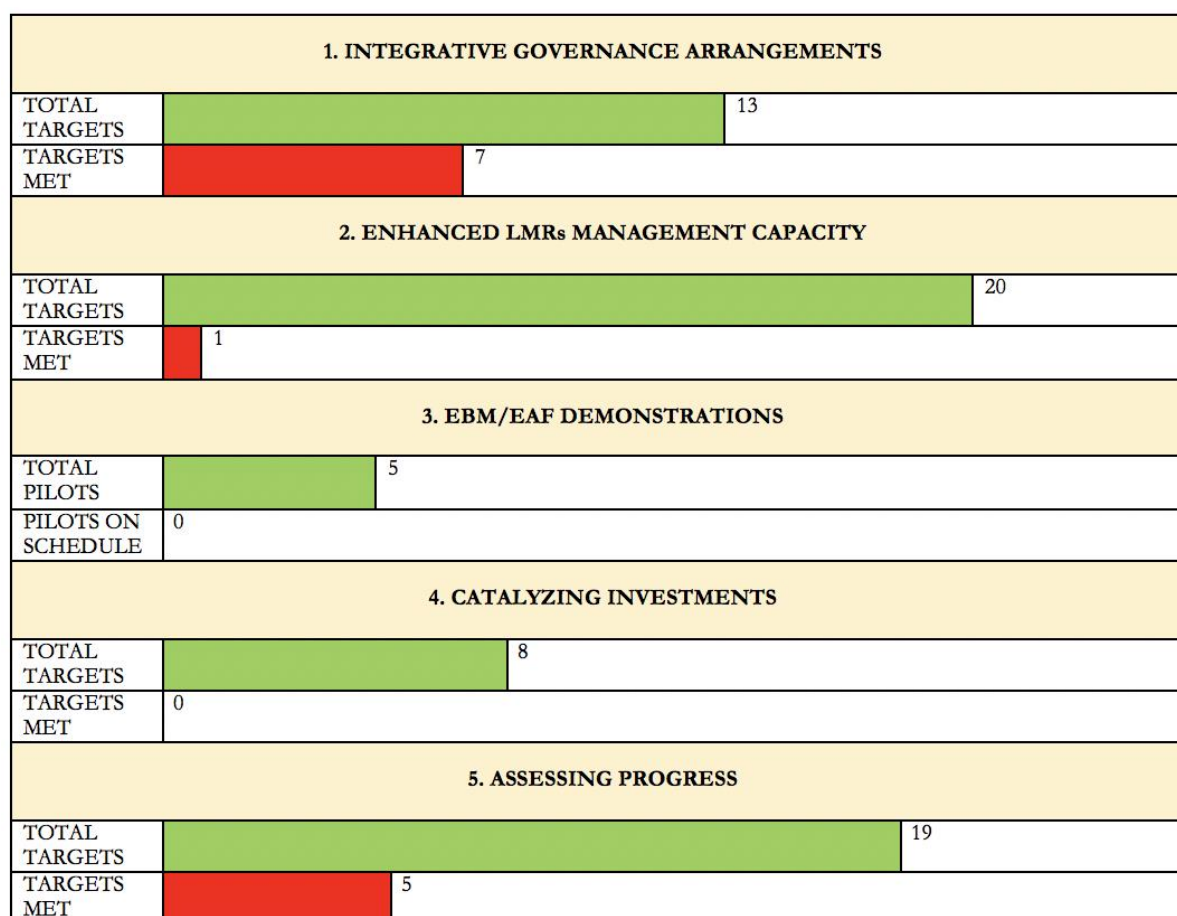


Figure 5: Achievements as of June 2018

Figure 5 visually summarizes the project's present achievements in terms of project targets met, and advancement of pilot sub-projects under Component 3. The emerging picture is one of alarmingly slow progress so far, with most of the delayed mid-term targets and all end of project targets to be achieved within little more than one-year time (December 2019).

On the other hand, it has to be noted that most activities are presently being reported to be rapidly advancing, now that most administrative and organizational issues seem to have been resolved.

Four outputs were however recognized by PEG members (May 2018) as at high risk:

- 2.2 Private Sector Action Program, P-SAP (PCU)
- 3.2 Shrimp and Groundfish Sub-project (FAO)
- 3.4 EBM (Caribbean) Sub-project (UN Env.)
- 5.2 SAP M&E and SOMEE (PCU)

Two of them (2.2 and 5.2), for which the PCU is responsible, are of the highest importance for the project overall success. The PCU considers that, whilst a P-SAP could be developed within the current timeframe of the project, it may result having decreased ownership by the private sector, and that a number of other P-SAP related targets outlined under the Project Document might not be achieved. As for the development of the State of the Environment and Associated Economies (SOMEE) reporting mechanism and the SAP M&E Framework, the PCU was unable to undertake an in-depth assessment due to unanticipated delays with recruitment

processes of the staff who would be working to deliver these outputs. In view of the above, the PCU recommended a no-cost extension of 4 months. To ensure the operation of the PCU during the extension period the cost involved would be around US\$ 175k, a cost which the PCU would be unable to cover with its present funds.

UN Env. recommended that the part of sub-project 3.4 related to the Caribbean EBM be dropped in view of similar work being funded by Italy, and the related funds redistributed to other outputs under its purview (2.1, contribution to 5.2)¹³. FAO assured that all activities of their sub-project will be completed as originally planned, with minor redistribution of funds amongst outputs. FAO however warned that since some activities are linked to LOAs with countries, it cannot take full responsibility for a timely delivery. In view, and in spite of this, the conclusion of both partners was that a no-cost extension was not warranted.

It is highly doubtful however that the delays accumulated during the first three years will be fully recovered without the additional extension that has been proposed by the PCU for decision of the Steering Committee, which moves the closure of co-executing agreements from December 2019 to April 2020, and the project closure from August 2020 to December 2020.

When considering the need for an extension, the SC members and the Implementing and Executing Agencies should consider not just the time strictly necessary for the various partners – in particular UN Environment and FAO WCAFC – to be able to complete their work, but also *the time needed by the countries to internalize project outputs which often require the countries' endorsement or adoption. In fact, without full buy-in from the countries the project outputs will remain on paper, and its achievements will not be sustainable.* During the last PEG meeting held prior to the SC meeting of June 2018, a partner observed that "...whilst activities can be completed within the current project timeline, buy-in from countries in relation to many outputs would not be achieved."

Any extension, beyond the four months already incorporated but not yet formally submitted for approval, will necessarily imply re-directing project resources to ensuring the continuation of the PCU operation, which is of paramount importance. This seems to have been so far an obstacle in taking the swift decision that the situation would require.

It is highly recommended to consider moving financial resources from budget lines of less critical importance, or activities at high risk of not delivering the expected results, like for example sub-project 3.4, to:

- Secure the continuing operation of the PCU, and
- Provide support to countries as they go through the internal processes needed to internalize project outputs in coordination with the national representatives of relevant IGOs.

¹³ The Steering Committee at its Panama meeting asked instead UN Environment to keep these funds as reserve in case co-funding will be needed for a project extension.

C. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION & ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) provides overall strategic policy and management direction for the project and plays a critical role in reviewing and approving the project planning & execution conducted by the PCU, the Executing Agency and the PEG members, reviewing project progress, making recommendations and adopting the (biennial) project work plans and budget. It meets three times during the project duration.

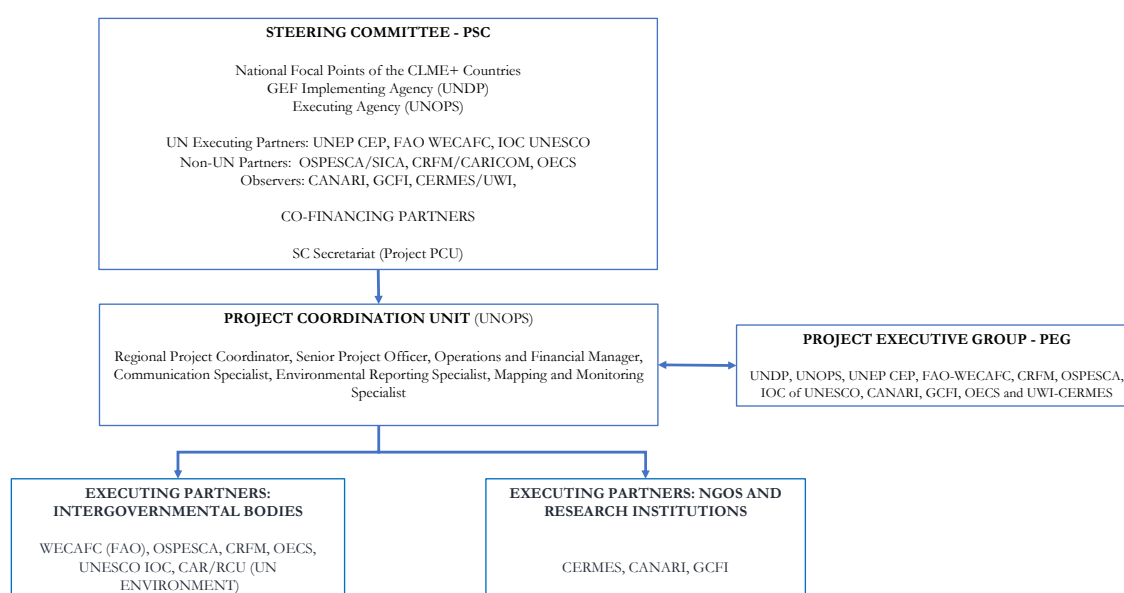


Figure 6: Institutional arrangements

The Project Executive Group (PEG), established during the project inception phase, is a coordination and problem-solving mechanism dealing with project execution issues throughout the project's duration, aiming at ensuring efficient and effective execution of the CLME+ region Project. The PEG meets physically (once every year) and via teleconference whenever needed. Many of the CLME+ region PEG members are part of the existing transboundary governance arrangements that currently support the management of shared living marine resources in the CLME+ region. These organizations constitute the basis for the Regional Governance Framework that the CLME+ region Project is striving to build. These PEG members are expected to lead in the future coordination of the implementation of the SAP. In fact, considering the formal, long-term mandate of these organizations, the SAP, and the project have recognized that coordinated implementation of the CLME+ region SAP needs to be anchored within and across these existing legal and institutional arrangements.

The Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and oversight of the CLME+ region Project. The PCU – with support from UNOPS WEC - is also

responsible for the project's financial and administrative management, for periodic reporting to the PEG and PSC, and for the (co)-execution of selected project activities.

A number of executing partners have been contracted for the execution of specific activities and the delivery of relevant outputs (see table). The same partners participated to the execution of the Foundational CLME project.

Table 6. Executing Partners

Acronym and Name	Field of Activity
CANARI - Caribbean Natural Resource Institute	Civil Society, Small grants
CRFM CARICOM - Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism - Caribbean Community and Common Market	Flyingfish fisheries
CERMES - Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies	EBM/EAF mainstreaming, NICs, M&E
FAO WECAF - Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations - Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission	Fisheries EAF/EBM, investment needs Shrimp and Groundfish fisheries
GCFI - Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute	Research Strategies
IOC UNESCO - Sub-commission for the Caribbean Sea and Adjacent Regions	Training
OECS - Organization of Eastern Caribbean States	Communication, environmental reporting, legal agreements, NICs
OSPESCA - Organization of the Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector	Spiny lobster fisheries
UNEP CEP - United Nations Environment Programme Caribbean Environment Programme	Cartagena Convention, LBS, protected areas, marine habitats, investment needs, EBM sub-project NBSLME

These arrangements follow what established in the Project Document, have been maintained throughout the first three years of the project, and will not be modified until project completion.

Of particular interest is the PEG, an innovation introduced by the project in order to more effectively manage and coordinate the large number of executing partners that are involved in the project and do so in a participatory manner. At the same time the PEG allows monitoring of progress and addressing issues of concern that have arisen during execution. This management tool is particularly tailored to the specificity of the project and recognizes the double role played by the partners: at the same time responsible for the execution of project activities and actors in the present framework of the governance of the CLME+ region.

The GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) appears to have well developed its role by providing support to the EA and its PCU in the early organizational stages of the project, in following closely project implementation and, as part of the Steering Committee, maintaining focus on the expected results, and on timely delivery of outputs. The Executing Agency, UNOPS, has established and staffed the PCU, that is the main actor in project management, which is

performing at very high standards in the double role of overall coordination and executor of a number of highly relevant activities.

The EA head offices have candidly recognized their – albeit limited - share of responsibility for the initial delays and have strived to improve their performance since.

WORK PLANNING

As stated in the previous chapters, the project suffered serious delays during the first year of implementation, mainly due to administrative hurdles, staffing of the PCU and the time-consuming processes for reaching agreements with the numerous executing partners (one, with UNESCO, still to be signed). Delays continued during the second and third years, as the various partners, in particular UN Environment CEP and FAO WECAFC, encountered organizational and staffing problems. The reason for the delays are the changes in administrative procedures for the hiring of project staff. Moreover, this overall slow pace in the execution of project components seem to be also due to the complexity of the project, with almost every output requiring ad hoc arrangements involving different stakeholders. However, it is to be noted that at the completion of the current evaluation, FAO WECAFC had a project coordinator hired and in place, which will hopefully accelerate the project implementation and delivery.

The PCU has monitored progress towards results, noted the delays in the delivery of many critical outputs, provided its support to the various executing partners, proposed amendments to the Results Framework as delays in meeting the outputs and outcomes targets accumulated, including canceling most mid-term targets (see Table 5: Evolution of mid-term targets and milestones). Through the PEG the IA and all partners were made conscious of the problem, and agreement was reached early on to incorporate a first 4 months no-cost extension, which was however, and quite correctly, not brought for decision at the SC 2016 Meeting, since rules allow only one extension, and the need for a longer one was already apparent at that time to the Project Coordinator. This second extension is now being debated, and a decision will be taken by the SC later this year, based on the progress, or lack thereof, made at that time on the delivery of key outputs.

FINANCE AND CO-FINANCE

Financial control over project resources has been effective in providing in a timely manner to the PCU and the SC the data concerning (i) the flow of funds, (ii) the state of payments of satisfactory deliverables, as well as of (iii) the state of fulfillment of co-financing commitments.

The current situation of disbursements reflects the mid-term stage of the project, with 47% of the project budget being spent by the PCU or transferred to the executing partners.

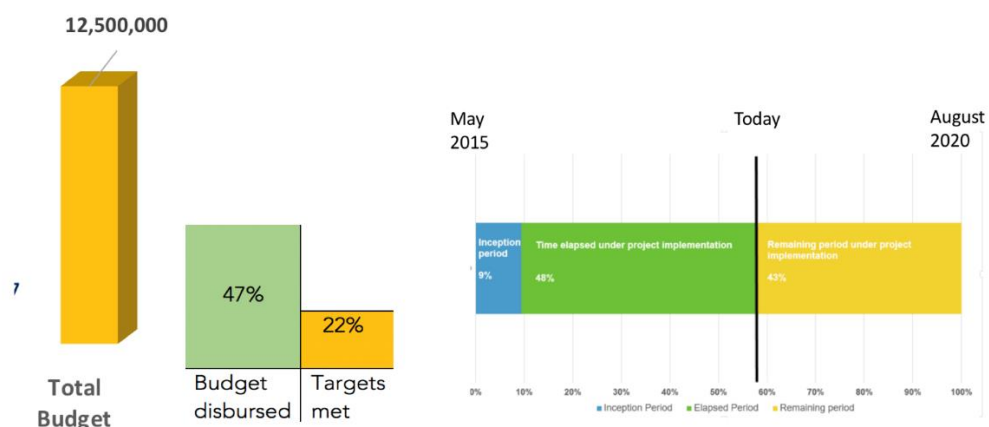


Figure 7: Implementation of GEF funds

Co-execution agreement	Total funds committed to partners	Transferred to partners	Spent by partners	Spent / total	Spent / transferred
CANARI	350,000	241,500	166,005	47%	69%
CERMES	235,000	164,500	98,366	42%	60%
CRFM	1,157,308	672,780	363,606	31%	54%
FAO	1,352,400	500,000	150,000	11%	30%
GCFI	140,000	80,500	36,857	26%	84%
OECS	160,000	108,750	22,930	14%	21%
OSPESCA	960,000	613,188	466,364	49%	76%
UN Env.	1,365,000	1,035,870	297,719	22%	29%
UNESCO IOC	125,000	0	0	0%	0%
Total	5,844,708	3,417,088	1,601,847	27%	47%

Table 7: Expenditure Level of Executing Partners (as of June 2018)

Personnel	1,223,000
UNOPS fees	240,000
Travels and Events	232,000
SC and PEG Meetings	162,000
Office costs	71,000
Consultancies	47,000
Communication	46,000
Total	2,021,000

Table 8. PCU Expenditures (as of June 2018)

Approximately 50% of the project total budget has been allocated to partners based on Co-Execution Agreements. Only 27% of the amount allocated to partners has been so far spent

(Table 7), a clear evidence of the excessively slow progress made during the first three years of the project. It has to be noted that this less than satisfactory progress is largely due to the lack of delivery from the two major partners: UN Environment and FAO, that together account for 22% of the total project budget. Expenditures levels of the PCU (Table 8) are instead consistent with the project timeline.

Remaining funds not yet committed as of June 2018 amount to approximately \$4,6 million. This amount is destined to cover costs of:

- PCU staff until the presently foreseen end of the project in August 2020 (33%);
- consultancies and contracts related to outputs 1.1 (PPCM), 2.2 (PSAP), 5.2 (SOMEE) and to M&E activities (24%);
- organization of events and meetings (26%);
- Office costs, travel and communication (10%)
- UNOPS fees (7%)

Co-financing

Data on co-financing from Executing Partners is collected regularly. They show a positive trend, with 61% of the total already delivered (Table 9), a trend though which does not seem to be consistent with the low rate of implementation progress, in particular from major partners. Data on co-financing from recipient countries were limited, and information from other sources was not available¹⁴.

Co-financing partner	Initial commitment	At Mid-term	
		Cash	In kind
UN Environment	2,000	609	660
CRFM	18,232	0	17,149
OSPESCA	3,101	0	0
CANARI	1,239	0	3
OECS	240	0	0
GCFI	1,508	0	126
CERMES	652	0	8
FAO	3,575	0	0
total	30,547	609	17,946
Beneficiary Country	Initial commitment	At Mid-term	
		Cash	In kind
Barbados	5,883	0	3,000
Belize	625	0	625
Colombia	16,874	0	13,363
Panama	1,922	0	237
Saint Lucia	1,421	870	474
St Kitts and Nevis	21,178	0	21,178
St Vincent and the Grenadines	1,500	0	1,500
Trinidad	973	250	384
total	50,386	1,120	40,761

Table 9. Reported Co-financing, by October 2018 (1000 USD)

¹⁴ The co-financing IOC of UNESCO contribution is not reported in the table. As per the co-financing letter IOC of UNESCO is providing co-financing in-kind (already delivered > 40%) and in-cash (180,000 delivered).

PROJECT-LEVEL MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEMS

The quality of the M&E plan implementation is high, and adequately funded. It appears to have represented a valid support to project management. In particular the PIRs and the PEG meeting reports and preparatory documents, as well as the SC documentation, can be considered best practice: they are complete, factual, and the result of a thorough participatory process. These M&E tools were instrumental in supporting the adaptive management that has been key for the progress of the project notwithstanding the many obstacles.

COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Participation in project design and execution, and stakeholder engagement have been and continue to be a constant characteristic of the CLME+ region project. Stakeholders engagement occurs at two main levels:

- at the overall project level, with the PCU and the IA effectively dialoguing with all major regional IGOs secretariats and governing bodies, NGOs and CSOs, as part of project management processes (PEG, SC) and through participation to regional events. Less successful appears however to have been so far the involvement of national representatives and stakeholders in project activities and decision making.
- at the level of each single project activity, always including in their design an essential role for beneficiaries and relevant national and regional bodies and stakeholders.

Communication flow however, while efficient with and amongst executing partners, has not been apparently as effective in disseminating information to countries' focal points and national representatives in IGOs (WECAFC, OSPESCA, CRFM...), and in promoting exchanges within countries among the different sectors involved, both where NICs are present, and in the absence of NICs.

This apparent lack of an adequate information flow with and within countries, might hinder the internalization of the legislative, policy and institutional reforms submitted for consideration through the project, and jeopardize the reaching of the desired outcomes.

Table 10. Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements	S
Work Planning	S
Finance and Co-Finance	S
Monitoring and Evaluation Systems	HS
Stakeholders Engagement	MS
Communication	U
Overall Implementation g& Adaptive Management Rating	S

D. SUSTAINABILITY

Countries sharing the CLME and NBSLME, aware of the severity of the anthropogenic stresses on their marine environmental resources resulting in over-exploited and collapsing fish stocks and loss of highly valuable ecosystem services, and recognizing the interdependence between human well-being and ecosystem health and the need to maintain ecosystems productivity for present and future generations, have committed through the SAP to reverse fisheries degradation trends by adopting region-wide integrative ecosystem based governance approaches blending enhanced protection of marine ecosystems and more sustainable fisheries practices: the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries¹⁵.

The CLME+ region project strives to facilitate this major reform in regional environmental and fisheries management through the implementation of selected SAP actions aimed at setting the scene for the long-term systematic SAP implementation. These actions can be summarized as follows:

1. Introducing interim governance coordination mechanisms embracing both LMEs aimed at overcoming the high fragmentation of environmental and fisheries governance frameworks, and at ensuring consistency and overall coordination in the long-term implementation of the SAP;
2. Providing countries with the necessary policy and communication tools to enable transition to EBM/EAF;
3. Piloting the implementation of EAF/EBM in four fisheries of primary importance and under threat;
4. Identifying financial needs and harnessing financial support for full SAP implementation;
5. Providing countries and regional organizations with the methodology and means for monitoring progress and impacts.

The long term success of the project will be determined by (1) the level of adoption by both countries and regional IGOs of the regional governance coordination mechanisms and environment/fisheries management approaches promoted by the project, consistently with the SAP; (2) the scope eventually agreed upon by countries and IGOs for these new governance coordination mechanisms and management approaches, (3) the internalization in countries' policy frameworks and in IGOs mandates of the policy tools developed by the project; (4) the securing of financial resources for sustaining the regional governance frameworks and for SAP investments; (5) the reaching of agreement among countries and IGOs on the adoption of regionally harmonized monitoring protocols of progress and impacts.

Clearly, all these factors lie beyond the control of the project as they involve decisions to be taken by the governments and legislative bodies of the sovereign countries and of the territories that share the two LMEs, and by the governing bodies of relevant IGOs. Eventually - as is the

¹⁵ The Project Document always refers to EBM/EAF, apparently considering Ecosystem Based Management as synonymous of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, defined by FAO 2003 as: "An approach that strives to balance diverse societal objectives, taking account of the knowledge and uncertainties about biotic, abiotic and human components of ecosystems and their interactions and applying an integrated approach to fisheries within ecologically meaningful boundaries".

case in all projects promoting legal, institutional and policy reforms - the final responsibility for the achievement and sustainability of all project outcomes lies with the countries.

The likelihood of sustainability of the CLME+ region project outcomes is however also a function of the effectiveness of project design and implementation, of the correct identification of risks and assumptions, and of the ability of the project management bodies (primarily the Steering Committee, and the PCU) to maintaining focus, within the plethora of outputs and targets, on the key objectives and deliverables.

Given the slow delivery rate that has so far characterized project implementation, elements available at mid-term for assessing the likelihood of the long-term sustainability of project achievements are scarce. The following evaluation of sustainability will hence be based mostly on a review of the project design, on statements by interviewees, on what achieved so far (mid-term targets), and on the likely effectiveness of the slow-delivery mitigation measures being presently debated.

Table 11. Ratings for Sustainability

Elements of sustainability	Rating	Justification
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	ML	Component 1 of the project includes the development of Sustainable Financing Plans for the continuing operation of the newly established regional governance structures and tools (PPCM, RGF). Activities under this line however have not yet been completed. Strong involvement of relevant regional IGOs in project execution, and the growing number of countries endorsing the SAP bode well for their continuing support after project completion.
SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	MU	The perceived limited involvement of national bodies in project execution and the less than satisfactory flow of information to and within countries, might jeopardize the reaching of the critical level of country ownership necessary for the adoption and long-term sustainability of the SAP reforms that the project is striving to promote.
INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND GOVERNANCE SUSTAINABILITY	L	Under Component 1 the project has put in place Interim Coordination Mechanisms with the full support of countries and IGOs. Future sustainability will depend on their demonstrated effectiveness in the interim phase, leading to a transition to permanent bodies such as the Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism.
	L	No environmental risks have been identified in project design, other than climatic variability and change that may have negative impacts on coastal

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY		zones and shallow marine fisheries resources. Adoption of the EAF would mitigate the impacts of climatic extremes.
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Table 12. Ratings & Achievements Summary Table for CLME+ region

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievements description
Progress towards results	Objective: MS	The few achievements detectable at mid-term show encouraging progress towards coordinated regional governance systems
	Outcome 1: S	The mid-term situation shows signs of increased delivery and growing country commitment (establishment of Interim Regional Governance Frameworks) which bode well for a fully successful achievement of the outcome if the time needed for countries to internalize recommended policy and institutional reforms will be fully considered.
	Outcome 2: MU	None of the mid-term targets has been achieved at the time of the MTR, with the exclusion of the first version of the Communication Strategy. It is highly questionable whether all targets will be met by the presently planned project end date.
	Outcome 3: MS	While 3 out of the 4 sub-projects appear to be slowly progressing towards end of project targets achievement, one is in part (EBM Caribbean) likely going to be dropped because of duplication with other ongoing initiatives.
	Outcome 4: U	No activities reported under this outcome.
	Outcome 5: MS	Some of the mid-term targets have been met, and all arrangements seem to be in place for a swift completion of activities related to the monitoring of SAP implementation and of progress to impacts.
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management	S	All management systems are in place and appear effective, with the exception of communication and KM, possibly suffering from delays in the staffing of the PCU.

Sustainability	ML	While there are evidences of country and IGOs growing commitment, the slow delivery of the Sustainable Financing Plan might jeopardize financial sustainability of achieved outcomes.
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3.4 Conclusions & Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

There is general consensus among all countries and territories sharing the CLME and NBSLME on the need and urgency of initiating the implementation of the SAP, now endorsed by 25 countries and 6 overseas territories. The 2018 Steering Committee concluded that notwithstanding the complexity and diversity of the CLME+ project and the region, multi country cooperation in the application of EBM/EAF is crucial for the continuing health of the transboundary living marine resources of the two LMEs.

The CLME+ project responds to this urgent need of transboundary cooperation, is timely and highly relevant for the environmentally sustainable development of the region. Its design and execution arrangements reflect the unavoidable complexity and ambitiousness of the endeavor, with execution responsibilities distributed across numerous partners, all of them at the same time executors of project activities, and major actors within the context of LMRs governance in the region. The Results Framework - possibly excessively detailed in terms of the number of outputs, indicators and targets, and often adopting confusing formulations of outcomes and indicators – describes notwithstanding a well-conceived overall architecture and intervention logic. So far, no need for major changes to the original design has emerged in PEG discussions or SC Meetings.

After three years of project life, some interlinked factors that might jeopardize the achievement of the project’s outcomes and the expected acceleration in SAP implementation, have been detected.

Delays in implementation

First and foremost, the initial delays, due to administrative, staffing and organizational hurdles at the level of the Executing Agency and of the several executing partners, that have dramatically affected progress during the first two years of implementation. In response to these delays the PCU and the co-executing partners have reacted by “informally” adopting a four months no-cost extension, speeding up activities and output delivery, and intensifying monitoring of progress. Only a small fraction of the originally planned mid-term targets have been however so far met. It is the MTE’s conclusion that even considering the mitigation measures being undertaken, the remaining time is not sufficient to ensure a successful conclusion of the project and, most importantly, the sustainability of its outcomes. Without an additional substantial extension, the project may fail.

Future sustainability

The sustainability of the project outcomes, that is of the legal, institutional and policy reforms at the regional and national levels that the SAP is calling for, depends primarily on the adoption and internalization of a number of the outputs produced by the project by countries and IGOs. The project will facilitate the decision-making processes by providing the technical basis, and the available options for the national governments and IGOs governing bodies to decide upon. The final decision lies with the countries. This country “buy in” process, involving national institutions and their representatives in the governing bodies of relevant intergovernmental organizations, will require time and the support and facilitation of the project. Without it, the project outputs might remain on paper, and no significant improvement will have been produced. At present, and surprisingly, major co-executing partners appear to have placed little consideration on this key project need, and do not consider a further extension of the project duration warranted.

Country ownership

Country ownership of the project and of its products is hence of paramount importance. So far, the responsibility to deliver most outputs has been of the IGOs executing partners - in particular FAO WECAFC, UN Environment CEP, CRFM, OSPESCA - and the PCU. In fact, apart from the sub-projects of Component 3, none of the project activities is being executed by national entities.¹⁶ To ensure country ownership, such execution arrangements would require:

- (i) clarity with respect to the roles of, and relationships among the several national actors: country representatives in the governing bodies of IGOs, project and sub-project national focal points, national inter-ministerial committees or equivalent bodies, GEF Operational Focal Points;
- (ii) the systematic dissemination of project’s information to and within the countries through effective mechanisms of communication;
- (iii) the allocation of resources in terms of time and financial means to the facilitation of the decisional processes at the national and regional levels.

These elements – albeit present in some form in project design – do not appear to have been so far developed to the level of effectiveness that the complexity of the project would have required, thus hindering project implementation and likely going to affect future decisional processes on the reforms proposed by the project consistently with the priority actions agreed upon by the countries in the SAP.

An example of the need for a strengthened role of countries – the signatories of the SAP, will be the forthcoming WECAFC session, when the Commission will take position on the move to a Regional Fisheries Management Organization, and on its sphere of jurisdiction (EEZ Vs ANBJ): a most critical decision that would require country representatives in FAO WECAFC to convey the national position, developed through in-country consultations and ensuring consistency with the SAP commitments to preserve sustainability of the near shore transboundary fisheries which are at risk and of the highest value.

¹⁶ This was a strategic project design choice that, coherently with the approach taken in the foundational CLME project, entrusts regional IGOs with the formulation of many of the plans, strategies, reforms and governance mechanisms and tools called for by the SAP, and with their approval/adoption through their governance bodies and processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The need for an extension is presently being debated and a decision by the Steering Committee is expected by early 2019. It is the opinion of the MTE that, notwithstanding the commitment to speed up implementation that the executing partners have taken at the Mid-term Steering Committee in Panama, without a substantial extension the project is at risk.

The amount in terms of months needed to ensure a successful project completion should be carefully estimated considering both the time needed to complete the foreseen activities, and the time to be dedicated to the facilitation of the approval/endorsement processes of the project proposed reforms by countries and IGOs. It is the MTE conclusion that such extension should exceed the four months presently being hypothesized, and be in the order of 12 months. The extra costs related to the operation of the PCU during the extension and to the facilitation of in-country decisional processes¹⁷, will have to be covered by re-distributing funds from activities at risk (e.g.: 3.4) or considered of lesser importance. Given the fact that approximately \$8m of GEF project funds have still to be spent, covering these critical costs should not represent a problem.

The recommended extension represents the main, but not the only measure that the SC should consider for adoption. Other important measures should also be taken into consideration.

- Even accounting for an extension, there needs to be a substantial acceleration in delivery from all actors, starting from the UNOPS Headquarters to the PCU and all Executing Partners, in particular FAO and UN Environment¹⁸ - without prejudice for the quality of the results of their work. The recommendation of the MTE is for executing partners to give priority to the achievement of outcomes, and focus on the critical targets listed in Table 13.
- From now on, the countries, with the support of the PCU, will have to take the lead through their National Focal Points for the project and for partner IGOs (WECAFC, CRFM, OSPESCA, UN Env. CEP, OECS). The decision-making processes, and the future of SAP implementation are in their hands. To make this possible, a priority will be putting in place effective communication mechanisms to, from and within the countries, streamlined and implemented according to ad hoc protocols.

¹⁷ These facilitation activities may consist in ad hoc presentations to decision makers, missions to countries of PCU staff, communication materials etc.

¹⁸ There has been some suggestion of a possible change of co-executing partners. On this regard it has to be pointed out that the CLME+ Project is to be seen as an instrument for the advancement of several of core Actions/components of the CLME+ SAP calling for the consolidation of the multi-level Regional Framework for Ocean Governance. This requires working with and through the organizations that have received a formal mandate from the countries on ocean governance. These organizations have therefore been engaged in the project design as co-executing partners, with co-executing responsibilities in full alignment with the mandate they received from the CLME+ countries. A change of co-executing partners would go against the overarching SAP objectives and the achievement of the outcomes of the CLME+ SAP.

- As recommended by the TE of the foundational CLME project, broadening the partnership to include multilateral development banks (CAF, CDB, IDB, The World Bank) and other potential multilateral and bilateral donors, is essential for long-term SAP implementation. Dialogue with these critical potential partners has not happened yet. The MTE reiterates the recommendation to seek the involvement of development banks and other major donors: this dialogue could be part of the definition of the SAP Investment Plans yet to be developed under Component 4.
- Alternative livelihoods for fisherfolks: in addition to what already foreseen in the Project Document, it is the opinion of the MTE that greater attention should be given to investments in the creation and promotion of alternative livelihoods for fisherfolks.
- Gender consideration has been so far perfunctory, and its importance apparently underestimated. Efforts should be made to strengthen the project approach to gender mainstreaming, particularly in consideration of the importance of women in fishing communities, and their potential roles in fostering alternative livelihoods approaches, and as stewards of coastal habitats.
- The CLME+ project, as well as its predecessor foundational CLME project, in their quest for the long-term sustainability of the living marine resources of the region have been pioneering the integration of two so far distinct – albeit interlinked – approaches to sustainable development: the protection of marine environment from land-based pollution and habitat degradation, and the management of fisheries resources. This integration is being promoted through the adoption of EBM/EAF in the highly transboundary context of the CLME and NBSLME. This worthwhile and innovative effort, supported by the countries sharing the two LMEs through the SAP, should be further expanded by fully embracing the “source to sea” approach to governance of the two LMEs, bringing in the coastal zone into the Cartagena Convention framework.

OUTCOME 1: REGIONAL GOVERNANCE
Consensus reached among CLME ⁺ countries and IGOs on the creation of an interim coordination mechanism for sustainable fisheries, leading to a permanent, inclusive and sustainably financed policy coordination mechanism for ecosystem-based fisheries management.
OUTCOME 2: THE POLICIES & TOOLS
The Regional Strategies and Action Plans to combat IUU, protect key marine habitats, and reduce nutrient loads, developed and submitted to the relevant IGOs (WECAFC, Cartagena Convention COPs) for adoption.
The Communications Strategy covering the communication arrangements with and within countries, and across the whole CLME ⁺ Partnership, developed and implemented.
OUTCOME 4 INVESTMENT NEEDS
Investment needs identified, and investment plans developed addressing both LMEs and targeting:

- Habitat protection/restoration
- Pollution prevention/mitigation
- Sustainable fisheries
- **Alternative livelihoods**

OUTCOME 5: MONITORING PROGRESS

Outline and structure of the baseline report on the “State of...CLME⁺”, and the CLME⁺ indicator sets, monitoring approaches and/or protocols, developed and submitted for endorsement by all countries and members of the interim SAP implementation coordination mechanism.

Table 13. Priority project targets

ANNEX: PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS MATRIX

PROJECT STRATEGY	INDICATORS	BASELINE LEVEL	LEVEL IN 1ST PIR	MIDTERM TARGET	END OF PROJECT TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	JUSTIFICATION FOR RATING
<p>Objective: Facilitating EBM/EAF in the CLME+ region for the sustainable and climate-resilient provision of goods and services from shared living marine resources, in line with the endorsed CLME+ region SAP</p>	NA	Fragmentation of governance frameworks hinders adoption of EAF/EBM region-wide.	Substantial progress (estimated as ranging between 15-20%) was obtained for Outcomes 1, 2 and 5.	NA	Newly established comprehensive Regional Governance Frameworks ensure the coordinated transition to ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management.	MS	The few achievements detectable at mid-term show encouraging progress towards coordinated regional governance systems.
PROJECT STRATEGY	INDICATORS	BASELINE LEVEL	LEVEL IN 1ST PIR	MIDTERM TARGET	END OF PROJECT TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	JUSTIFICATION FOR RATING
<p>Outcome 1 Integrative governance arrangements for sustainable fisheries and for the protection of the marine environment</p>	Solid transboundary and cross-sectoral governance arrangements in place	Substantial gaps & weaknesses in governance arrangements identified under the CLME Project (GEF ID 1032)	<p>Efforts were undertaken by UNEP-CEP and the Government of Brazil to work towards a formal agreement in time for the COP 14 planned for early 2017.</p> <p>The MOU to formalize the establishment of the Interim</p>	<p>Formal agreement between Brazil and the Cartagena Convention Secretariat</p> <p>Roadmap for collaborative action on SPAW and LBS available</p> <p>Feasibility analysis of different region-wide governance arrangements for sustainable fisheries.</p>	Multi-level, nested Regional Governance Framework for sLMR in place, in-line with the endorsed CLME+ region SAP, and with associated sustainable financing plan	S	Initial delays and the complexity of the project context have hindered, so far, the achievement of planned targets according to the initial schedule. The mid-term situation however shows very positive signs of

			<p>Coordination Mechanism for Sustainable Fisheries was signed by three Regional Fisheries Bodies: CRFM, OSPESCA and WECAFC-FAO, in January 2016.</p> <p>The baseline analysis of NIC mechanisms within the CLME+ region was completed in February 2016.</p>	<p>Interim mechanism to support coordinated SAP implementation, established.</p> <p>Completed baseline analysis of NIC mechanisms, including identification of good practices.</p> <p>Strategy to support the mainstreaming of EBM/EAF concept.</p> <p>MoUs and protocols to facilitate access to/exchange of national and (sub)regional data sets developed and adopted by at least 40% of the relevant CLME+ region partner organizations, by PMT.</p> <p>Sustainable financing plan (proposal), incl. evaluation and comparison of options, to be delivered by end of PY3.</p>			<p>increased delivery and growing country commitment which bode well for a fully successful achievement of the outcome. Project time remaining however does not ensure that all targets will be met by the present project end date, in particular if the time needed for countries to internalize recommended policy and institutional reforms is taken into consideration.</p>
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PROJECT STRATEGY	INDICATORS	BASELINE LEVEL	LEVEL IN 1ST PIR	MIDTERM TARGET	END OF PROJECT TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	JUSTIFICATION FOR RATING
<p>Outcome 2 Enhanced institutional and stakeholder capacity for sLMR management at regional, sub-regional, national and local levels (with special attention to regional and sub-regional organizations with key roles in SAP implementation)</p>	<p>Capacity to sustainably govern the sLMR of the CLME+ region, to the benefit of the people of the region and beyond</p>	<p>Weak human and institutional capacity, insufficient (access to) data and knowledge bases, lack of awareness, and lack of stakeholder participation were identified as root causes of environmental degradation under the CLME TDAs Governance assessments further pointed to dysfunctional policy cycles; linkages between science and decision-making often not operational or insufficiently used; weak implementation capacity; weak M&E Many efforts ongoing in the region, but insufficiently coordinated; lack</p>	<p>It was estimated that the project had advanced approximately 15% in achieving end-of-project target.</p> <p>A draft Communications Strategy outline was available for review by the Project Coordination Unit and project partners at the time of submission of this PIR.</p> <p>The IAA between UNEP and UNOPS regarding the implementation by UNEP- CEP of a number of the activities under the CLME+ region Project, including the development of Regional</p>	<p>Regional Strategy and Action Plan against IUU developed, and approved at the 16th WECAFC Session in 2016;</p> <p>Model National Plans of Action against IUU developed and disseminated among CLME+ region countries by PMT.</p> <p>Regional Strategy and Action Plan for key marine habitats covers at least 50% of CLME+ region countries, by end of PY3.</p> <p>Regional Action Plan for reducing nutrient loads covers at least 30% of CLME+ region countries and is adopted at the latest by LBS STAC 4 (2018).</p> <p>C-SAP document delivered and adopted by at least 8 CBO/FFO organizations, together with Small Grants</p>	<p>Enhanced sLMR management capacity for: (Target A) all 3 priority problems identified under the TDAs, and with due consideration of the issue of climate change; (Target B) full policy cycle implementation; achieved among: (Target C) governmental, civil society and private sector stakeholders; incl. better (use of) support from academia; at: (Target D) regional, sub-regional and national levels;</p>	<p>MU</p>	<p>None of the mid-term targets has been achieved at the time of the MTR, with the exclusion of the first version of the Communication Strategy.</p> <p>Although signs of increased delivery rate are evident, it is highly questionable whether all targets will be met by the presently planned project end date.</p>

		of over-arching strategy/plan	Strategies and Action Plans for (a) key marine habitats and (b) reducing nutrient loads was finalized during the first year of the project.	<p>coordination mechanism, by PMT.</p> <p>Increase of resp. 30% and 50% of the number of women that are active members of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO), by PMT.</p> <p>“P-SAP” document delivered by Project Month 28.</p> <p>“P-SAP” adopted by at least 15 private sector organizations/partners (incl. at least 3 with regional-level impacts), by end of PY3.</p> <p>Inventory of good practices for DIM/CAB/DM available by end of Project Inception Phase.</p> <p>Innovative DIM/CAB/DM tools tested and results documented from at least 3 CLME+ region countries, by PMT.</p> <p>First version of the Communications Strategy by end of PY1.</p>		
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				<p>By PMT, components of the (updated) Communications Strategy (“Sub-Strategies”) cover at least: communication arrangements among the CLME+ region Partnership; general awareness building among the broader CLME+ region stakeholder community; experience exchange with the global LME Practitioners Community.</p> <p>Training Strategy document is developed by end of PY1</p> <p>At least 1 regional Research Strategy developed, addressing the needs for at least 1 of the themes mentioned above, by end of PY2.</p>			
PROJECT STRATEGY	INDICATORS	BASELINE LEVEL	LEVEL IN 1ST PIR	MIDTERM TARGET	END OF PROJECT TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	JUSTIFICATION FOR RATING
Outcome 3 Progressive reduction of environmental stresses, and enhancement of	Transition towards the implementation of EAF in the CLME+ region (sustainable and	In many parts of the region, considerable efforts have already been made or are currently ongoing	During the first year of the CLME+ region Project, attention was focused on negotiating and	No clear mid-term targets specified in the Project Document for the Sub-Projects of Component 3.	Across 3 fishery ecosystem types and involving at least 70% of CLME+ region countries, measurable progress	MS	While 3 out of the 4 sub-projects appear to be progressing towards end of project targets

<p>livelihoods demonstrated, across the thematic and geographical scope of the CLME+ region SAP</p>	<p>climate- resilient fisheries)</p> <p>Transition towards the implementation of EBM, demonstrated in the CLME and NBSLME at different levels and spatial scales</p>	<p>to deal with the priority environmental problems and -up to a certain extent- their associated root causes. In spite of this, many gaps remain to be filled if within the next 10 years substantial progress towards effective implementation of EBM/EAF is to be achieved.</p>	<p>finalizing the agreements, between the project implementing partner, UNOPS, and CLME+ region Project Partners responsible for the execution of Component 3. By 30 June 2016, the following agreements were finalized:</p> <p>UNOPS- CRFM MOA: to support the transition to an ecosystem approach for the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish fisheries -</p> <p>UNOPS - UNEP (CEP) IAA to support a transition to an Ecosystem-based management approach.</p> <p>UNOPS- OSPESCA MOA: to</p>		<p>for the first 3 elements of the Governance Effectiveness Assessment Framework (GEAF): governance arrangements in place, processes operational, and stakeholders involved, for at least 3 priority fisheries under the SAP.</p> <p>Medium to long-term targets established through interactive governance, and measurable intermediate progress for the GEAF element: fish stock stress reduction (IUU, harvest limitations (seasons areas species size), fleet capacity, harmful fishing practices, alternatives, human health & social justice), for at least 3 priority fisheries under the SAP.</p>		<p>achievement, one are lagging behind and might be dropped due to duplication of other ongoing initiatives.</p>
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			<p>support the transition to an ecosystem approach for the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fisheries.</p> <p>During the reporting period the CLME+ region region made advances towards adopting harmonized management measures for the Spiny Lobster Fishery.</p>		<p>Medium to long-term targets established through interactive governance, and measurable progress for: socially just outcomes, and improved human well-being for at least 2 of the fishery ecosystem types.</p> <p>In both the CLME and NBSLME, covering the ecosystem types “coral reefs and associated systems and continental shelf” and involving at least 5 countries: measurable progress at the intervention site level, for the first 3 elements of the GEAF: arrangements in place; processes operational; and stakeholders involved.</p> <p>Medium to long-term targets established through interactive governance, and measurable</p>		
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PROJECT STRATEGY	INDICATORS	BASELINE LEVEL	LEVEL IN 1ST PIR	MIDTERM TARGET	END OF PROJECT TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	JUSTIFICATION FOR RATING
					<p>intermediate progress for: stress reduction (habitat loss/degradation, community modification (invasive, over-fishing), pollution inputs) at least 2 intervention sites.</p> <p>Medium to long-term targets established and measurable progress for: socially just outcomes, and improved human well-being, at at least 2 intervention sites.</p>		
<p>Outcome 4 Financing catalyzed for the up-scaling of priority actions for the protection of the marine environment and for ensuring sustainable, climate-resilient livelihoods and socio-economic development from sLMR use</p>	<p>Investments planned to substantially reduce environmental stressors during the next decade; indication of the (anticipated) source of the financial resources</p> <p>Substantial reduction of key</p>	<p>Current investments are too small-scale or too disconnected to halt & reverse environmental degradation in the CLME+ region</p> <p>Some recent bigger-scale initiatives, but at the sub-regional level(s) only.</p> <p>Lack of baseline evaluation of the</p>	<p>The signing of the IAA between UNEP and UNOPS regarding the implementation by UNEP- CEP of the development and adoption of investment plans related to the following SAP priorities: (a) habitat</p>	<p>At least 1 baseline & (pre-)feasibility report on investment needs and opportunities available by PMT. Proposed solutions are fully reflective of ecosystem values, climate change and gender considerations.</p>	<p>Plans to up-scale investments to address min. 2 of the priority problems identified under the TDA's.</p> <p>Contributions from all societal sectors secured: governments, private sector, civil society, development banks</p>	<p>U</p>	<p>Mid-term target not met and end of project targets considered at risk</p>

	environmental stressors projected at the regional level; projected time-frame	real magnitude of the needs	protection/restoration; (b) pollution prevention/mitigation was finalized during the first year of the project.		& international donor community. Projected reduction of 30% for key stressors (where applicable/needed), to be achieved within a 10-year period.		
PROJECT STRATEGY	INDICATORS	BASELINE LEVEL	LEVEL IN 1ST PIR	MIDTERM TARGET	END OF PROJECT TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	JUSTIFICATION FOR RATING
Outcome 5 Regional socio-economic benefits and Global Environmental Benefits from SAP implementation are maximized through enhanced collaboration, planning & adaptive management, and exchange of experiences and lessons learnt.	Enhanced coordination and collaboration among sLMR programmes, projects and initiatives in the region Optimized, adaptive management of sLMR-related projects and initiatives in the region Exchange of best/good practices and lessons learnt among the global	More than 100 regional and sub-regional initiatives dealing with sLMR in the CLME+ region. Politically endorsed CLME+ region SAP provides platform for enhanced coordination and collaboration. Over-arching M&E mechanism needed to enhance planning, and to track & evaluate progress, at the LME level.		Active involvement of min. 70% of CLME+ region countries in Project and SAP implementation, by PMT Active participation of at least 12 organizations with mandates highly relevant ¹⁹ to the SAP, by PMT. Formal commitments from/active participation by major civil society and private sector partners; at least 8 by PMT At least 15% of identified PPIs are actively engaged in SAP	CLME+ region Partnership includes the vast majority of CLME+ region countries and (sub)regional organizations with a formal mandate or work program relevant to the SAP. By project end, total investment in support of SAP implementation valued at ≥ 25 times the size of the CLME+ region GEF grant. CLME+ region SAP M&E mechanism in place	MS	Some of the mid-term targets have been met, and all arrangements seem to be in place for a swift completion of key end of project targets related to the monitoring of SAP implementation and of progress. to impacts.

	LME Community of Practice (CoP)			<p>implementation by end of 2017</p> <p>Coordination of PPIs towards SAP implementation results in a total “portfolio”/investment value of at least USD 180 million by PMT.</p> <p>CLME+ region indicator sets, monitoring approaches and/or protocols adopted (incl. assignment of long-term responsibilities) by at least 33% of the members of the “CLME+ region Partnership”, incl. all members of the interim SAP coordination mechanism, by PMT</p> <p>Table of Content for the “State of...CLME+ region” report and structure for the (network of) web portal(s) developed and adopted by all contributing parties (incl. all members of the interim SAP implementation coordination mechanism), by PMT</p>	<p>to track & evaluate progress and to enhance performance and strategic decision-making.</p> <p>Key messages on SAP implementation exchanged and disseminated among CLME+ region stakeholders and global LME COP.</p>		
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ANNEX: UNDP-GEF MTR REPORT AUDIT TRAIL

The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Midterm Review report; they are referenced by institution (“Author” column), page number, and paragraph.

Author	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft MTR report	MTR team response and actions taken
UNOPS	1	Page 19 1 st paragraph	I would be keen on a further evaluation of the consultant. Is there a challenge with country support, is there something the project can and should do? If yes, what. If no, why?	The answer to this question is given in the following pages.
UNOPS	2	Pag 19 1 st paragraph	Is the project adequately integrating climate considerations?	Yes, for what concerns sLMR sustainability
UNOPS	3	Page 19 2 nd paragraph	And post design? Is the further involvement of stakeholders correctly designed	This section of the report analyzes project design. By assigning execution responsibilities at major regional stakeholders, the project design in principle implicitly secures “after project” sustainability.
UNOPS	4	Page 19 3 rd paragraph	Any comments? Is that realistic, sufficient, the good approach?	The Logframe does not contain reference to/ specific targets for gender issues, which is not a good design approach. Text has been modified to note the generic nature of the way gender is considered in project design.
UNOPS	5	Page 22, table 4	I see this as one of the essential weaknesses of the project and would like this to be emphasized including in the conclusion. There is an unrealistic scope with confusing formulation which highly impacts on the implementability, the quality of implementation and above all the sustainability.	The table shows an <u>example</u> of what the evaluators considers a <u>correct</u> and <u>simpler</u> formulation of outcomes and outputs and of SMART indicators. The same applies to practically all Logframe entries. The assessment of the impacts of the complexity of the logframe on the overall implementation performance - a highly subjective exercise – is attempted later on in the report.
PCU	6	Page 22 Table 4	The various bullet points below, associated with Output one, set much clearer/specific expectations in terms of what needs to be done/delivered by the Project. Without such, the results framework would be much more open ended and leave it to co-executing partners to define what can be done, and many different options might then lead to the alternatively formulated indicators (numeric criteria being met). This could possibly lead to these criteria being met but the overall coherence and complementarity of the distinct elements of the outputs being lost. Now the bullets e.g. indicate that the coordination mechanism MUST include all countries (this is a very specific requirement that will avoid conflict among	The observation of the TE regards exclusively the way both outcomes and indicators are formulated throughout the logframe. For example: Outcome 1 lacks a verb, which is a must for outcomes; the indicator for outcome 1 is: “solid etc..”: how do we measure solidity? The indicators for output 1 are not indicators but a list of outputs.

			existing opposed political tendencies in the region). Not having this as part of the S in SMART for the indicators under these output could open the door again for certain political agendas to be pushed - agendas which were present during CLME1 and could have led to failure in achieving SAP endorsement. Bullet point 2 and 3 for example call for very specific “deliverables” and having these explicitly mentioned like this under the logframe made it possible to keep a common understanding among co-executing partners that this is what had to be delivered. An alternative formulation as suggested would have left room to re-open discussions that were already held and come back on prior agreements (in terms of what needs to be done under the project) and as a consequence make the project much less manageable and even prone to additional delays in implementation. The above is obviously my perception as RPC but considered this important to be shared.	
UNOPS	7	Page 24	Could we add details regarding the initial administrative delays. What exactly are we talking about and why did this happen.	Every executing partner gave a somewhat different explanation: much was blamed however on difficulties in hiring the right staff, including by UNOPS, and on internal organizational problems.
UNOPS	8	Page 34 1 st paragraph	Any view whether this is a good idea?	Yes, given that reportedly the activity funded by Italy is quite similar.
FAO	9	Page 34 2 nd paragraph	Please clarify this sentence: “In view, and in spite of this, the conclusion of both partners was that a no-cost extension was not warranted.” I think that this could be updated based on the most recent conversations held among partners and with the Steering committee.	The evaluator was not made aware on the cited “most recent conversations”. The opposition of both FAO and UNEP to a no-cost extension was made very clear in various occasions, including PEG meetings.
FAO	10	Page 34 2 nd paragraph	Add: (FAO) ... but would invest all efforts in identifying and applying mitigation measures to minimize delays.	This is a generic and rather obvious assurance, given the extent of the delay.
UNOPS	11	Page 34 3 rd paragraph	This is very important. I would like the consultant to go further and recommend way forward: de-scoping? Adjusting, how to prioritize internalization? Any consideration to whether and how to get the implementing partner to perform?	FAO and UNEP are the main executing partners, and at the same time the major “recipient IGOs” of the project outcomes. Contrary to what one would expect, their performance so far has been almost nil. This notwithstanding they do not see the need for an extension of the project duration. The evaluator was not able to identify clear motivations for this apparently contradictory position and suggests that their double role might be part of the problem.
UNOPS	12	Page 35 2 nd paragraph (PEG)	1. Perhaps there is need to think about and include an analysis of technical supervision of project and governance mechanisms around these. Since UNOPS is not a technical	The following text has been added to the Conclusions of the MTR: In principle, the creation of the PEG was a logical management response to both the large number of executing

			entity, it is critical that PCU gets continued support and guidance from UNDP and others. Is this already happening? Can it be improved further? 2. There is a need to assess the usefulness and performance of the PEG. It is supposed to ensure efficient and effective execution but this is what we are struggling with right now. We need to a. boot performance and b. enhance effectiveness. Can the consultant recommend what to do to get there?	partners, and their already mentioned double role. In the practice of the PEG meetings however, partners seem to have developed a strong decisional role (e.g.: on the no-cost extension), at times frustrating the efforts of the PCU to adopt corrective actions for the slow project implementation. To correct this situation in the future, it would be advisable for the Implementing Agency (UNDP) to take over, when deemed necessary, the responsibility of final decision making in the context of the PEG, and to be the main, if not the sole, interlocutor of the countries in the context of the Steering Committee.
UNOPS	13	Page 35 last paragraph (PCU)	Any comments whether this is adequate. Is the scope of management capacity congruent with scope of work?	Difficulties in fully staffing the PCU are among the causes of the implementation delays, and of the less than adequate communication mechanisms within and among countries. In spite of this, the PCU is performing admirably.
UNOPS	14	Page 36 Table 6	Could there be a column added that illustrates progress made for respective partner, so to see what is left to implement is doable in a 4 months extension until April 2020? Figure 7 below shows spending pattern but I thought more in terms of deliverables (done/what is left to be done).	For progress in term of deliverables see Table 5. As stated in the conclusions, the evaluator doubts that an additional extension of 4 months will be sufficient to achieve the project's expected outcomes.
UNOPS	15	Page 36 3 rd paragraph	Execution not as efficient and effective as it has to be, any recommendation what PEG or else should do to get there in the short period that is left?	See response at bottom of page 35
UNOPS	16	Page 37 1 st paragraph	It may be worth mentioning that the EA has adequate capacity and systems to manage the project, but, for a big share of the work a. depends on the implementing partners performance and b. the GEF agency guidance on the technical side. Important is also to point towards the challenging task to ensure high quality execution of a complex project, multi-country, multi-implementation channel with extremely limited management capacity. The mismatch represents a significant risk and challenge for UNOPS.	Agreed. The text has been rephrased to reflect this situation: "The EA head offices have candidly recognized their – albeit limited - share of responsibility for the initial delays and have strived to improve their performance since."
UNOPS	17	Page 37 2 nd paragraph	Is the consultant saying that the slow implementation is due to project design, interdependence? Any suggestions how to address this. I am also not sure whether this is only a staffing issue. Is this what the partner's said? Is there more to it from the consultant's side? is there any recommendation to mediate this risk going forward?	According to partners, the slow implementation progress appears mostly due to administrative and staffing issues, which, combined with the inherent complexity of the project, have contributed to create the present situation of delays in implementation. The complexity of the design was unavoidable.
UNOPS	18	Page 39, 1 st paragraph	I would insist that this table clearly indicates which partners were pre-selected by UNDP and which were selected through a UNOPS process. Also, the report needs to provide clear	The two major partners, FAO WECAFC and UN Environment CEP were selected for project execution because these two IGOs are the ones responsible for regional

			recommendations on how to address these persistent capacity issues. For instance, is the approach to take creation of quarterly assurance meetings and more reporting requirements? At what point we go to Steering Committee to suggest that partners need to be replaced, etc.?	policies on fisheries, and on the protection of the marine environment respectively. The project could not have been executed without them: the policy and institutional reforms that the project strives to promote concern primarily these two organizations. Obviously, they cannot be replaced. A closer monitoring of progress and delivery, as well as a firmer role of the SC are recommended for the future. Improved communication within countries among project focal points and the national representatives in the two IGOs can play a role in speeding up decision making and delivery.
UNOPS	19	Page 39 Co-financing	Perhaps an analysis here also would be useful to show how much of this financing is allocated to PCU and how this is not enough given the heavy work plan, and what future projects can learn from this design-wise.	According to what shown in the PIF, the PCU receives \$m 6.5 of co-financing, which seems quite enough for the task.
IOCARIBE	20	Page 39 last paragraph	The co-financing IOC of UNESCO contribution is not reported. As per the co-financing letter IOC of UNESCO is providing in-kind (already delivered > 40%) and in-cash (180,000 delivered).	Noted
UNOPS	21	Page 44 2nd paragraph	As mentioned above, we are all experiencing a risk for the success of the implementation and the sustainability of the project outputs. Is it really not important to consider adjustment and focus, to recommend de-scoping or focus? It seems that with the seriousness of the challenges there is not strong enough recommendation and advice on adjustments, scope and management wise.	The phrase to which the reviewer refers to, ambiguously formulated, has been modified: "So far, no need for major changes to the original design has emerged in PEG discussions or SC Meetings." The recommendations of the evaluator are two: (i) focus on 5 highest priority targets; and (ii) extend the project duration well beyond the four months presently being debated.
UNOPS	22	Page 44 4 th paragraph	Can this section clearly explain what delays occurred due to UNOPS specifically, and what are the delays caused by each partner? What is the way forward and around these? Were these delays due to lack of staffing or attention or due to unrealistic project design from the start (i.e. work plan too heavy, direct support costs and PCU size very small, etc.). Also, how about governance? Why didn't PEG take action to remedy these, and how can PEG oversight and support be improved?	As already stated, the project design, albeit complex, is not responsible for the delays in the delivery of the two major partners. Nor is the action of the PCU. UNOPS is in the best position to assess its own responsibilities in the implementation delays. The PEG meetings basically reflect the positions of the various partners in relation to each partner responsibilities in the project: the question of delays was raised with insistence by the PCU, but not considered critical by the major partners, who questioned the need for an extension beyond the four months already incorporated into project planning and gave assurances of delivery within the initially foreseen deadlines.
UNOPS	23	Page 44 4 th paragraph	I think he needs to indicate how long this should be and what mitigating measures should be taken to deliver the project within this time frame.	In the opinion of the evaluator the length of the extension will depend on: (i) the time necessary to complete all highest priority activities, (ii) the time necessary to facilitate in-country decision making processes, including those pertaining

			The comment refers to the phrase: “Without an additional substantial extension, the project may fail.”	to decisions to be taken at the level of the relevant IGOs, and (iii) the resources available to cover the cost of the extension (basically the operation of the PCU). The three elements above need a careful assessment which is beyond the scope, time and resources of the MTE. The evaluator’s opinion is that the extension should be definitely more than the four months submitted for SC decision.
IOCARIBE	24	Page 46 1 st paragraph	It is extremely important to define “ <u>a substantial extension.</u> ” What is recommended? A year? Six months? Nine?	See response above.
UNOPS	25	Page 46 2 nd paragraph	Redistribution – does this perhaps mean de-scoping and if so any recommendations how?	Yes, the MTR suggests ways
UNOPS	26	Page 46 1 st bullet	Also, perhaps we need to ask each partner to reaffirm their commitment to deliver within revised timeframe in writing or consider replacing them?	Replacing partners is not an option, as explained at 13 above. Once the extension will have been decided upon, commitment to the new timelines will be necessary.
UNOPS	27	Page 46 3 rd bullet	Sure, but development banks will only allocate resources to governments and not UN, so a participating government needs to agree to lead this. 100% agreed, and is it perhaps a bit late to engage now? Is it realistic that the PCU will be able to engage now, very late in this activity? Is there a possibility to reassess what can be done and perhaps rather focus on a market analysis, study....	This activity seems to fit very well Component 4, and its targets. Nothing has been done so far under this Component.
IOCARIBE	28	Page 47 3 rd bullet	Why only into “the Cartagena Convention framework???” What about Brazil?	See Output 1.1, supposed to be achieved by mid 2018, related to the coordination between the Cartagena Convention and Brazil.
FAO	29	Page 47 title of Table 13	The text mentions a list of priorities. Consider renaming the table	Title has been modified as suggested
IOCARIBE	30	Page 47 outcome 2	There is a series of national initiatives regarding IUU, Marine Protected Areas, and land-based sources of pollution that have been already considered.	These national initiatives will have to be considered in and contribute to the Regional Strategies.

COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA EMAIL

UNESCO IOC (IOCARIBE)

I concur with the MTE on his statement: “...*the time needed by the countries to internalize project outputs which often require the countries’ endorsement or adoption. In fact, without full buy-in from the countries the project outputs will remain on paper, and its achievements will not be sustainable.*”

In order to achieve this and to move budget support from some activities will require a major exercise that, if so decided, should start asap and should be finished by the mid-December at latest.

MTE: Noted.

CERMES

Expect no comments from CERMES. Which is not the same as agreement.

MTE: very constructive

CRFM

(1) I agree with that statement "in a number of instances many project targets call for “decision”, “approval”, “endorsement” or “adoption” by countries. No project however can commit to deliver on something that lies beyond its control, such as the political decision of a sovereign nation. The formulation of the targets calls hence for a clarification: when the target involves a political decision (policy or institutional reform etc.), the commitment of the project is limited to facilitating the process preparing the grounds for a decision by national governments or by the governing bodies of relevant IGOs."

(2) on page 15 and 16 #s (ii) and (iv) I think "Lack of" should be replaced by "Paucity of ..." and "Insufficiency of.." respectively.

MTE: Noted.

UN ENVIRONMENT

I have finally completed the reading of the MTE report and I find it to be generally adhering to the issues at hand. I anticipate that the grammatical and typographical errors will be picked up by the Contractor at some point, therefore I limit my comments to the technical aspects.

With respect to gender issues, it is my belief that these have not been underestimated, certainly not by the IGOs for whom this issue is central to their daily work. For UNPE CEP, the gender issues should become obvious in the reports that are due over the next months.

I am not certain that the ‘communication flow’ to countries is the problem. From the previous project, countries saw the CLME process either as a fisheries programme or an ecosystems conservation programme. This polarization of thought has stymied the required national efforts to work across ministries and departments, (1) to ensure a smooth communication system; and (2) to bring about the necessary national outcomes. The issue of country ‘buy in’ is something that the IGOs deal with on a daily basis and is not linked solely to this project. Therefore, I believe that a caveat is indicated in that paragraph on page 45, like ‘the efforts of the CLME+ project to bring together key national players will be augmented by the hard work of IGOs already working towards national co-engagement of fisheries and environment divisions.’

The issue of the capacity of countries to cover all projects, intergovernmental processes and organizations is also a key consideration in the implementation of all projects, small or large, and should also be included.

MTE: Noted. These are good news. To make up for the time lost, the CLME+ project will require a tremendous effort of IGOs, in particular UN Environment.