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Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities (GMC)
Project

Lesson Learnt Report
26 March 2018 – 26 March 2022

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Objectives of this document

The Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities (GMC) Project, funded by the Global Environment Facility, has been operating for about three years and much has been learned already ([GMC Project Implementation Report, 2020](#)) The objectives of this document are to:

- Provide interim advice for those that may wish to adopt the platform approach in a new fishery or country.
- Encourage practitioners to explore existing consultation arrangements so as to design a platform of 'best fit'.
- Provide links to more detailed information if practitioners need to seek further advice.

This document draws from the experiences of GMC Project implementation teams in Indonesia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Philippines as well as observations by the project's global fisheries advisor and NGO partner, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP). The management arrangements for fisheries in each of these countries are diverse, particularly regarding aspects that facilitate consultation and participation. The fisheries involved were managed at a mix of national (e.g., tuna in Indonesia, or large pelagics in Costa Rica) and local levels (e.g., blue swimming crabs in Indonesia and the Philippines) and had varying, existing commitments to consultation, ranging from non-existent through in-development, to well developed. Thus, each country team had a unique situation within which to implement the Project and the adaptive nature of the platform approach has been of assistance.

Based on an analysis of the learnings to date, ten key lessons are put forward that may be useful for the establishment of a successful dialogue space that assists stakeholders to transition their fisheries towards sustainability.



Lessons Learned from
the **Indonesian Western**
and **Central Pacific**
Yellowfin and **Skipjack Tuna**
Pole and Line FIP

Global Marine Commodities

for sustainable fisheries



Lessons Learned

from the Indonesian Western and Central Pacific
Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna Pole and Line FIP

December, 2020

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List of Acronyms

AP2HI	Indonesian Industry Association for Pole and Line and Handline Tuna Fisheries
BMT	Benchmarking and tracking
CMM	Conservation management measure
EAFM	Ecosystem approach to fisheries management
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
FAD	Fish aggregating devices
FIP	Fishery improvement project
FMA	Fisheries management area
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GMC	Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities
HL	Handline
IPNLF	International Pole and Line Foundation
Kementerian PPN/BAPPENAS	Ministry of National Development Planning, National Development Planning Agency
MDPI	Masyarakat dan Perikanan Indonesia Foundation
MMAF	Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSY	Maximum sustainable yield
PL	Pole and line
RFMO	Regional fisheries management organization
RPJMN	Indonesian National Medium-Term Development Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STELINA	Fisheries traceability and logistic system
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

In 2017, the Indonesian Western and Central Pacific Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna Pole and Line Fishery Improvement Project (Tuna PL FIP) was launched. Its purpose is to address overexploitation of marine fisheries by mainstreaming sustainability in the fisheries supply chain. Stakeholders in this ongoing Project include fishers who are members of the Indonesian Industry Association for Pole and Line and Handline Tuna Fisheries (AP2HI), the International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF), and the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), provides support for implementation of the Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities (GMC) Project, which includes accelerating the Tuna PL FIP.

The Tuna PL FIP journey provides an opportunity for fisheries stakeholders to extract lessons learned and identify the potential for replication and scaling up. In June 2020, BAPPENAS, through the GMC Project, hosted an online roundtable discussion to examine in greater depth the lessons learned from the Tuna PL FIP. Participants included members of the Indonesian fisheries sector and government representatives from the institutions

mentioned. Each participant presented a specific topic for discussion; these included the relevance of fisheries improvement to national development planning, the trajectory of the Indonesian Tuna PL FIP, and the roles of local government and NGOs, among others.

To date, the Indonesian Tuna PL FIP has provided fishing communities, scientists, and development workers with ten essential lessons. The first three involve the role of a FIP in Indonesia's larger development picture. To begin with, fishery improvement projects are not ends in themselves, nor is certification. Rather, a FIP is a means to sustainable fisheries, and achieving that goal is a long and difficult process. It involves a multi stakeholder platform to establish a governing structure that will endure. A second lesson learned is the FIP's role in the larger development picture. This involves facilitating and strengthening national efforts by providing a government-led platform for inclusive dialogue. The third lesson refers to the frameworks and benchmarks required for improving fisheries. Sustainable stocks, environmental health, and effective governance, the three principles of good fisheries management, aid in producing measureable development outcomes, and align with the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

The fourth lesson learned involves the importance of coordinating all aspects of fisheries management, including strategies, programmes, and budgeting, at all levels, from the local to the national. These management measures must be compatible with those applied on a regional level. According to the fifth lesson, integration of existing tools and systems, such as government e-logbooks and the vessel tracking system, will increase efficiency in FIP implementation, as will innovative technology that leads to better management of the small-scale fisheries dominating the sector.

Equally important is the sixth lesson learned, an analysis of the state of fisheries in order to determine sustainability requirements and to create a traceable work plan. Together, these elements enable stakeholders to communicate efficiently, providing for an effective improvement process. Cooperation among stakeholders, the seventh lesson learned, is also vital to the creation of a reliable support system and implementation of the FIP work plan. NGOs, among the major advocates for sustainability, can play various roles in this process, including by providing technical expertise, channeling funding, and assisting in project management. Just as vital is the eighth lesson, that is, recognition of the fact that, while certain elements are common to all FIPs, each will have a different set of challenges and priorities. Nevertheless,

resources, activities, and outputs must be shared whenever possible. In addition, local government involvement needs to be increased for fisheries that are managed locally.

The ninth lesson learned involves data, including documentation of the management process. Data collection is essential to effective fishery improvement and may contribute to competitiveness. This is especially true of data on indicators in a given FIP that are relevant to other fisheries. In this respect, a national fisheries platform can become a clearing house for FIPs, a step that will be essential in replicating success and scaling up improvements. Finally, this document describes why FIPs cannot be sustained without funding, and innovation regarding this matter needs to be developed. Members of AP2HI are devising a business strategy to fund and maintain a sustainability standard through development of the “Indonesian Tuna” brand. To that end, they are exploring contributions from industry to finance the FIP.





Fishing poles used by Indonesia's pole and line tuna fishers.

General Information

Country	Indonesia
Name of Fishery Improvement Project (FIP)	Indonesian Western and Central Pacific Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna Pole and Line FIP
Project start and end date	November 1 st , 2017- ongoing
Stakeholders participating	Indonesian Pole and Line and Handline Fisheries Association (AP2HI) International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF) Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Ministry of National Development Planning/BAPPENAS
Principal milestones / outcomes achieved	Accelerate the Indonesian Tuna Pole and Line FIP to generate lessons learned that can be scaled up or implemented in other fisheries
Date of Report	June 2020

Background

Overexploitation of marine fisheries, a major global issue and a key driver of changes in the marine environment, is caused by a variety of interacting factors. The long-term solution is a transformation of markets so that consumers value sustainable seafood, together with public policies and instruments to support sustainable fisheries and coordinated contributions from the stakeholders along the value chain.

The Ministry of Development Planning of the Republic of Indonesia/National Development Planning Agency (Kementerian PPN/BAPPENAS), with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implements the Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities (GMC) Project to contribute to transforming Indonesia's fisheries by mainstreaming sustainability in the supply chain of fisheries commodities in Indonesia.

Among the strategies adopted by the Kementerian PPN/BAPPENAS is support for Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). Their support is based on the ability of FIPs to generate lessons learned that can be scaled up and applied to other fisheries. Since the end of 2018, the GMC Project has provided funding support to the Indonesian Industry Association for Pole and Line and Handline Tuna Fisheries (AP2HI) to accelerate the Indonesia Tuna Pole and Line FIP. This FIP,

which is co-implemented by AP2HI and the International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF), entered into Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) full assessment at the end of 2019. Further information on this FIP can be found at fisheryprogress.org.¹

The Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions² defines a fishery improvement project, or FIP, as a multi-stakeholder effort to improve the sustainability of a fishery. These projects utilize the power of the private sector to incentivize changes that will ensure sustainability in the fishery. At the same time, they work on enacting public policy to assure that positive changes in the fishery are long-lasting.

A FIP identifies environmental issues that need to be addressed, defines priority actions to be undertaken, and oversees the action plan to be adopted. Issues to be addressed and follow-up actions are grouped in three categories of principles: Principle 1 (P1): Sustainable target fish stocks; Principle 2 (P2): Environmental impact of fishing; and, Principle 3 (P3): Effective management. Each principle is accompanied by its respective components and performance indicators, for a total of nine components and 28 performance indicators.

Although not mandatory, many FIPs work to achieve a level of performance consistent with an unconditional pass from the MSC's Fisheries Standard.

1 <https://fisheryprogress.org/fip-profile/indonesian-western-and-central-pacific-yellowfin-tuna-pole-and-line>

2 http://solutionsforseafood.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/FIP_report_screen-final_revised_september.pdf





Indonesian tuna pole and line fisher.

The Indonesian Western and Central Pacific Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna Pole and Line Fishery Improvement Project (Tuna Pole and Line FIP) is led by AP2HI and IPNLF. These organizations work with partners, such as the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), and Masyarakat dan Perikanan Indonesia Foundation (MDPI), on implementation of the Tuna Pole and Line FIP. The FIP, launched in November 2017, aims to achieve the following objectives by the

end of 2023: MSC Full Assessment for Indonesian one-by-one tuna fisheries within the prescribed five years, and cross-sectorial collaboration that advances the implementation of national and regional sustainable management measures.

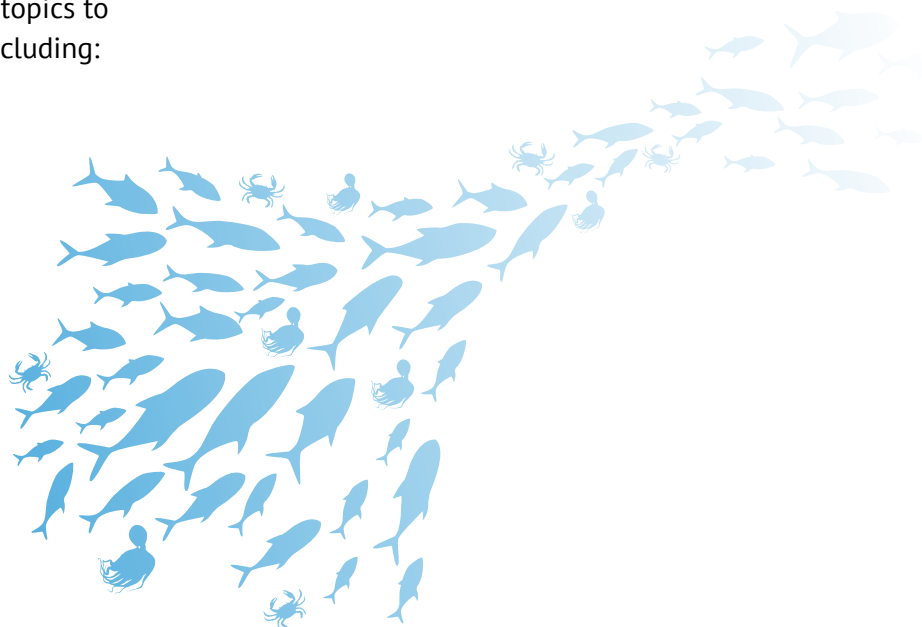
This publication provides a summary of the main findings of a workshop conducted in June 2020 in order to document lessons learned from this FIP as well as to identify opportunities for replication and scaling up.

Methodology for the Collection of Lessons Learned

This lesson learned document is based on observations made by the GMC Project in assisting the Tuna Pole and Line FIP in Indonesia from the end of 2018 to mid-2020. During this period, AP2HI, coordinator of the FIP, was able to strengthen data collection, improve fishery compliance, and increase participation and contribution in developing management measures for the fisheries as well as policy direction for the fisheries sector.

An online roundtable discussion was hosted by the Kementerian PPM/BAPPENAS and the UNDP GMC Project in July 2020 to further examine lessons learned from the PL tuna FIP in Indonesia. A carefully selected group of individuals participated (Annex 1), representing entities related to the FIP as well as the fisheries sector in Indonesia. Each representative was assigned specific topics to present and discuss in the session, including:

1. the relevance of fisheries improvement to national development planning;
2. the trajectory of the Indonesian tuna PL FIP, best practices, gaps, and opportunities;
3. the potential for scaling up improvements in tuna fisheries to national fisheries;
4. opportunities for the FIP to improve national tuna and/or other fisheries management;
5. the role of local government in the FIP's success and in the FIP's impact on local fisheries management;
6. the role of NGOs, collaboration, openness, and capacity building towards sustainable fisheries; and
7. trends in regional and national governance, data availability, and empirical evidence of the FIP's success.



Lessons Learned

Lesson 1

Fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and certification are not ends in and of themselves but, rather, means to sustainable and prosperous fisheries. Good fisheries management is a long process, and a FIP can be part of the journey.



Women working in a tuna processing plant, Indonesia.

The journey to good fisheries management is commonly long, sometimes spanning decades. Stakeholders should not get discouraged. Too many people are involved in most fisheries, and catches are too high. For these reasons, the road to sustainability is long and hard.

Effective management is the best conservation strategy and the only path to sustainability. Participation of those who work directly with the challenges faced by the fisheries is its secret recipe.



Laws, regulations, monitoring, and enforcement are all important, but without good governance structures in place, the chances of long-term sustainability are low.

A multi stakeholder platform that brings people together to manage fisheries is needed to establish a lasting governance structure as a long-term legacy. The UNDP GMC Project has applied this platform approach in different countries with different fisheries management systems. The results are encouraging.

Lesson 2

FIPs should be part of the bigger development picture, facilitating and strengthening national efforts through an inclusive dialogue platform led by the government.



Indonesian tuna pole and line vessel.

The government's vision is for Indonesian fisheries to progressively move towards sustainability, becoming a source of premium and competitive products. The target is meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as Goal-14: Life Below Water. The SDGs have been internalized in the Indonesian National Medium-term Development Plan (RPJMN)³, which identifies improving fisheries management as one of the areas Indonesia needs to focus on to ensure the sustainable use of fisheries resources through an approach based on the concept of the fisheries management area (FMA).

For tuna fisheries, these policy directions are linked with the challenges and opportunities

associated with being one of Indonesia's major fisheries commodities. FIPs can help with improving data availability and compliance, steps which will support Indonesia's effort to optimize its tuna fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and on the high seas. The implementation of FIPs is an important step in supporting national development targets. Achieving these target can be facilitated by an inclusive coordination platform led by the government.

During national development planning, the UNDP-GMC Project has actively promoted the participation of FIP implementers and stakeholders in providing planning inputs for fisheries, including advocating for the adoption of FIP principles.

³ https://www.bappenas.go.id/files/rpjmn/Narasi%20RPJMN%20IV%202020-2024_Revisi%2028%20Juni%202019.pdf

Strategic issues	Policy directions
1. Sustainable use of fisheries (capture and aquaculture): maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and carrying capacity	1. Making fisheries management areas (FMA) a spatial basis for sustainable fisheries development, together with the management and arrangement of sea space and zoning plan
2. Strengthen FMA management and creation of FMAs	2. Manage marine ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine services
3. Optimize fisheries productivity	3. Increase production, productivity, standardization, quality assurance, and safety of marine and fishery products
4. Harmonize sea and land use planning	4. Improve business facilitation, financing, welfare, and empowering fishers, and protecting small-scale businesses
	5. Improve the quality and competence of human resources, technological innovation, and research, and strengthen the database

Table 1. Strategic issues and policy direction in the fisheries sector for the 2020-2024 Indonesian National Medium-term Development Plan (RPJMN)

FIPs contribute to transforming the sector by focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources. They help improve fishery practices, as well as product traceability, by facilitating the establishment of a chain of custody in the supply chain. For example, through the tuna PL FIP, the fishery is improving live-bait use and catch data collection, increasing product competitiveness, opening and maintaining market access, and increasing the value of fisheries products.

FIPs included in the national strategy or coordinated under the government-led platform provide advantages for a fishery to be prioritized for improvement and policy support.



The steps and tools that underpin the operation of a FIP provide a model that heightens the efficacy of management measures and policies. The three principles of good fisheries management (sustainable stocks, environmental health, and effective governance) facilitate the production of targeted and measurable development outcomes. The FIPs' holistic environmental principles also align with the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), an approach that has been regulated and promoted for fisheries management in Indonesia. A FIP can become a support tool to increase the effectiveness of managing fisheries commodities in FMAs, by determining the status and gaps of each commodity, based on FIP performance indicators.

Lesson 3

FIPs should be part of the bigger development picture, facilitating and strengthening national efforts through an inclusive dialogue platform led by the government.



Indonesian tuna pole and line fishers.

The success of a FIP requires, to varying extents, changes in fisheries management. For instance, there is common agreement that setting a harvest strategy for tuna fisheries would contribute to the sustainable management of stocks. However, the availability of such a management tool alone is insufficient, as its

success relies on compliance and the quality of enforcement, among other factors. As a process, fisheries management involves the creation and enforcement of rules, as well as stock assessment, to ensure that the fishery is performing in accord with agreed-upon objectives.

FIPs can serve as an ambassador of the country's fisheries in the global market, and a role model and benchmark for other fisheries in the country.



FIPs operate according to a clear, timebound action plan which provides an output-based collaborative mechanism. A FIP work plan breaks down outputs into targets for each performance indicator and identifies the roles of each party required to meet FIP objectives. This mechanism facilitates efficient performance by each party and identification of opportunities for sharing resources. For instance, in pole and line fisheries, the FIP creates opportunities to bring together all parties in the supply chain to provide fisheries authorities with inputs, and together identify problems and solutions beyond the FIP. The FIP framework also allows the UNDP GMC Project to strategically allocate resources to improve tuna fisheries; these include updating the National Tuna Management Plan, supporting the pole and line and longline FIP, supporting analysis to

improve management of fish aggregating devices (FADs), as well supporting the development of the tuna vessel database.

Fisheries involved in FIPs also become early adopters of fisheries policies/regulations and become role models and benchmarks for other fisheries. The best practices in fisheries introduced via the FIP process have motivated other Indonesian tuna fisheries (i.e. longline, purse-seine fisheries), which might have more difficult management challenges and standards, such as fisheries in the EEZ and on the high seas, as well as small-scale fisheries. The implementation of FIPs could contribute to building the enabling conditions needed for other fisheries to embark on the same sustainability journey, and this could create a greater impact. Lastly, improvement in fisheries will contribute to the country's compliance in implementing resolutions and conservation management measures (CMMs) in the relevant tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).

Lesson 4

Synergy and harmonization of strategies, programmes, and budgeting from the central to the local level, as well compatibility with regional management (in the case of tuna fisheries) are enabling conditions for FIPs and need to be ensured.



Trian Yunanda, Director of Fish Resource Management in the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries.

At the national level, the government has prioritized the improvement of fisheries data by ramping up the implementation of the [eLogbook](#) system, increasing the capacity and coverage of observers on board vessels, and implementing the catch documentation

scheme. The UNDP GMC Project also supports the government in leading the development of a harvest strategy for Indonesia's archipelagic waters, updating the National Tuna Management Plan, and improving the integrated national tuna vessel database.

At the local level, the provincial government plays a role in the successful implementation of FIPs. This role is becoming crucial for FIPs focusing on fisheries that operate under the authority of the provincial government as mandated by local government law. The approach taken depends on the context of each fishery. In the case of the Indonesian Tuna Pole and Line FIP, the provincial government contributes towards improvement in ecosystems through the establishment of conservation areas, strengthening the surveillance of marine resources, and increasing capacity of local community surveillance groups. It is also coordinating fisheries data management through the establishment of the tuna fisheries data management committee, and minimizing conflicts between fishers through collaborative permits with the neighbouring province.

The availability of a government-led inclusive platform to coordinate and create a communication network across FIPs and other initiatives will facilitate more collaboration and sharing of information and resources.



All the initiatives and actions at both the national and local level provide enabling conditions for the successful implementation of FIPs. In addition, MMAF, through the Directorate of Fish Resource Management, has established ad hoc national FIP tuna coordination. This platform gathers and consolidates action plans from all tuna FIPs and determines mechanisms for solving bottlenecks in implementation.



Lesson 5

Adopting or integrating existing and emerging tools and systems increases efficiency in implementing the FIP work plan.

AP2HI and IPNLF, as the FIP implementers, have tested and utilized several tools to assist in the collection of data needed for verification, such as government e-logbooks, and the vessel tracking system.

It is important to ensure endorsement and compatibility of the data collection mechanism with the existing data system used by fisheries authorities.



Further steps should include adopting technologies that enable simple, streamlined, effective mechanisms

for licensing (i.e., online licensing or registration), traceability (i.e., operationalise STELINA – National Fish Traceability and Stock System), and data collection and data analytics (i.e., automatic data analysis system). This also relates to the need to provide simple yet efficient bureaucracy and procedures, from the central to the local the level.

For a major global fishery resources producer such as Indonesia, integrated and innovative technology that enables better management of the small-scale fisheries that dominate the fishery sector is essential. The implementation of FIPs can contribute to the continuous improvement of mechanisms designed to capture small-scale fisheries data and provide feedback to assist and gather inputs from the small-scale fishers as part of fisheries management.



Indonesian tuna observer.

Lesson 6

Clear identification of the state of the fisheries relative to sustainability requirements and a traceable work plan provide a path for an effective and efficient improvement process.

Although focused solely on the MSC standard, both the pre-assessment, which forms the basis for preparing a work plan, and the benchmarking and tracking tool (BMT) combine to provide a clear, traceable, and timebound process that a FIP needs to focus on. These tools maintain consistency and aim towards the MSC while helping interested stakeholders understand the status of FIPs that are being implemented.

The work plan enabled members of AP2HI to efficiently communicate their situation and needs to their stakeholders. For instance, it assisted in coordinating with the fisheries authority to deploy observers onboard pole and line vessels. In addition, AP2HI, IPNLF, and MMAF were also able to adjust the onboard [observers protocol to suit the operation of pole and line](#) vessels and conducted training for observers in the use of the protocol.

Meanwhile, the pre-assessment report enabled AP2HI to identify gaps in management of the fishery. For instance, in addressing the legal and customary framework underpinning the fishery, and the fishery-specific objectives, AP2HI identified elements that would contribute to increased management effectiveness for tuna pole and line fisheries. These included focusing support on the development of a harvest strategy in archipelagic waters, developing a tuna management plan, and ensuring compliance with provincial regulations.

The pre-assessment assisted the FIP implementer in providing information on status and gaps, as well as measures in the action plan intended to close those gaps. Thus, it can be used by all stakeholders (i.e. government representatives, researchers, etc.) to assess resources that are needed.

The UNDP GMC Project facilitated an annual meeting for AP2HI and its FIP stakeholders to discuss and evaluate progress on implementation recommended by the pre-assessment report and its associated work plan.

Ensuring all the stakeholder and industry members understand the result of the pre-assessment and action plan is as important as getting the right assessor.



For fisheries that are not looking for certification, ISO 14000 can also be explored. The ISO 14000 is a cost-effective tool designed to promote effective environmental management systems in organizations. This standard is, to some extent, relevant for the FIP. It provides a series of international environmental management standards, which specify requirements for establishing an environmental management policy, determining environmental impacts produced by products or services, planning environmental objectives, implementing programmes to meet objectives, and conducting corrective action and management reviews.

Lesson 7

Building effective, mutual, and transparent cooperation with a range of stakeholders is important in creating a support system and implementing the FIP work plan.



Janti Djuari, Chairperson of AP2HI, during the Indonesian Multi Stakeholder Platform for Fisheries launch.

NGOs are among the main advocates for sustainability; their actions include promoting FIPs and, to some extent, ecolabel certification. In fact, NGOs can play various roles, depending on the needs of their partners. For instance, IPNLF, which supports the AP2HI, provides technical expertise, channels funding, and assists in project management.

The members of IPNLF include seafood buyers who prioritize tuna from pole and line and handline fisheries. They provide competitive and effective assistance to AP2HI with their experience from previous work with PL and HL tuna fisheries in other regions. With links and access to seafood buyers, IPNLF can ensure that the FIP is always up to date with market trends. To date, IPNLF has worked with 14 buyers, brands, and retailers to make a commitment and sign an understanding with MMAF to preferentially source MSC-certified one-by-one tuna over non-certified tuna from Indonesia's tuna fisheries. This commitment contributes to boosting the progress of the FIP in Indonesia's tuna fisheries.

A partner organization(s) with practical and holistic knowledge of the fisheries context could be effective in providing technical assistance to the FIP.



Given that all those involved in fisheries (i.e., government, NGOs, industry, etc.) play unique roles, transparency on all aspects is needed to ensure effective collaboration. There needs to be coordination and commitment along the supply chain, from fishers to buyers, as well as in the involvement of NGOs and counterparts. If this is achieved, IPNLF can provide targeted capacity building, AP2HI can coordinate its industry member to focus on data collection, and the government can focus on the policy making and assistance that is needed by the FIP.

Lesson 8

There is no one size that fits all fisheries because each FIP has its own set of challenges and priorities; but resources, activities, and outputs should be shared whenever possible.



Anderson Maluengseng, captain of an Indonesian tuna pole and line vessel.

Each fishery's context, opportunities, and challenges are unique, and FIPs must adapt to these characteristics. However, especially for FIPs that focus on similar fisheries or areas, there should be coordination to identify the potential for shared resources, activities, and/or outputs. For instance, in developing a harvest strategy, all FIPs should work together to allocate resources to supply the research and fisheries authorities with adequate data. In addition, all tuna FIP implementers need to collaborate to support the updating of the national tuna management plan.

In the context of MSC, there is a trend that if a certain FIP focuses on a target species in which its biomass is at or above target levels while fishing pressure is below target levels, the FIP can make necessary improvements that suit its fisheries operation, and aim for certification without relying on other, overlapping fisheries (same target species, same areas).

The involvement of the local government should be increased to provide enabling conditions for fisheries that are managed locally, ensuring practicality and contextual management that is needed by the FIP, in data collection, compliance, and/or outreach to fishers.

The FIP coordinator must have the skills and knowledge of the fisheries in order to identify the expertise required and build effective cooperation.



Lesson 9

The availability of data, both in terms of quantity and quality, including documentation of the management process, is important for an effective improvement in fisheries and may also contribute to the competitiveness of fisheries.



2019 launch of the Indonesia Multi Stakeholder Platform for Fisheries.

Better documentation of data, information, and progress in improving fisheries management can expedite a FIP's progress and motivate replication and scale-up. For instance, some indicators in a given FIP might be relevant to other fisheries. Thus, with better documentation, those fisheries can utilize the progress made by more advanced fisheries in this regard. The Tuna Pole and Line FIP, which targets tuna stocks that are managed at the regional level, benefits from the harmonization of certain indicators and the quality of data at the regional level.

A national fisheries platform can play a role by maintaining data and information, documenting evidence of sustainability improvement, and becoming a clearing house for FIPs. In the case of the Tuna Pole and Line FIP, the existing ad hoc national FIP tuna coordination and the Multi Stakeholder Platform for Fisheries, being promoted by BAPPENAS with support from the UNDP GMC Project, will be essential in replicating success and scaling up improvement in fisheries to the national level.

Organizing industry and all actors in the supply chain to internalize data collection can catalyze improvement in data in the fisheries.



Lesson 10

Funding innovation needs to be developed, including blended finance, to subsidize and maintain the sustainability of the FIPs.



Indonesian one-by-one tuna.

Improvement in fisheries management requires resources. For example, in the Tuna Pole and Line FIP, a significant amount of funding, time, and expertise is required to develop, assess, launch, and implement the project. In the case of this FIP, AP2HI has been developing a business strategy to fund and maintain a sustainability standard (i.e., ecolabel certifications) by developing an “Indonesian Tuna” brand. This strategy includes exploring contributions from the industry to fund the cost of FIPs as part of internal business operation, as well as by developing a fee mechanism to finance activities for maintaining standards as required for certification.

As an association, AP2HI is able to bring its members to work together in meeting sustainability objectives. This has allowed them to access funding and in-kind support, including from the GMC Project, to implement and accelerate the FIP. AP2HI has also benefited from the strong and unique collaboration it has with IPNLF, as well as effective coordination with the

government, including through participation in the development of the National Tuna Management Plan and development of the Harvest Strategy that is supported by the UNDP GMC Project.

A strategy needs to be developed to encourage industry to fund the implementation of fisheries improvement projects, maintain sustainability standards, and to internalize the costs of improvement or an alternative financing mechanism.

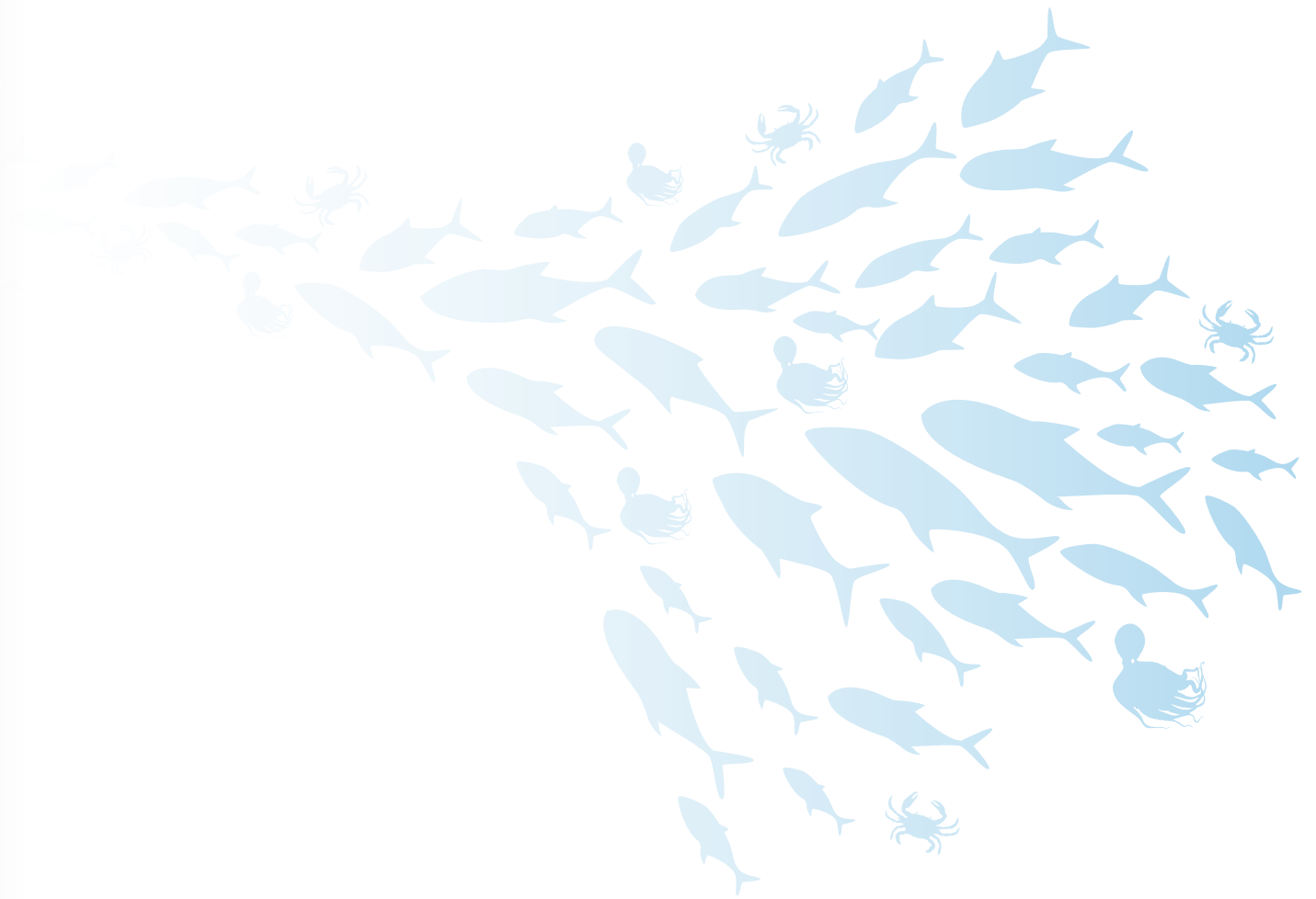


Finally, fisheries management has a cost and government and stakeholders need to work out the best way to cover this, with or without a FIP.

Annex 1

Attendance List. Focus Group Discussion: Lessons Learned from the Tuna Pole and Line Fishery Improvement Project

Name	Organisation / Institution	Sex
<i>Dr. Ir. Sri Yanti JS, MPM,</i>	<i>Director of Marine and Fisheries Resources, Ministry of National Development Planning/ BAPPENAS</i>	Female
Janti Djuari	<i>Chair of Indonesia Pole and Line and Handline Fisheries Association (AP2HI)</i>	Female
Putuh Suadela	<i>Deputy Director for EEZ and High Seas, MMAF</i>	Female
Tienneke Adam	<i>Head of Fisheries and Marine Affairs Agency, North Sulawesi Province</i>	Female
Roby Fadillah	<i>Deputy Director for Coastal and Ocean Governance, BAPPENAS</i>	Male
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Key Considerations for
Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Spaces
for Improved Fisheries
Governance

Key Considerations for Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Spaces for Improved Fisheries Governance.

October, 2020

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Introduction

Good governance is a critical but commonly overlooked aspect of the quest for sustainable use of natural resources. According to Manuel Barange from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), “Sustainability failures are governance failures, but the reasons that challenge sustainability are complex. Beware of simple solutions – seek the underlying causes.”¹

The term ‘wicked problems’ has been coined to describe those challenges for which there is no obvious and simple solution. In development planning there can never be full knowledge and there are inevitable tradeoffs between competing user groups and between people and the environment. Getting people together can create an enabling environment for the design and implementation of new solutions.

As economies have become more connected via trade, there is a need to ensure that the potentially negative impacts of increased economic activity are adequately controlled and that the benefits are properly distributed over the long term. Seafood is the most highly

traded primary product in the world and over the past thirty years, fishery production in developing countries, and its transfer to the developed world, has increased substantially.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is committed to enabling people to share their goals, needs and commitment to managing the use of natural resources (water, forests, soils, fisheries) in a way that meets global sustainable development goals. The UNDP has been facilitating dialogues between people involved in a variety of commodities such as coffee, oil palm, soy, beef and cocoa. The move into seafood enabled this approach to be applied to seeking solutions to the well documented issues associated with overfishing and the inequitable distribution of benefits from the use of fishery resources. As publicly owned resources, fisheries are more likely to be sustainable when stakeholders are actively involved in the management process. The Sustainable Marine Commodity Platform approach ensures that those in the wider supply chain, who also have an interest in sustainable use, are proactively included.

1. <http://www.fao.org/fishery/static/symposiumfisheriespresentations/TechnicalKeynoteManuelBarange.pdf>

Objectives of this document

The Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities (GMC) Project, funded by the Global Environment Facility, has been operating for about two years and much has been learned already (GMC Project Implementation Report, 2020) The objectives of this document are to:

- ▶ Provide interim advice for those that may wish to adopt the platform approach in a new fishery or country.
- ▶ Encourage practitioners to explore existing consultation arrangements so as to design a platform of 'best fit'.
- ▶ Provide links to more detailed information if practitioners need to seek further advice.

This document draws from the experiences of GMC Project implementation teams in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia and the Philippines as well as observations by the project's global fisheries advisor and NGO

partner, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP). The management arrangements for fisheries in each of these countries are diverse, particularly regarding aspects that facilitate consultation and participation. The fisheries involved were managed at a mix of national (e.g., large pelagics in Costa Rica) and local levels (e.g., blue swimming crabs in the Philippines) and had varying, existing commitments to consultation, ranging from non-existent through in-development, to well developed. Thus, each country team had a unique situation within which to implement the Project and the adaptive nature of the platform approach has been of assistance.

Based on an analysis of the learnings to date, ten key lessons are put forward that may be useful for the establishment of a successful dialogue space that assists stakeholders to transition their fisheries towards sustainability.

Rationale

Capture fisheries are an important source of food and livelihoods, particularly in rural areas in developing countries. Fish resources are generally publicly owned and, commonly, have not been managed with long-term benefits as the primary goal. Globally, fisheries management in developing countries lags behind the developed world and reforms are urgently needed if fishers are to have food and income in the future.

Successful fisheries management must be a partnership whereby all the key players, from fishers to retailers, share

a commitment to sustainable use. This commitment should go beyond good science and enforcement, both of which are important but without effective governance, history has shown that lack of respect for the rules undermines any measures taken to control catches within sustainable limits. A notable example is the case of Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing which is a worldwide threat to sustainable fisheries.²

The GMC Project was established to foster dialogue and a shared commitment to making fisheries management work. It

2. <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-illegal-fishing-day>



deliberately involves a wide range of stakeholders, including those in fishery dependent businesses, whether these be active fishers, buyers or sellers. The Project explicitly works with government as the primary decision and rule-making body in charge of determining who may catch fish and how much.

Efforts to engage stakeholders in good fisheries management are, globally, not uncommon and there have been some positive success stories (Bundy et al 2017, Hilborn and Ovando 2014). The importance of good governance is now embodied in guidance available globally. The term 'co-

management' has been used to describe the 'shared journey' whereby government and stakeholders work together. The GMC Project has developed a platform approach that provides a model for those that want to put in place a governance and dialogue space to enable fisheries to work.

Fisheries are diverse and there is no simple rule book for determining the details of the governance arrangements. The lessons learned from the work to date clearly demonstrate that a mix of good preparation, understanding the root causes of issues, and patience are the keys to success.



10 Key Lessons in Promoting Fisheries Governance



Lesson 1 Determine the scope of the platform

A valuable attribute of the platform approach is that it is highly flexible in terms of scope. A platform can apply at different jurisdictional scales (national to local) and/or it can cut across agency responsibilities if required. For example, a platform may cover more than just the responsibilities of the fisheries management agency. Determining the scope of a proposed platform is an entry level decision that will determine who may be interested in being involved, budgeting, timetables, long term arrangements and more.

- ▶ Fisheries management jurisdiction - The role of the platform should be in keeping with the scale of the fishery. If the fishery is managed at a local level, it is best to have representation and a mandate that is locally focused. There may be exceptions such as the existence of issues that have wider importance. An example could be a

fishery of strategic importance (that may be located in a disputed area) or that requires a wider government response (e.g., the fishery is but one of a number in different jurisdictions, or there are enforcement issues that require a wider response).

- ▶ A fisheries diagnostic analysis (e.g., root cause analysis or RCA) can help generate an understanding of the scope and depth of issues and thus what information is required. A diagnostic analysis needs to cover the status of the fishery resources, how the fish are used and who benefits, and what arrangements are in place to ensure that the fishery objectives agreed by stakeholders and government are being achieved. It can provide valuable information in itself but also be a useful guide for what information may be required to facilitate decision making in the platform committee. The [FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#) provides valuable guidance on the various aspects of a fishery that could form the basis for an analysis.



Lesson 2

Document any existing consultation arrangements and how they currently operate

Prior to initiating discussions about establishing a dialogue platform, a review of existing consultation arrangements should be undertaken. Attention needs to be paid to the following:

- ▶ Jurisdictional aspects – Consultation arrangements should be appropriate to the level at which decisions are made about management measures that affect those who go fishing and are dependent on utilizing the catch in some way. It may be that there are transboundary arrangements in place. An example is the management of oceanic tunas where there may be an international agreement that seeks to broker agreements among participating governments who then implement these via national laws.
- ▶ Membership – The people issues in consultations are critical and can make or break consultation arrangements. Set out who is guaranteed committee membership and how they are chosen. Ownership of the issues and the solutions by stakeholders is critical to success. Membership needs to draw on the diverse strengths of those in fishing communities, especially women and those whose business depends on decisions that favour sustainability. Governments need to be encouraged to be proactive in seeking membership from groups that are commonly poorly represented (e.g., women). Participants in the consultation forums may be chosen by their peers (either by elections or by recommendations) or they may be appointed by government via an application process. The aim should be to have [committee members](#) contribute to the management dialogue based on their expertise and commitment and not because they have a personal agenda or want to be disruptive.
- ▶ Consultation arrangements – Describe the aims of the consultation arrangements. Document whether the consultation committee provides higher level strategic advice or whether it provides feedback on decisions made by fisheries policy makers. Consideration needs to be given to whether the committee is asked to



be involved in decisions that have a significant impact on the fishery or whether the issues addressed are of a relatively minor nature. Document the pathway for the committee's advice. Elected officials may prefer unfiltered and considered advice from stakeholders that is provided in a transparent manner. Circumstances where advice which is perceived by stakeholders to be filtered by agency policy makers may not generate the trust and respect needed for decisions to be widely accepted.

- ▶ Degree of government commitment to consultation outcomes – Describe

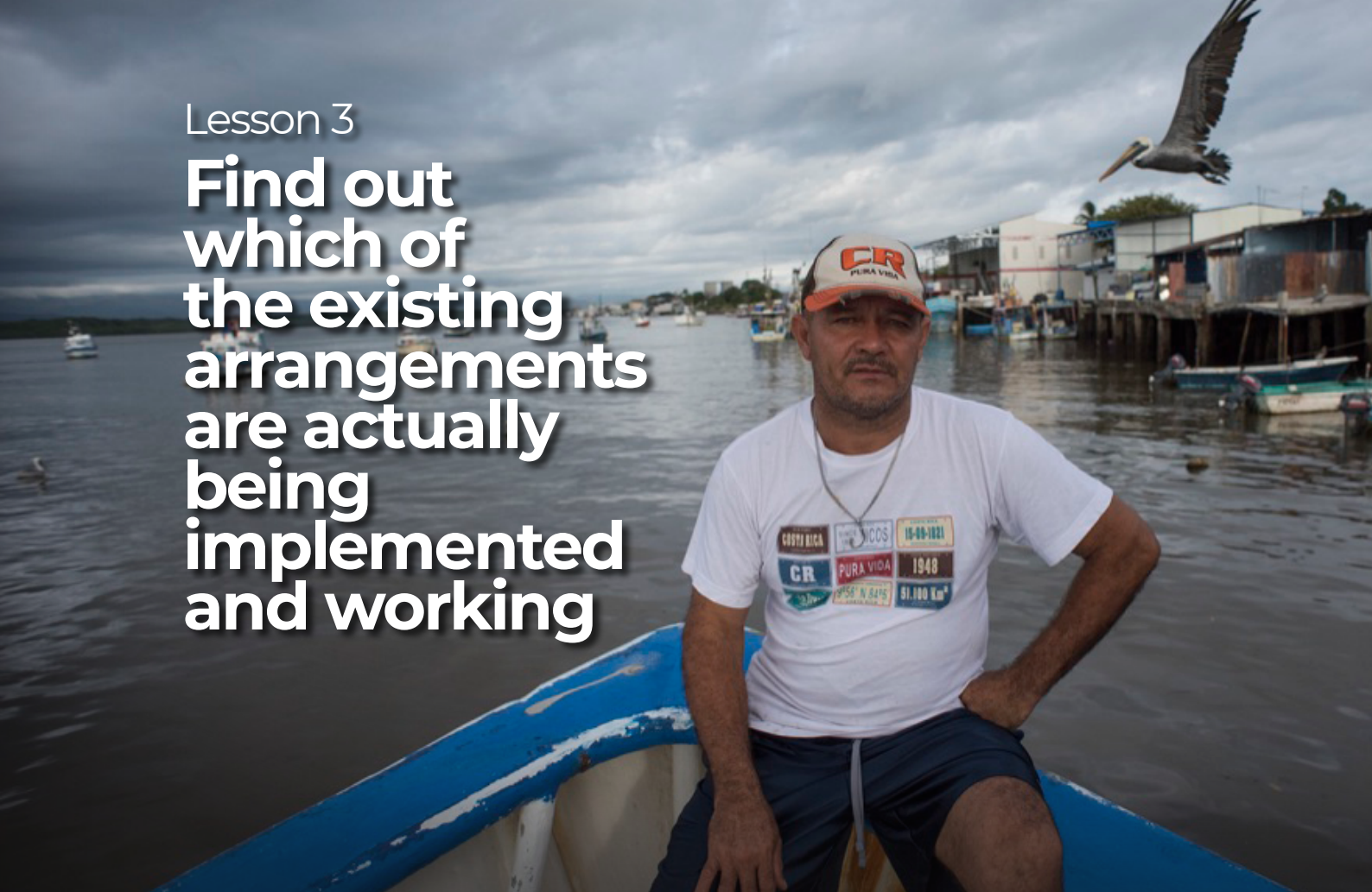
how the arrangements are set out in law or in regulation or whether they are simply a policy commitment. The degree of legal strength may provide an insight into how committed the government is to servicing and supporting the consultations and whether it sees the arrangements as an integral part of the fisheries management process and not just an add-on. Managing a fishery requires ongoing evaluation and interaction with stakeholders and commitment from all parties over the long term.



Multi-stakeholder Platform for Sustainable Fisheries, Indonesia

Lesson 3

Find out which of the existing arrangements are actually being implemented and working

- 
- ▶ Performance evaluation - There may be formal consultation arrangements in place but either they have not been implemented or are clearly not working. Positions on consultation committees may not have been filled, the committees may not have met or their advice is being ignored. There is a wide variety of ways that the arrangements may exist on paper but not be serving their true purpose. Evaluating the performance of any existing consultation arrangements will help ensure that they are working as designed.
 - ▶ [Trust building](#) - Trust will be enhanced if stakeholders believe that their advice is both actively considered and, within the bounds of sustainable use, has an influence on decision making. There needs to be evidence that stakeholders are both consulted and their advice is valued and used in the decision-making process. Transparency is required around the holding of meetings and the reporting back process (e.g., via the timely availability of minutes). Document any evidence that agreed advice from stakeholders to government leads to change. The government needs to report back on the recommendations made and how they were considered in the decision-making process.
 - ▶ Generating respect - The wider community of stakeholders will respect the process if they understand how it works and how their aspirations and needs are reflected by committee members. There needs to be evidence that the views of men and women in the wider fishing community are taken into account. Affected fishers and other stakeholders need to understand how their fishery is managed and that there are formal arrangements in place for gathering their views on management needs. Formal arrangements may include writing to all license holders, publishing decisions/consultation opportunities in a forum that fishers are known to access and holding scheduled/regular meetings.

Lesson 4

Find out who is involved and what the relationships between the players are

Having the right people involved is as important as having the right structures and the correct mix of representation. Consultation and participative decision making is a person-to-person exercise.

- ▶ Stakeholder mapping - There is a need to undertake a stakeholder mapping exercise to document who the players in the fishery are and how they relate to one another. Progress in decision making within the committee may be helped or hindered by the existence of connections or networks among individuals or groups. The exercise needs to be broad-based to ensure



Costa Rica Large Pelagic Sustainable Fisheries Platform



that supply chain connections, non-commercial participants (e.g., artisanal fishers, NGOs) and gender equity aspects are included.

- ▶ Understanding existing relationships
- Consultation is all about the relationships between people and such relationships are not always harmonious. Talking with people will generate an understanding of whether the interpersonal dynamics on the consultation committee(s) are likely to be conducive to making good progress on decision making.
- ▶ Potential conflicts of interest - Ensure that commercial relationships are not dominating the dialogue about sustainable use. While the needs of commerce and private companies are important, if the needs of one group are adopted over others for purely commercial reasons then there may be a breakdown in discussions.
- ▶ Understanding deeper motivations
- Determine what are the key issues of concern as these may well be the source of conflict or, at the very

least, the source of an inability to agree on what needs to be done to pursue sustainable use. Many issues in fisheries are driven by, at their root cause, conflict over resource allocation whereby one group feels that another is taking all the fish. Talking with stakeholders will quickly reveal what are the main concerns and deeper questioning will reveal many of the root causes. Much can be learned outside of formal meetings by networking with stakeholders on the committee and/or their constituencies.

- ▶ Socialization – Participation in the fisheries management process may not be familiar to some or all stakeholders or it may be that some groups have entrenched disagreements and having discussions in an open forum may be unproductive. Some preparatory work may be needed with groups to ensure that the platform becomes a place where there is a shared sense of what needs to be done and a commitment to finding solutions that can work for (or at least be tolerated by) the participants.

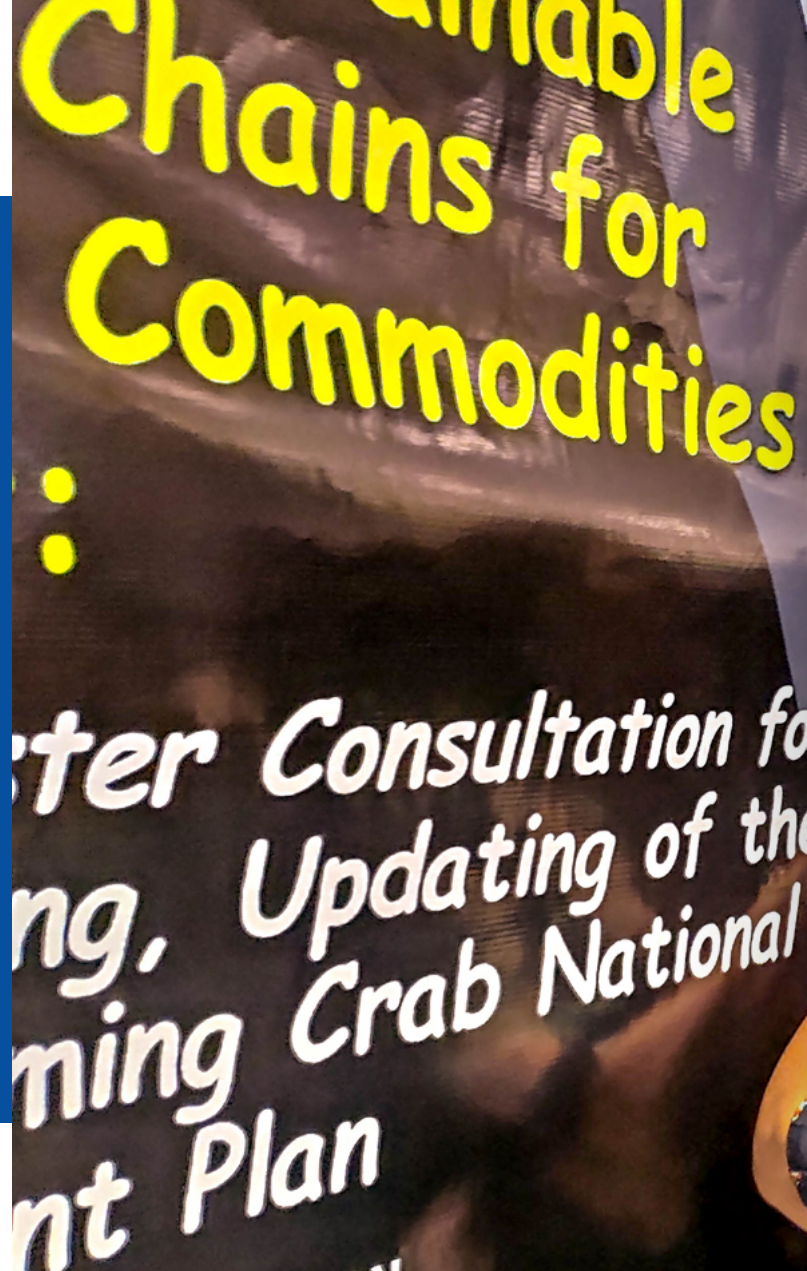


Lesson 5

Ensure the platform has clear objectives, roles and responsibilities linked to the legal responsibilities of the agencies charged with managing the fisheries

The authority of a platform and the respect it generates from those involved are strongly influenced by clarity around its role and operations.

- ▶ **Clarity of purpose** - The platform needs to have a clear purpose that is strongly linked to the legal responsibilities of the agency (or agencies) charged with managing the fisheries. The primary purpose of platforms is to catalyze agreement on sustainable use but other factors, such as trade, status of the stocks and national policies on benefit sharing (e.g., encouraging domestic processing industries) may require the involvement of other agencies.
- ▶ **Clarity of roles** - The role of the committee and its members should be clear and understood by all. In addition, the responsibilities of the agency staff in terms of providing information/ data and then faithfully reporting the deliberations of the members to the minister/secretary, need to be spelled out.



Blue Swimming Crab Management plan cluster consultation, the Philippines.





Sustainable Small Pelagic Fishery Platform, Ecuador



Lesson 6

Have a clear and agreed National Action Plan

The platform needs to have a clear National Action Plan that has been created in a participatory manner with stakeholders and especially by government.

- ▶ **Transitional arrangements** – The platform should include in its plan measures for ensuring that its legacy is continued. The platform will have greater value if it becomes a formally recognized source of stakeholder input to the fisheries management process. A platform has an endpoint but it can leave a lasting legacy if there is a plan to ensure that it is incorporated into legislation/regulation if required.
- ▶ In addition to the National Action Plan, it is important to also advance the development of a [Fishery Management Plan or Plans](#). If the scope of the platform is wider than jurisdictionally feasible for a Fisheries Management Plan, or if the platform does not have the formal, legislative basis, an analysis should be undertaken of how to progress such a plan with the relevant authorities.

The general guidelines for the preparation of fisheries [management plans](#) are quite specific and need to be clear about who has access to the fishery and under what conditions, among many other requirements as set out in the guidelines from FAO.



Lesson 7 Ensure that capacity is adequate

- ▶ Government leadership - Leadership from government is critical to setting the tone of the consultation process. Government needs to be clear in its aims and intentions, balancing a willingness to listen and be flexible with a commitment to meeting international norms for resource sustainability and any nationally applicable laws. Stakeholders may not be willing to make tough decisions or they may provide advice that is at odds with sustainable use. Government needs to make the tough decisions but they also need to exercise some flexibility where livelihoods and political stability are at stake. For example, many fisheries require quite significant cuts in catches to become sustainable. Doing this overnight would be enormously disruptive and potentially a source of civil strife. Governments need the flexibility to effect change in a way that is manageable for the affected communities.
- ▶ Capacity building for members - Ensure that committee members and their constituents understand the aims and methods of fisheries management. Training on matters such as the role of consultation and meeting procedures

may be required as part of the process of capacity building amongst committee members, including technical aspects such as stock assessments.

- ▶ Sourcing additional skills/capacity - Additional capacity needs to be sourced when there are major gaps in knowledge, experience or skills but funding needs to be available. It is unlikely that all the resources and capacity to provide robust and credible advice can be source from within the membership of the committee. From time to time, there will be a need to source advice from technical consultants, university researchers or others.





Lesson 8

Create/strengthen links with other initiatives (e.g., FIPs)

There may be some existing programs aimed at improving fisheries management operating outside of any formal government structures or in the absence of existing government structures. Fishery improvement projects (FIPs) are one type of effort with the potential to complement the market orientation of the platform approach.

- ▶ Ensure that platform and FIP scopes are connected – Fisheries may be managed in different jurisdictions. For example, many coastal fisheries may be managed by a local authority and a FIP may cut across these jurisdictions. A platform may be established to work at the national level and thus have limited involvement at a local level. Moreover, FIPs may work on issues which are outside of the scope of the fisheries agency. For example, some fisheries agencies may have no legislative mandate to be involved in post-harvest production issues (i.e., supply chain, export) or labour management, among others, and thus there will be a need for the platform to work with a variety of agencies.
- ▶ Synchronize planning – There may be a need to ensure that the requirements of

several different plans are integrated. For example, there may be a FIP workplan, a platform National Action Plan and a Fisheries Management Plan. The scope of each plan likely reflects the aims and objectives of the committee/legislation under which it is established. While there are likely to be some clear areas of alignment, it is important to have a clear understanding of how the plans may (or may not) work in harmony.

- ▶ Connecting FIPs to other consultation structures - Ensure that any FIPs are connected into any existing consultation structures and among FIPs. Having multiple and possibly uncoordinated sources of advice to government generally makes for little or no progress and the opportunities for synergies in efforts to collect data, source funding, or similar, may be lost. Unless the existing consultation system is completely broken, it is better to strengthen it than establish a parallel effort.
- ▶ Promoting knowledge sharing across jurisdictions – FIPs and platforms can share information with other similar bodies or with other bodies where there may be a shared interest such as the same species being fished in another jurisdiction.



Lesson 9

Ensure access to facts and funding

A successful fisheries management advisory body (platform or FIP) requires enough facts and funding to enable participants to develop the confidence and respect needed to maintain their commitment to sustainable use.

- ▶ Ensure the committee members have sufficient information to aid their decision making – Seek expert advice on the options for making progress as there may be a variety of alternatives available. It may be necessary to bring in external sources of advice if there is none available in-country.
- ▶ Lack of certainty should not prevent decision making - While data and information are important, there will always be uncertainty and there needs to be a balance between doing more research that simply postpones difficult decisions and making a call based on expert judgement.
- ▶ All sources of funding should be explored - All participants have a role to play in terms of making funding available or seeking funding. The private sector has demonstrated in a number of FIPs and in many government-run fisheries management systems that it is willing to contribute funds towards better fisheries management if the right conditions are in place.



Lesson 10

Keep the end goal of sustainable use in mind

The platform approach explicitly seeks to involve supply chains, including those that may supply seafood products to international markets. It taps into a growing global movement that aims to connect those with an interest in the need for fisheries sustainability, no matter where they are located.

- ▶ A sustainable fishery is important irrespective of what market actors require. The end goal is a sustainable fishery, whether it is recognized via certification or not. There cannot be a 'sustainable management for one market and business as usual for another' approach.
- ▶ It may take many years to ensure that the fishery is sustainably managed and it is important not to lose sight of the benefits for people and the environment. Certification is simply a tick that the fishery is in good shape and is not the endpoint. The real success comes from the fishery participants having a long-term source of food and livelihood.





There has been a considerable amount written about the problems in world fisheries in recent decades. The forces driving unsustainable use are diverse and variable from place to place and over time. While there is a plethora of examples of issues such as overfishing, there is also a growing number of success stories. While it is true that good science, the adoption of clear and enforceable regulations, the removal or an absence of perverse incentives (to overfish) and equitable distribution of benefits are all important, it is also clear that fisheries do not manage themselves. Fisheries management is essentially about people and it is an activity that needs to be undertaken over the long term.

The GMC Project and its platform approach has been demonstrated to be an appropriate method of fisheries management in many ways. One obvious possibility for explaining its utility in capture fisheries is that it applies a widely used concept in fisheries, namely; co-management. For common property resources such as fisheries, a participatory governance approach generates a shared understanding of the issues and the solutions, thereby increasing the chances of respect for rules and regulations.

While there is room for non-governmental initiatives (such as FIPs), the role of

government is critical as it has ultimate responsibility for determining who can go fishing and how much fish can be taken. There are economic and social consequences associated with these responsibilities for which government is generally accountable and, especially where there is overexploitation occurring, tough decisions to be made. Finally, the platform approach has proven itself to be highly flexible in terms of scope. The GMC Project has implemented platforms that are administered by a variety of government agencies (e.g., planning, fisheries), are cross jurisdictional (cover multiple agencies, and multiple fisheries jurisdictions) and incorporate aspects that go beyond traditional fisheries management. The GMC Project approach has shown interesting results in the coordination between Platforms and FIPs, particularly in relation to the private sector's participation in fisheries management. While it's important to ensure that the basics are fully addressed (i.e. proper controls on catches), the platform approach provides opportunities to bring women and men from the supply chain together and welcome new ideas and approaches towards long-term fisheries governance and sustainability.



**Global Marine
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for sustainable fisheries





About the Global Marine Commodities Project (GMC)

The Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities Project (GMC) is an interregional initiative implemented by the Ministries and Bureaus of Fisheries and Planning of Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia and the Philippines, with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), facilitated by the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

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Key Considerations for a diagnosis of fisheries issues

Generating information for participatory
fishery dialogues



Key considerations for a diagnosis of fisheries issues – generating information for participatory fishery dialogues

This document is part of a series of guidance tools developed by the UNDP¹ to assist those wanting to establish dialogues aimed at improving fisheries management. It is the 'front end' of a well-established methodology known as Root Cause Analysis (RCA) which is used in a wide variety of situations to generate an understanding of the drivers that underlay environmental, social or economic issues in commodity production. This guidance focuses on fishery dialogues and utilises the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and interpretive documents such as the FAO's Guidelines for Small Scale Fisheries, as the basis for ensuring that the RCA is fully informed by a consideration of issues agreed internationally as being important to ensuring sustainable and responsible fisheries.

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¹The Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities Project (GMC) is an inter-regional initiative implemented by the Ministries and Bureaus of Fisheries and Planning of Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia and the Philippines, with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), facilitated by the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Contents



Preface

Overfishing continues to be a source of concern around the world despite significant gains with some types of fisheries, especially in developed economies. Developing an understanding of what may be the drivers of overfishing in any given situation is like peeling an onion. The discovery of what may seem like a cause of overfishing may well simply be another symptom and further layers may need to be removed. In addition, there may be connections between layers that require other ways of looking at the problem. Removing one layer after another may reveal complex connections. Finally, one may get to the centre of the onion and find that there are multiple cores, not one.

Fisheries are complex interactions between people and fish and the drivers of overfishing are almost exclusively people related. Understanding the motivations for how people interact with fish and why is critical to solving overfishing issues. Economic, cultural and social forces may operate to both overexploit and conserve fish stocks and success in solving overfishing may simply come down to shifting the balance between forces that are working in opposition with one other.

Like many primary products, seafood is highly traded, and the beneficiaries of fishery exploitation can extend far beyond national borders. The reverse is also true in that the consequences

of poor fisheries management can affect the livelihoods and businesses of supply chain participants, as well as fishers themselves. In the past two decades, supply chain businesses have increasingly sought mechanisms for having a say in the implementation of good fisheries management. The development of the so called 'sustainable seafood movement' has provided tools such as certification/labelling, fishery improvement projects and supply chain roundtables to help make progress. These tools are based on ensuring that stakeholders have a clear understanding of the issues facing the fisheries of interest as a basis for formulating a plan for remedial actions to address gaps between the current management arrangements and those required for long term sustainability.

There are many different fisheries assessment systems available, the majority of which focus on the technical and scientific aspects of fishery performance. The outputs from these analyses may enable insights into the range of issues but may not provide an in-depth insight into connections between issues or deeper causes. Similarly, there exist assessment systems that may cover some of the social and economic issues associated with fisheries, but these too may simply provide an

insight into the outer layers of the onion.

The challenge for a guidance document such as this one is that there is no simple 'recipe book' for gaining an understanding of the drivers of overfishing. There is no substitute for the involvement of skilled and experienced people with expertise in fisheries management to probe, discuss and dig deeper with all stakeholders.

The [Global Marine Commodities \(GMC\)](#) project contributes to the transformation of the seafood market by mainstreaming sustainability in the value chain of fishery commodities from developing countries. This initiative achieves this goal by employing and strengthening emerging tools such as corporate purchasing policies, [sustainable marine commodity platforms](#), and fishery [improvement projects](#) (FIPs).

Working with stakeholders is a central plank of the UNDP and its Green Commodities Programme (GCP), which covers a wide range of agricultural products. The 'dialogue platform approach' is very similar to the co-management approach which is employed in fisheries (UNDP, 2020). Thus, there is the potential for some of the approaches and tools that have been developed for other commodities to be brought into the seafood space.

Root Cause Analysis in fisheries – the GMC experience

Root Cause Analysis (RCA) was developed in the manufacturing industry to enable the root cause of a problem to be identified. It is predicated on probing deeper into the basis of a problem to seek the ultimate cause, rather than just relying on what may be the proximate cause. It has developed into a structured approach that requires those leading the process to have sufficient knowledge of the system being investigated to guide an exploration of the most likely root causes as well as exploring alternatives.

There are variations to RCA, of which tree analysis is described in the Guidance 2 – Using component trees with stakeholders, as it has been adopted in training materials on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM).

Regardless of how the issues are identified (whether by RCA or other techniques), the aim is to provide the basis for the development of an action plan to implement remedies. This approach is adopted across the Green Commodities Programme and is similar to the widely used Environmental Management Systems

approach adopted under ISO 14000 group of standards.

The GMC Project has conducted four Root Cause Analyses (RCA) to date, in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia and the Philippines. The UNDP methodology for undertaking RCA covers a variety of commodities and experience by practitioners in the field suggests that the preparation of some detailed guidance on fisheries would help practitioners in the fisheries field.

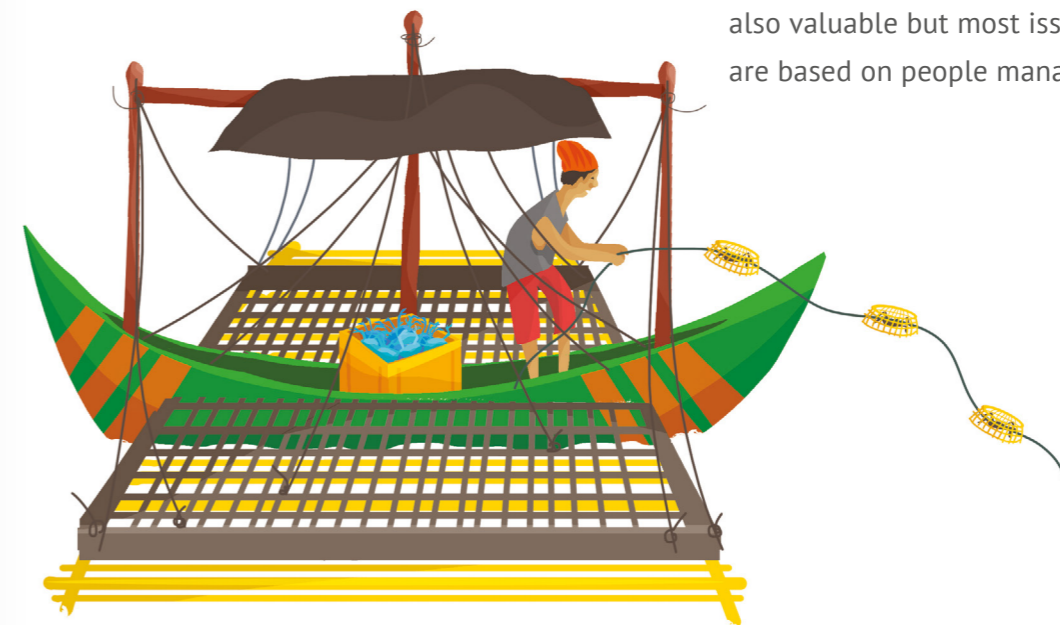
In general, RCA is a flexible tool and the RCAs undertaken by the GMC project were applied to different types of fisheries circumstances. For example, in Indonesia it was applied at a national policy level while in Costa Rica and Ecuador it was applied at a national, individual fishery level. In the Philippines it was applied at a national level even though the main management actions apply at a provincial level. Flexibility is clearly a need for fisheries. The four RCAs also showed some flexibility in terms of application, with Indonesia, for example, not utilizing the Ishikawa fishbone approach (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ishikawa_diagram) but Costa Rica making use of this. However, in both cases,

the utility of the fishbone approach was questioned. Based on observations from field staff, it appears the application of RCA was too focused on finding a single problem and the risks of this approach in fisheries are that it may not take into account interactions and complex relationships. In the Philippines there was a major focus on a stakeholder driven approach whereas in Indonesia it was very much expert advice based. A common observation was the absence of a structured description of the nature of the fisheries being addressed.

Any fisheries assessment method should be viewed as the starting point for a discussion among stakeholders aimed at enabling them to work towards an agreed plan for addressing the issues raised. An independent fishery assessment may miss important information (or it may be out of date), incorrectly interpret information or not make the causal connections between

issues, among other challenges. Moreover, stakeholders may have information which helps identify root causes and are likely to have their own priorities for remedial actions based on the availability of resources, capacity or other factors. The fishery assessment provides information to aid the determination of root causes and may or may not identify them specifically.

It is recommended that the facilitator of the process ask ‘five whys (the key elements of an RCA)’ as this probing is more likely to get to the root cause. RCA can be very participatory where stakeholders can be closely involved in the process. In this regard, it has some similarities to Participatory Rural/ Fisheries Appraisal (PR/FA). For PR/FA, the guidance strongly suggests that the process facilitator(s) have skills in fisheries management and the human side of fisheries. Biological expertise is also valuable but most issues in fisheries are based on people management.





Refining and focusing the RCA

Some of the observations made about the limitations of RCA as applied to date in the GMC project could be best summed up by the statement – ‘the answers you get depend on the questions you ask’. The Preliminary Fisheries Analysis (PFA) is designed to provide a standardized approach to outlining the scope of the fishery assessment to be used for the RCA. It is based on the internationally agreed FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), as updated via the Guidelines for Small Scale Fisheries.

The FAO CCRF was completed in 1995 after several years of negotiation. It has served as a mechanism for elaborating legal norms such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the UN Fish Stock Agreement and environmental norms such as the Convention on Biological Diversity. It was used as the

basis for a regional CCRF prepared by the South East Asian Fisheries Development Center and is often used as an input to fisheries management planning. Most recently it has been further elaborated for small scale fisheries via the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (hereafter called the SSF Guidelines). Of significance for the GMC Project’s market orientation, the CCRF also used as the basis for a number of private sector standards such as those owned by the Marine Stewardship Council, Marin Trust and others plus the international benchmarking program, the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative. Aspects of the SSF Guidelines are increasingly being incorporated into various fisheries assessment systems such as the Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative,

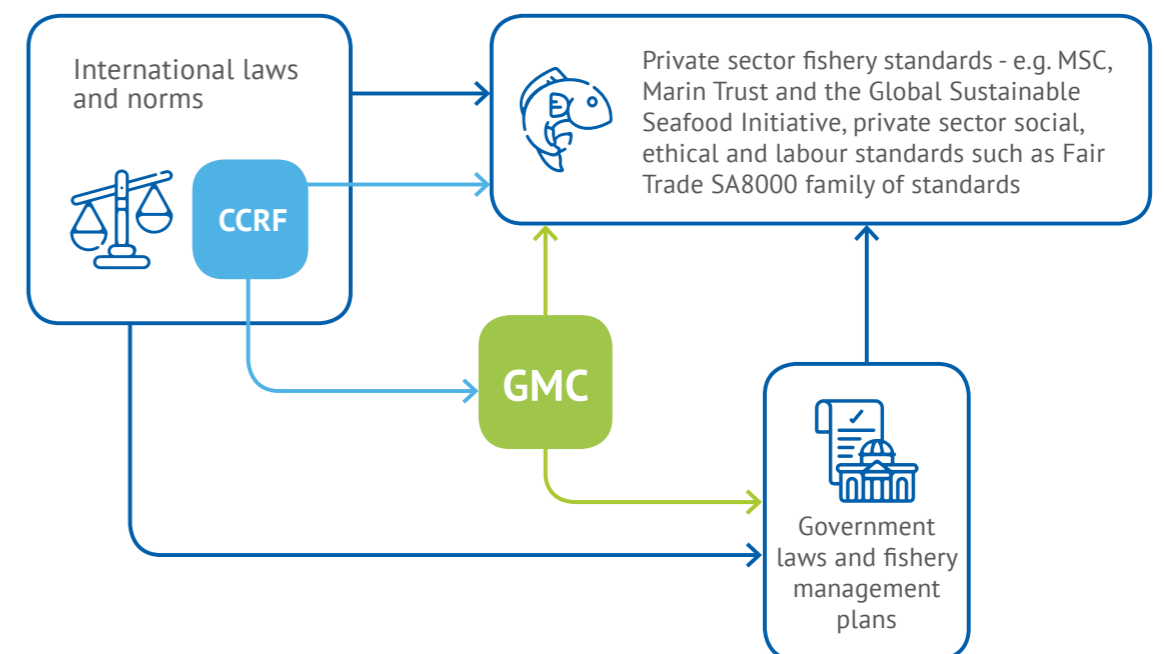
benchmarking systems such as the World Benchmarking Alliance and reporting systems such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

It should be noted that certification and fishery improvement do not seek to implement all aspects of the CCRF or the SSF Guidelines. This is due to the fact that some requirements are beyond the scope of these programs (e.g. food quality, coastal zone management), some are purely the domain of government (e.g. resource allocation) and others may be beyond the ability of a fishery to resolve (such as inequity in society more widely). The absence of issue in the tables of indicators below is therefore not an oversight but merely reflects a judgement about what may be tractable at a fishery

level given the capacity of participants to effects change.

Figure 1 sets out the relationships between GMC dialogue platforms, private standards, the fisheries management arrangements of governments and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, noting that these relationships are generally informal. However, the CCRF, as an internationally agreed document, provides an influential source of advice and a valuable anchor for both private and public sector initiatives alike. The GMC approach explicitly links private and public sector initiatives and the CCRF can also serve as a mechanism for ensuring that the connections are based on a common understanding of what defines a sustainable/responsibly managed fishery.

Figure 1 Relationships between the CCRF, GMC Project Platforms, fishery standards and government laws.



The GMC Project is predicated on:

1. The establishment of a robust and influential group of stakeholders (a dialogue platform) who are vested in the long-term future of a particular fishery, commodity group or fisheries management regime;
2. An assessment of the nature of the issues that require fixing if the bases for long-term sustainable use are to be put in place;
3. The implementation of a plan (or plans) which set out what actions are required, by whom they will be implemented, time periods, funding sources and the nature of monitoring and review.

While the GMC Project is designed to work closely with the private sector, it is explicitly oriented towards harnessing the skills and commitment of those with an interest in sustainable use. Getting to the root cause(s) of poor fishery status is central to ensuring that scarce financial and human resources are deployed effectively. Getting to the root cause of a problem relies on having an adequate identification of the problem in the first place. Like many resource management challenges, fisheries are

complex and the drivers of some of the most obvious problems such as low stocks can be diverse and there may be a lot of interactions and feedback loops involved. For example, as a fish stock declines, fishers tend to fish harder to maintain a living, which speeds up the decline. There is thus a clear interaction between the economics and the biology.

There has been a considerable amount of research undertaken on the drivers of poor outcomes in fisheries status and management and, at least in a general sense, there is sufficient known about what may be the root cause(s) in any given system, noting that these may vary in number or degree from one fishery to another. There is thus an opportunity for participants in a GMC dialogue platform, in a FIP or similar spaces to have access to tools that help focus them on the most likely areas to examine. These tools will ensure that there is a thorough overview, with none of the main areas overlooked.



An enhanced method for exploring root causes in fisheries

Based on the learnings to date, this guidance document provides a method for preparing a structured fishery assessment that can be applied at different scales of fishery organisation ranging from an individual fishery to a national jurisdiction. A Preliminary Fishery Assessment (PFA) sets out heads of consideration (stock status, ecosystem interactions, management arrangements, and economic and social considerations) based on internationally agreed guidance (at the UN level) such as that provided in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and associated guidance, including aspects

such as gender, human rights, fair work, and governance, among others. Using the CCRF as a basis helps ensure compatibility with other fishery assessment systems that may be associated with a dialogue platform, FIP or similar space, such as those used by the Marine Stewardship Council or Marin Trust, among others.

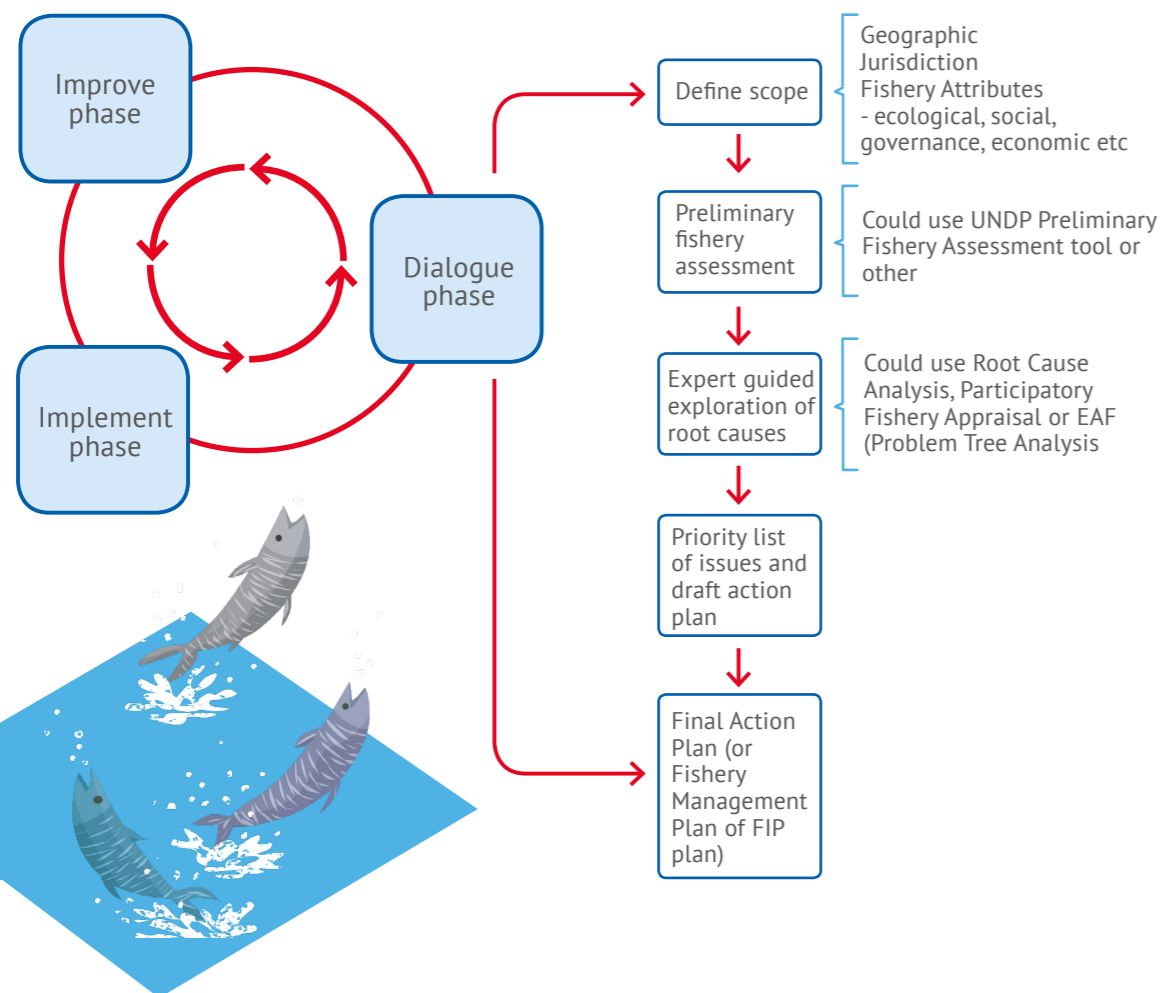
While the PFA may identify some clear root cause fishery issues, the aim is not necessarily to find the root cause but to provide stakeholders with sufficient information to enable them to either agree on the findings of the assessment or to develop these findings further so as to

support their action/management plan. This process is comparable to some of the private sector systems where stakeholder comment is sought (especially with regards to the plans required by fishery improvement projects) and the pathway set out under the [Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries](#) (EAF).

Figure 2 sets out where the PFA fits in the current GMC designed process. In the past,

this position has been occupied solely by the Root Cause Analysis. The scope setting step has been added as dialogue platforms can be established at any level of fishery organisation and this has implications for the scope of the fishery assessment. For example, a dialogue established at a national level would likely deal with high level policy issues more so than details of individual fisheries and thus the issues to be explored would differ.

Figure 2 Role of the Preliminary Fishery Assessment in the GMC process and its relationship to the plan preparation phase



The Scope of the planning process will be determined by the stakeholders and government. There needs to be a clear description of the fishery (or fisheries) that will be covered including the location, species taken, participants, current management arrangements, environmental interactions, supply chains and governance arrangements. This will form the basis for a more detailed analysis of the issues that may require remedial action.

The role of the Preliminary Fishery Assessment is to ensure that stakeholders are provided with information that is comprehensive in its treatment of those attributes of fisheries that may likely reflect or be a cause of poor sustainability. The PFA is designed to ensure that advice sought from external providers to dialogue platform coordinators covers the range of issues that are likely to be important for understanding the root causes of fisheries sustainability issues. The PFA will:

1. Be based on a list of factors that need to be addressed by a desk top review of publicly available information;
2. Provide some preliminary observations as to what factors may be significant and require further exploration;
3. Enable stakeholders to engage in discussions that will enable priorities and actions to be determined.

This engagement with stakeholders needs to be guided by experts with skills and experience in fisheries management, including but not limited to ecological, social (including gender, human rights), governance and economic attributes. It is valuable if the facilitator has completed EAFM training. The [Participatory Fisheries Appraisal Process](#) devised by the World Fish Center and the [FAO's EAFM](#) process

is designed to facilitate a more detailed exploration of the higher-level symptoms of sustainability issues to help identify underlying causes. Practitioners facilitating a dialogue process do not have to utilize these tools specifically but may refer to them for guidance to assist them to run their own discussions with stakeholders. As a prelude to the exploration of root causes, the Preliminary Fishery Assessment

should be made available to stakeholders as a draft with sufficient time for it to be analysed and understood. Opportunities for clarification need to be provided.

The facilitator will work with stakeholders to prioritize the issues as there are likely to be a large number, some of which may be easily solvable and some not. For example, climate change may be identified as an issue, but the underlying causes will not be solvable at a fishery level. Two useful tools for working with stakeholders to help structure their thinking are provided in the Guidance 1 - Using component trees with stakeholders and Guidance 2 – Prioritizing the issues. Once the priorities are identified, the indicators from the assessment that become priorities need to be highlighted.

Encouraging a discussion among stakeholders will help identify any

potential interactions between factors and once there is agreement on what the root causes are, the fishery action/management plan can be prepared. There is guidance for working with stakeholders on linking solutions and problems to be found here – Guidance 3– Working with problem/solution trees. Finally, a plan will need to be developed which sets out what actions will be taken to address the issues, including timetabling, budgets and responsible persons.

The remainder of this document outlines the four guidance tools recommended to carry out this process.



Using the Preliminary Fishery Assessment table

The following tables set out instructions and guidance for the preparation of a discussion document aimed at providing fishery relevant information for aiding discussions by stakeholders who are undertaking a diagnostic analysis or fishery assessment as part of their fishery action/management plan preparation. The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries is used as the basis for the Preliminary Fishery Assessment because it has been widely adopted by country governments, it forms the basis for a number of private sector

Standards (such as schemes benchmarked by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative and Marin Trust), is supported by a wide variety of interpretive material from the FAO and is being updated on a regular basis via new documents such as the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries.

The Guiding Principles (Table 1) are sourced directly from Article 6 of the FAO Code of Conduct and are reproduced here to help interpret the indicators in Table 2 below. They do not have to be addressed specifically.

Table 2 is based on the FAO CCRF. The requirements are not verbatim, nor is every article from the Code included. Facilitators of the plan preparation process are free to add or subtract articles if circumstances warrant. However, it is advised to not remove too many of the requirements as the clues as to the root causes may be missed.

The dialogue platform approach can be utilised at varying jurisdictional scales and applying the tables to individual fisheries (for example an individual crab fishery) versus groups of fisheries (e.g., all crab fisheries) versus jurisdictions (e.g., national fisheries management agency) or will require some thought and modification.

Table 1 – FAO CCRF Guiding Principles sourced from Article 6

6.1	States and users of living aquatic resources should conserve aquatic ecosystems. The right to fish carries with it the obligation to do so in a responsible manner so as to ensure effective conservation and management of the living aquatic resources.
6.2	Fisheries management should promote the maintenance of the quality, diversity and availability of fishery resources in sufficient quantities for present and future generations in the context of food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Management measures should not only ensure the conservation of target species but also of species belonging to the same ecosystem or associated with or dependent upon the target species.
6.3	States should prevent over fishing and excess fishing capacity and should implement management measures to ensure that fishing effort is commensurate with the productive capacity of the fishery resources and their sustainable utilization. States should take measures to rehabilitate populations as far as possible and when appropriate.
6.4	Conservation and management decisions for fisheries should be based on the best scientific evidence available, also taking into account traditional knowledge of the resources and their habitat, as well as relevant environmental, economic and social factors. States should assign priority to undertake research and data collection in order to improve scientific and technical knowledge of fisheries including their interaction with the ecosystem. In recognizing the transboundary nature of many aquatic ecosystems, States should encourage bilateral and multilateral cooperation in research, as appropriate.
6.5	States and subregional and regional fisheries management organizations should apply a precautionary approach widely to conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment, taking account of the best scientific evidence available. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species and non-target species and their environment.
6.6	Selective and environmentally safe fishing gear and practices should be further developed and applied, to the extent practicable, in order to maintain biodiversity and to conserve the population structure and aquatic ecosystems and protect fish quality. Where proper selective and environmentally safe fishing gear and practices exist, they should be recognized and accorded a priority in establishing conservation and management measures for fisheries. States and users of aquatic ecosystems should minimize waste, catch of non-target species, both fish and nonfish species, and impacts on associated or dependent species.

Table 1 – FAO CCRF Guiding Principles sourced from Article 6

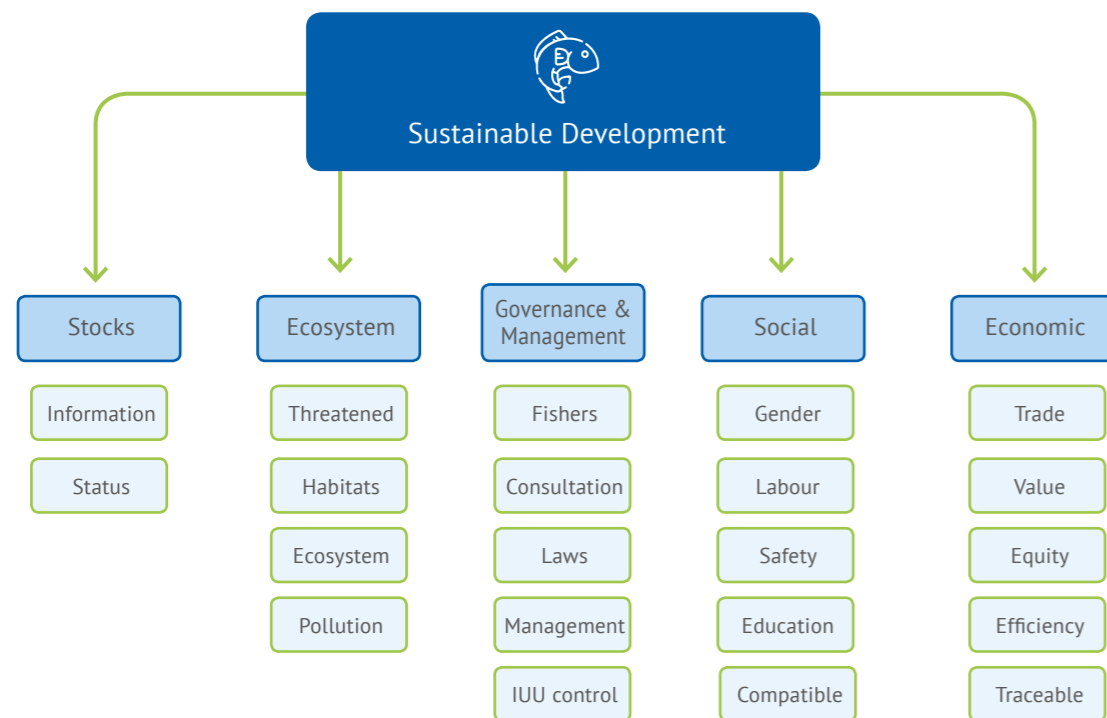
6.8	All critical fisheries habitats in marine and fresh water ecosystems, such as wetlands, mangroves, reefs, lagoons, nursery and spawning areas, should be protected and rehabilitated as far as possible and where necessary. Particular effort should be made to protect such habitats from destruction, degradation, pollution and other significant impacts resulting from human activities that threaten the health and viability of the fishery resources.
6.9	States should ensure that their fisheries interests, including the need for conservation of the resources, are taken into account in the multiple uses of the coastal zone and are integrated into coastal area management, planning and development.
6.10	Within their respective competences and in accordance with international law, including within the framework of subregional or regional fisheries conservation and management organizations or arrangements, States should ensure compliance with and enforcement of conservation and management measures and establish effective mechanisms, as appropriate, to monitor and control the activities of fishing vessels and fishing support vessels.
6.12	States should, within their respective competences and in accordance with international law, cooperate at subregional, regional and global levels through fisheries management organizations, other international agreements or other arrangements to promote conservation and management, ensure responsible fishing and ensure effective conservation and protection of living aquatic resources throughout their range of distribution, taking into account the need for compatible measures in areas within and beyond national jurisdiction.
6.13	States should, to the extent permitted by national laws and regulations, ensure that decision making processes are transparent and achieve timely solutions to urgent matters. States, in accordance with appropriate procedures, should facilitate consultation and the effective participation of industry, fish workers, environmental and other interested organizations in decision-making with respect to the development of laws and policies related to fisheries management, development, international lending and aid.
6.15	States should cooperate in order to prevent disputes. All disputes relating to fishing activities and practices should be resolved in a timely, peaceful and cooperative manner, in accordance with applicable international agreements or as may otherwise be agreed between the parties. Pending settlement of a dispute, the States concerned should make every effort to enter into provisional arrangements of a practical nature which should be without prejudice to the final outcome of any dispute settlement procedure.
6.16	States, recognizing the paramount importance to fishers of understanding the conservation and management of the fishery resources on which they depend, should promote awareness of responsible fisheries through education and training. They should ensure that fishers are involved in the policy formulation and implementation process, also with a view to facilitating the implementation of the Code.
6.17	States should ensure that fishing facilities and equipment as well as all fisheries activities allow for safe, healthy and fair working and living conditions and meet internationally agreed standards adopted by relevant international organizations.
6.18	Recognizing the important contributions of artisanal and small-scale fisheries to employment, income and food security, States should appropriately protect the rights of fishers and fishworkers, particularly those engaged in subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, to a secure and just livelihood, as well as preferential access, where appropriate, to traditional fishing grounds and resources in the waters under their national jurisdiction.

The assessment table (Table 2) is designed to enable information to be gathered in a structured way and for the issues explored to be aligned with the FAO CCRF and, thus, market-based standards. The table does cover some aspects of fisheries which may not (yet) be covered by standards but are nevertheless important for ensuring that the social aspects of fisheries are brought into the fisheries management process.

Table 2 is organized to cover the topics set out in Figure 3 (the component tree) below. The component tree (Figure 3)

is a mechanism for helping visualise all the components of a fishery that need to be addressed. It should be noted that each column of factors is not separate. So, for example, stocks and management and economics are inter-related and connections across the columns may be complex. Figure 3 shows the relationship between the general categories of indicators and the main factors that determine sustainable fisheries. The top row (in blue) relates directly to the Section headings in Table 2.

Figure 3 The component tree



An assessor needs to seek out and evaluate available information for each of the

indicators. It may be that there are indicators which do not have significant issues that

require action. The assessor should use their expert judgment to allocate a category for each indicator as follows:

- **1** – not an area where there are significant issues that require specific actions in the fishery action/management plan
- **2** – areas where there are issues that require actions in the fishery action/management plan, but they may not be urgent
- **3** – areas here there are some significant issues requiring action in the short term

If there is uncertainty, the assessor should err on the side of caution and ensure that there is further investigation by the stakeholder group. The expert

judgement is not a final ruling but simply an indication and the stakeholder group should not feel compelled to accept the views of the assessor if there is good reason to disagree.

Some brief guidance on the sorts of information/issues that could be covered for each of the indicators is outlined in Box 1. In addition, there is an enormous amount of online guidance material available from both the UNDP (see for example [here](#)) and FAO (see for example [here](#)). There is a rich source of guidance available through the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries training area – and EAFMlearn.

Box 1 – Guidance on interpreting the issues that could be covered under each of the high-level indicators set out in the component tree

Stocks

- **Information** – all stocks/species need to be considered whether they are considered to be target species or not. May be considered as species groups (if too many species). Information sources may be landings data (volume, place, species), independent scientific surveys, observer reports, targeted research projects, biological data, oldest through to most recent where possible, fishery effort data (e.g.,

amount of fishing gear, numbers of vessels, days at sea etc),

- **Status** – any stock assessments undertaken, can be single or multispecies, need to know how undertaken and when, what the results are, how the stocks are performing over time and what they are against informal or formal reference points.

Ecosystem

- **Threatened** – what endangered, threatened or protected species are taken, how they may be taken and whether the fishery is considered to be a significant source of mortality, measures that are in place to mitigate any mortalities,
- **Habitats** – includes both any effects of the fishery on fish habitats and the influence of habitat loss on fishery production. The latter may include the loss of estuarine nursery grounds due to coastal development or the loss of freshwater flows and flow blockage caused by dams and weirs.
- **Ecosystem** – does fishing affect he ecosystem in an unacceptable way? Some ecosystem change will always be associated with fishing (or other human activities). Is the change caused by selective or unselective fishing? What controls are in place to limit the change to acceptable levels?
- **Pollution** – includes both pollution due to the fishing (or fish processing, ports etc.), including solid (e.g., plastics) and liquid wastes. Can include greenhouse gases if possible. Need to include lost fishing gear and measures to mitigate such losses. Also need to consider non fishery pollution and its potential impacts on fish quality (including contamination) and productivity.

Management and governance

- **Fishers** – are fishers organized and engaged in the management processes? If capacity is an issue are there arrangements made to facilitate their engagement?
- **Consultation** – what arrangements are put in place by government (or, where applicable, a community-based management body) to consult with fishers and other stakeholders? Are the views of fishers and other stakeholders proactively sought?? Are meetings regular and is there a report back mechanism?
- **Laws** – what laws or customs are in place to manage the fisheries? Do these laws/customs have clear objectives aimed at ensuring sustainable use, transparency of decision making, accountability, provision for fishery level regulations and plans, provisions for enforcement

and sanctions and reference to international norms.

- **Management** – if considering an individual fishery is there a management plan in place? Are there management arrangements that control catches (either by input or output controls or both), establish fishery level objectives, limit participation, control fishing gear, establish reference points (target, limit and trigger points), establish harvest control rules and tools, make provisions for capacity reduction (if required) and stock rebuilding (if required).
- **IUU control** – in addition to laws and sanctions, what Monitoring/Control and Surveillance measures are in place to detect and deter Illegal, Unregulated and Uncontrolled fishing? Is there capacity to be able to undertake fishery enforcement activities and is there a record of violations being successfully prosecuted.

Social and human rights

- **Gender** – are women are treated equally to men in all aspect of workplace payment and opportunity and are they also involved in an equal way in fishery governance structures? Do they have equal opportunity in terms of access to fishery resources?
- **Safety** – do both boat and shore-based workers have access to safe work places including the right protective gear, access to communications equipment (e.g. radios) and appropriate training? Do fishing ports and villages have arrangements in place for dealing with natural disasters such as cyclones, tsunamis and similar?
- **Labour** – are both boat and shore-based workers are provided with adequate remuneration and non-monetary benefits (e.g. transparent contracting, on-board living arrangements etc) in line with ILO conventions? Is child labour used? If children are involved in family business does their work interfere with schooling?
- **Education** – do fishers and others have access to suitable education aimed at enabling them to perform their tasks in a safe and efficient fashion and enable options for new sources of work to be available if they so choose?

- **Compatible** – are there arrangements in place to enable dialogue between fisher groups that share the same space (i.e. different gear types, sizes of vessels) and are there similar arrangements for dialogue between

fishers that share water space with other waterway user groups (e.g. recreational users). Different. Do fishers have a voice in coastal development and planning?

Economic

- **Trade** – is the movement of seafood both within the country and between countries documented and understood including volumes, values and product transformations?
- **Value** – the value of the fisheries needs to be documented, including not only the landed catch value but value added industries and what this may mean for employment and rural economies/development.
- **Equity** – how is access to fishery resources determined? Is the division of access between user groups fair? Do

all key user groups have a mechanism to participate in policy decisions that allocate fishery resources?

- **Efficiency** – are resources fully utilized and discarding minimised? Is the fleet efficient or are there too many vessels that are inactive or do not make a profit?
- **Traceable** – what measures are in place to ensure that seafood products are traceable back to the source to ensure that IUU and substitution are minimised and regulatory requirements are met.

The assessor needs to provide a rationale for the judgement made and to document the source of information used. These sources need to be publicly available

so that the stakeholder group has access while writing the fishery action/management plan.

Table 2

Section 1 Stocks		1	2	3	Assessors comments	Information source
1.1	Information is collected on the amount of fish landed by the fishery to the extent that there is an adequate understanding of the annual catch by the fisheries of interest and any associated fisheries that may take the same species. Data on landings should be collected at the lowest level of taxonomic classification feasible. Where species level data are not collected the level of aggregation should be described. For example, if species of snappers are not segregated then the next most relevant taxonomic level should be used (genus or family).					
1.2	Information on landings is collated by the fisheries authority that management responsibility for the fishery and is made public in a timely fashion.					
1.3	Other information required to develop an understanding of the status of exploited fish stocks is collected. This could include effort data, biological data (including geographic distribution) and catch composition. The information sources can be scientific or based on traditional knowledge.					
1.4	Regular assessments of the status of fish stocks are carried out. The assessments can be carried out on a single species or aggregate basis using whatever techniques are appropriate to the size and intensity of the fisheries.					
1.5	There is evidence (quantitative or risk based) that none of the individual stocks is depleted (below the point of recruitment impairment).					
1.6	Where there is a target reference point there should be evidence the stocks of interest (single or aggregate) are fluctuating around this.					

Table 2

Section 2 Ecosystem		1	2	3	Assessors comments	Information source
2.1	The types of fishing gears used in the fishery along with their interactions with habitats and species that are not of interest to fishers. Information on the range of species taken and their characteristics (e.g., common sizes) would be valuable.					
2.2	Where there are interactions between fishing gear and species of conservation concern the nature and number of the interactions (capture, mortality) should be known along with any efforts being undertaken to reduce mortalities.					
2.3	Where there are interactions between the fishing gear and habitats there is an assessment of the significance of the interactions and if there is a risk of unacceptable habitat loss then there are measures in place to reduce this.					
2.4	There is an understanding of the risk to ecosystem structure and function associated with the fishing activities and that the risks are believed to be acceptable or manageable.					
2.5	Fishing vessels and fish processing facilities are not a source of pollution – solid or liquid. The disposal of plastics is appropriately managed and there are efforts to eliminate the loss of fishing gear.					
2.6	Land/sea-based source of pollution from activities outside of the fishery are not a threat to fish resources, seafood quality (i.e. contamination) or habitat/ecosystem integrity.					
2.7	Non fishery sources of habitat loss (e.g., coastal development, wetland loss) or ecosystem alteration (e.g. large scale dams or water irrigation systems) are not a serious risk to the ongoing viability of the fisheries.					
2.8	There are mechanisms in place to allow or encourage the recovery of fish or other animals/plants.					

Table 2

Section 3 Governance and management		1	2	3	Assessors comments	Information source
3.1	Fishers are organized into representative groups that can engage in the fisheries management process.					
3.2	Government run, fishery level consultation arrangements are known to all stakeholder groups, codified in law or policy and are run in a proactive and collaborative fashion.					
3.3	Stakeholders are advised about upcoming meetings and are given timely feedback on and records of the results of previous meetings.					
3.4	Fisheries laws are in place which give clear priority to the long-term sustainability of fishery resources and acknowledges the precautionary principle.					
3.5	Fishery laws make arrangements for consultation over the management of transboundary stocks and fleets.					
3.6	Stocks should be managed at Maximum Sustainable Yield (single or aggregate species based) as qualified by environmental, social or economic factors.					
3.7	Decision making processes are clear and transparent and there are avenues for appeal.					
3.8	There are fishery level management objectives that cover environmental, social and economic aspects and which are linked to reference points, trigger points and indicators.					
3.9	Individual fisheries should have formal management plans.					
3.10	There needs to be a monitoring, control and surveillance system in place which is appropriate to the size and scale of the fishery.					
3.11	An enforcement system is in place that incorporates a suitable method for detecting breaches of regulations and a track record of issuing sanctions where required.					

Table 2

Section 4 Social and human rights		1	2	3	Assessors comments	Information source
4.1	Fishing is regulated in such a way as to avoid the risk of conflict among fishers using different vessels, gear and fishing methods.					
4.2	The management of fisheries resources gives due recognition, to the traditional practices, needs and interests of indigenous people which are highly dependent on fishery resources for their livelihood.					
4.3	In the evaluation of alternative conservation and management measures, their social impact and cost-effectiveness should be considered.					
4.4	Education and training programs should be available to increase education and skills of fishers.					
4.5	Health and safety standards should be adopted for everyone employed in fishing operations.					
4.6	Workers are treated responsibly and in accordance with national labour rules and regulations and, where appropriate, relevant ILO conventions.					
4.7	Workers are paid wages and provided benefits and working conditions according to national laws and regulations.					
4.8	Child labour is not used in a manner inconsistent with ILO conventions and international standards.					
4.9	Women and men have opportunities for participation – there is access to a variety of work in the supply chain (from vessels to sales).					
4.10	Government collects, analyses and uses sex-disaggregated data in official statistics.					

Table 2

Section 4 Social and human rights		1	2	3	Assessors comments	Information source
4.11	A gender analysis has been carried out to understand the legal framework, women and men’s division of roles and responsibilities along the supply chain including caring responsibilities and their needs and interests along the fishery supply chain.					
4.12	Women fish workers earn equal pay for equal work. Earnings are consistent with decent work and sustainable livelihoods and all fish workers are provided opportunities to advance.					
4.13	Women are represented along the supply chain and their knowledge, needs and interests are taken into account.					
4.14	Women fish workers have full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of policy making and decision-making.					
4.15	Women fish workers have access to training, education and credit.					
4.16	Women fish workers have access and control over assets and resources along the supply chain.					
4.17	Representatives of the fisheries sector receive sensitization and training on gender.					
4.18	Representatives of the fisheries sector and fishing communities are consulted in the decision-making processes and involved in other activities related to coastal area management planning and development.					

Table 2

Section 5 Economic		1	2	3	Assessors comments	Information source
5.1	There is information available on the value of the fisheries – landed catch value and value adding within the country. There should also be information on the costs associated with the fishery such as research and enforcement, and any subsidies that are provided.					
5.2	Excess fishing capacity is avoided, and exploitation of the stocks remains economically viable. Mechanisms are in place to remove excess capacity if it exists.					
5.3	There should be measures to ensure the right of consumers to safe, wholesome and unadulterated fish and fishery products.					
5.4	Mechanisms for reducing any discarding, whether they be focused on reducing capture or increasing utilization, need to be in place.					
5.5	The economic and social role of the post-harvest fisheries sector needs to be included in the development of national policies for the sustainable development and utilization of fishery resources.					
5.6	Those involved in fish processing, distribution and marketing to use fish resources in an efficient manner and reduce post-harvest losses and waste.					
5.7	The international and domestic trade in fish and fishery products accords with sound conservation and management practices and the origin of traded fish and fishery products is traceable.					
5.8	International trade in fish and fishery products should not compromise the sustainable development of fisheries and responsible utilization of living aquatic resources.					

Guidance 1

Using component trees with stakeholders

What it is

The component tree tool allows you to categorize issues according to the three main components of sustainable development – ecological well-being, human well-being and governance - and break issues down to a level that can be further analyzed. A component tree has similarities to Root Cause Analysis in that it is a structured way of working with stakeholders to tease out the underlying causes of issues they may be facing.

Purpose

The use of the tool is to allow the issues to be put into a structured framework for subsequent risk analysis and prioritization. Thus, the issues in this framework will be a mix of ecological, social and economic issues for a given fishery.

How to do a component tree

Have the heading “Sustainable development” at the top of a large piece of paper. Under this put the three component headings: Ecological well-being; Human well-being; and Governance.

Ask stakeholders to identify the issues for their fishery, and categorize each issue under one of these three component headings. Continue to identify the issues in a hierarchical setting.

It is likely that initially the stakeholders will brainstorm a whole variety of issues. This process can be disorderly and full of debate, but that should be encouraged. Get stakeholders to write their issues on cards and place them under the headings; the cards can then be moved about easily during the debate. If possible, broad issues should be broken down into more specific issues. Starting with the broad issue, the hierarchical tree diagram is further developed to include all issues relevant to that broad issue for a given fishery, noting other tools such as problem trees (see Annex 3) can also be applied.

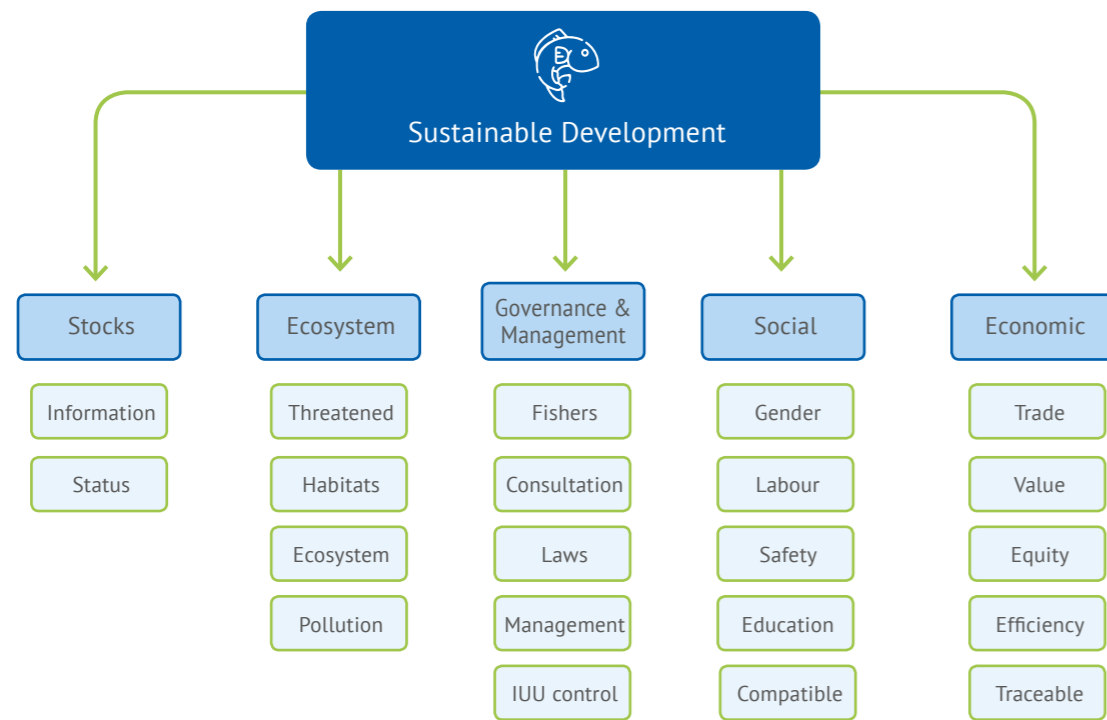
Alternative: FAO’s EAFnet and EAF Toolbox suggest a slightly different approach, which consists of modifying a set of “generic component trees” to document and structure the various issues associated with a fishery system into their related components. Adapting the already tested

generic trees minimizes the chance of missing issues. See details at www.fao.org/fishery/eaf-net/topic/166252/en. This method also relies more on constructing branches of the tree to move from the high-level issue to an operational level, with as much branching as is necessary

to specify the issue at a level that can be managed with one or more management interventions.

Figure G1.1 gives an example of the main headings in the component tree that might need to be considered.

Figure G1.1 Example of a component tree that covers many categories of issues in a fishery



Likely issues could include:

- overcapacity of fishing;
- high level of illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing;
- overfishing of the fishery resource;
- degraded critical habitats;
- ecologically unsustainable catches of non-retained species (bycatch), especially endangered and vulnerable species;
- detrimental impact on the structure, processes and functions of the ecosystem;
- unsustainable livelihoods; and
- high regional unemployment.

When to use

This tool is most useful in scoping issues when stakeholders are identifying their FMU issues. It allows one to categorize what would otherwise be a mass of diverse issues. It can be done simply with large sheets of paper stuck together, card and pens (on tables or on the floor); in this case the final product will need to be recorded electronically. Or it can be done using spreadsheets and with software that all involved in the process can share. However, the spreadsheet option requires reasonably sophisticated computer and display setup and is not as interactive.

Strengths

- Identifies fishery issues for each of three sustainable development components (ensures all aspects of the fishery are considered)
- Fosters discussion and debate and creates ownership

Weaknesses

- Time consuming if involving many stakeholders
- Can be a complicated process if not facilitated well



Guidance 2

Prioritising the issues

Inevitably, scoping issues with stakeholders always produces a long “shopping list”. However, in any one time (e.g., five years), only a relatively small sub-set of these can be addressed by management.

To reduce the long list to one that is manageable, a 2x2 matrix risk assessment can be used (Figure G2.1). The tool categorizes the issues as high priority if they are both very likely and have a large impact.

How to do a risk assessment for issues

A risk analysis typically seeks answers to three questions:

1. What can go wrong? (Risk)

2. How likely is it to go wrong? (Likelihood)

3. What would be the consequences of it going wrong? (Impact)

$$\text{Risk} = \text{likelihood} \times \text{impact}$$

To conduct a risk assessment, you score both the likelihood and impact of failure in relation to each issue. This can be on any scale, for example, on a scale of zero to five. A simple semi-quantitative risk assessment is to rate each issue as to whether it has (i) high or low likelihood of occurring and (ii) high or low impact when it does occur. Likelihood is the probability of occurrence and impact is how change would occur. These are then plotted on a 2x2 matrix diagram (Figure G2.1).

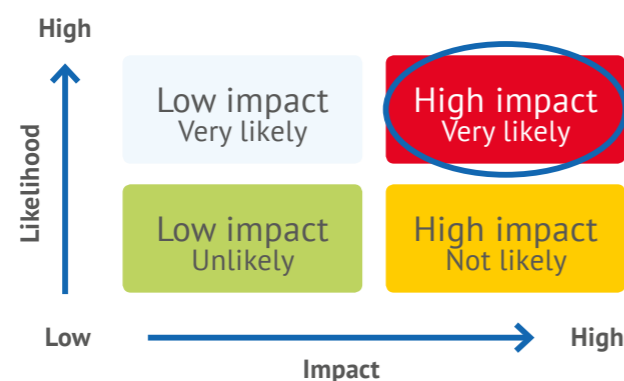


Figure G2.1: Semi-quantitative risk assessment.

In this way, the high likelihood/high impact issues are identified (shown in the circle). These high priority issues are the ones that require direct management and need to be taken forward into the planning process. The medium risk issues might also be identified and mentioned in the planning in case their priority changes over time.

To correctly assign the levels of consequence and likelihood, it is important to recognize that these form a pair; they are not to be chosen independently. It is the likelihood that, given a particular fishing management strategy, a particular level of impact may be the result (either from an accumulation of small events or from a single large event). It is assessing the likelihood of an outcome being generated, not the likelihood of an activity occurring. This type of error must be avoided as it results in over-rating risks.

When making decisions about what are appropriate combinations of consequence and likelihood, if more than one combination of consequence and likelihood is considered plausible, the combination with the highest risk score should be chosen (this is consistent with taking a precautionary approach).

When to use

When stakeholder issues have been identified and categorized, they need to be prioritized.

Strengths

- Risk assessment is a very effective tool for participatory priority setting
- The assessment can be as simple or complicated as needed – caters for all audiences
- Can be carried out with simple props

Weaknesses

- Can be time consuming
- Can be made too complicated, which defeats its purpose



An example for a trawl fishery is as follows:

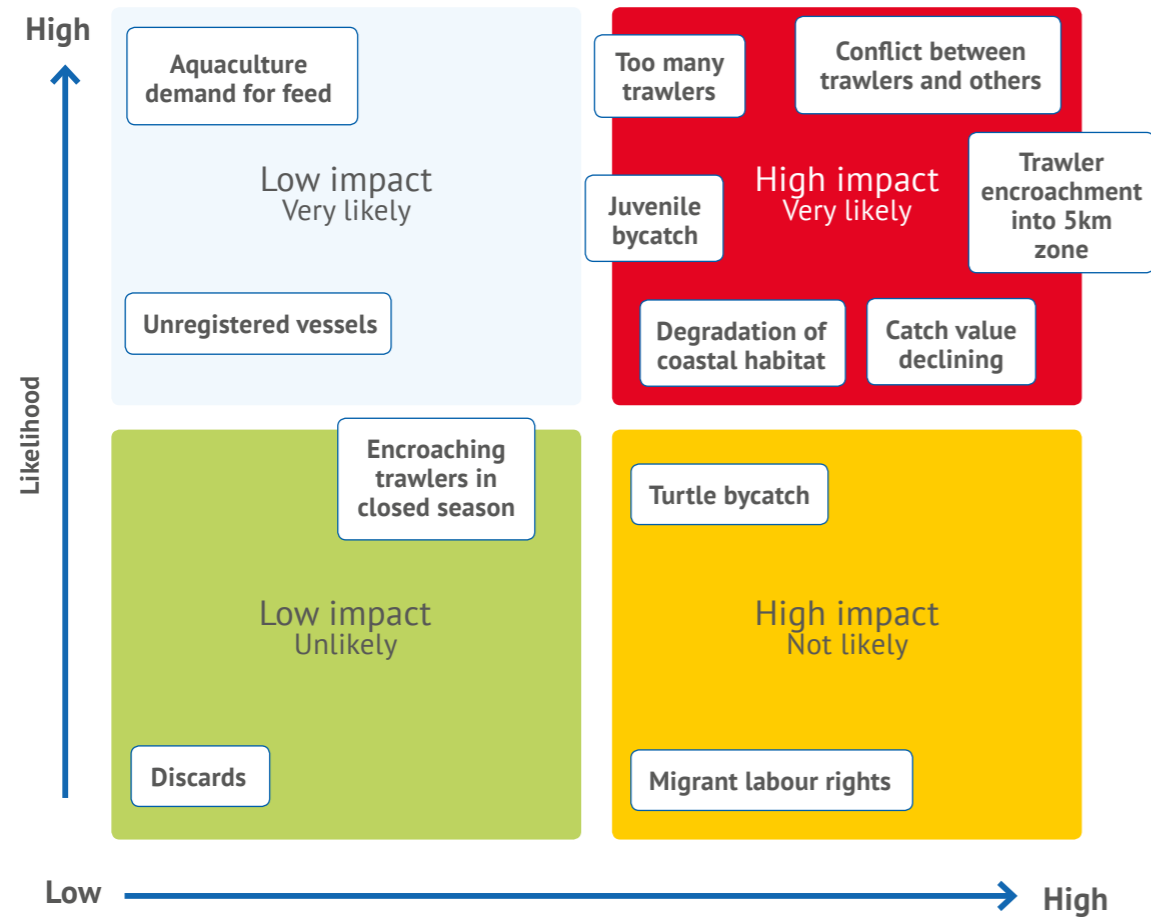


Figure G2.2: An example of using a 2x2 matrix risk assessment tool to prioritize issues.

In this example, the high priority issues were:

- Too many trawlers
- Conflict between trawlers and others
- Trawler encroachment in 5km zone
- Catch value declining
- Degradation of coastal habitat
- Fuel subsidies
- Juvenile bycatch (catching too many juvenile fish)

Guidance 3

Working with problem/solution trees

What it is

Problem tree analysis is a visual tool to help tease out cause and effects by mapping out the anatomy of cause and effect using an analogy of a tree. The effects are the branches of the tree, the core problem is the trunk, and the causes lie underground in the roots of the tree.

Purpose

The problem tree is designed to provide a way of separating out causes and effects and being able to identify the underlying causes that can be addressed by management measures. The problem tree can easily be converted to a solution (or objective) tree.

How to do a problem tree

A problem tree recognizes four levels of an issue that help sort out the causes and effects, as follows (Figure G3.1):

- 1. Drivers:** the large-scale events that have a flow-on effect on many issues, e.g., growth in population and wealth, or climate change;
- 2. Effects:** what the core problem creates;
- 3. Core problem:** the actual problem; and
- 4. Causes:** the causes of the problem. These can be broken down further into main and underlying causes.

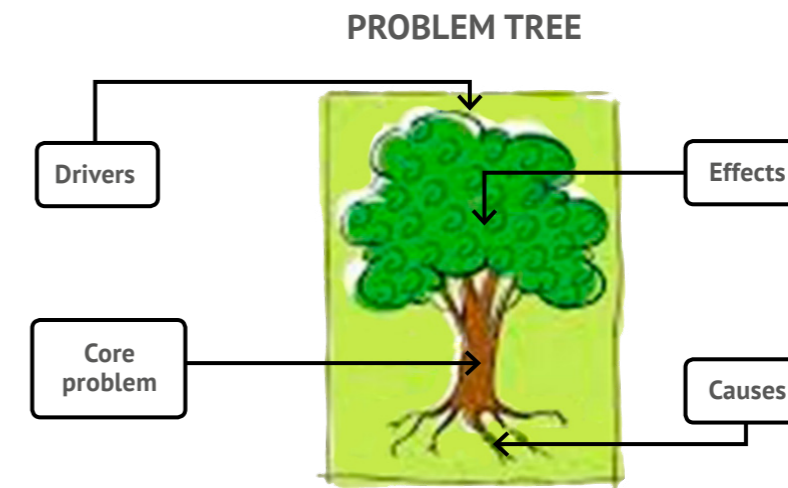


Figure G3.1: The problem tree

The problem tree analysis can be conducted by using cards and flipcharts, or even drawings in the dirt. In its simplest form, and one that promotes the participation even of stakeholders without formal education, the problem tree is a way to set out the problems in a hierarchical order using the following steps:

1. Take one of the high priority issues identified in the risk assessment.
2. Decide whether the issue is a driver, an effect, a core problem or the causes of the problem.
3. Agree on the core problem and then using some of the “issues” identified earlier plus adding new effects and causes:
 - a. Group causes below the core problem
 - b. If it is an effect, it goes above the core problem

This exercise can be done on a large sheet of paper divided into four rows – drivers, effects, core problems, and causes.

As with many RCA tools, the “5 whys method” that was developed by the Toyota Production System can be used to identify underlying causes.

“The basis of Toyota’s scientific approach is to ask why five times whenever we find a problem ... By repeating why five times, the nature of the problem as well as its solution becomes clear.” Taiichi Ohno

In practice, anywhere between three and six questions might be needed.

Converting a problem tree into a solution tree

One of the strengths of the problem tree tool is that it can quickly be turned in to a solution tree that can be used to frame a fishery management plan. The effect in the problem tree is often linked to the goal and the core problem often identifies the operational management (Figure G3.2).

Appropriate management measures are selected that can address the causes of the problems (not the effects). Ideally, this should be framed as a harvest control rule (or decision rule) that specifies an agreed action that will be taken to apply the management measure



FROM THE PROBLEM TREE TO SOLUTION TREE

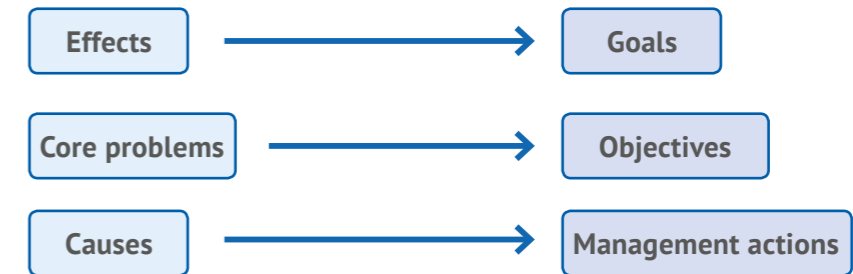


Figure G3.2: Converting a problem tree into a solution tree

When to use

The problem tree tool should be used after the high priority issues have been identified. The tool will result in much discussion, and as with many tools, the process is probably as important as the end result.

Strengths

- The approach and terminology are much easier to follow than some other tools. For example, other tools use the terms such as “root cause”, “proximate cause”, “immediate causes” that are difficult for stakeholders to understand in a participatory process.
- Problem trees can easily be turned into solution trees that are used in planning, e.g., for developing a fishery action/ management plan.



- Helps define the problem, which is often a stumbling block for RCA.

Weaknesses

- It is often difficult to decide whether an “issue” is a driver, an effect, or a cause. For example, climate change could be a driver or a cause, although a more thorough analysis often reveals that it is a particular aspect of climate change that is the cause, rather than climate change per se e.g., changing the ecosystem structure of a fishery resource.
- Many hours (and days) can be spent debating whether an aspect of an issue is a cause or an underlying cause, or even an effect. Converting the problem tree to a solution tree usually resolves these uncertainties.

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www.globalmarinecommodities.org

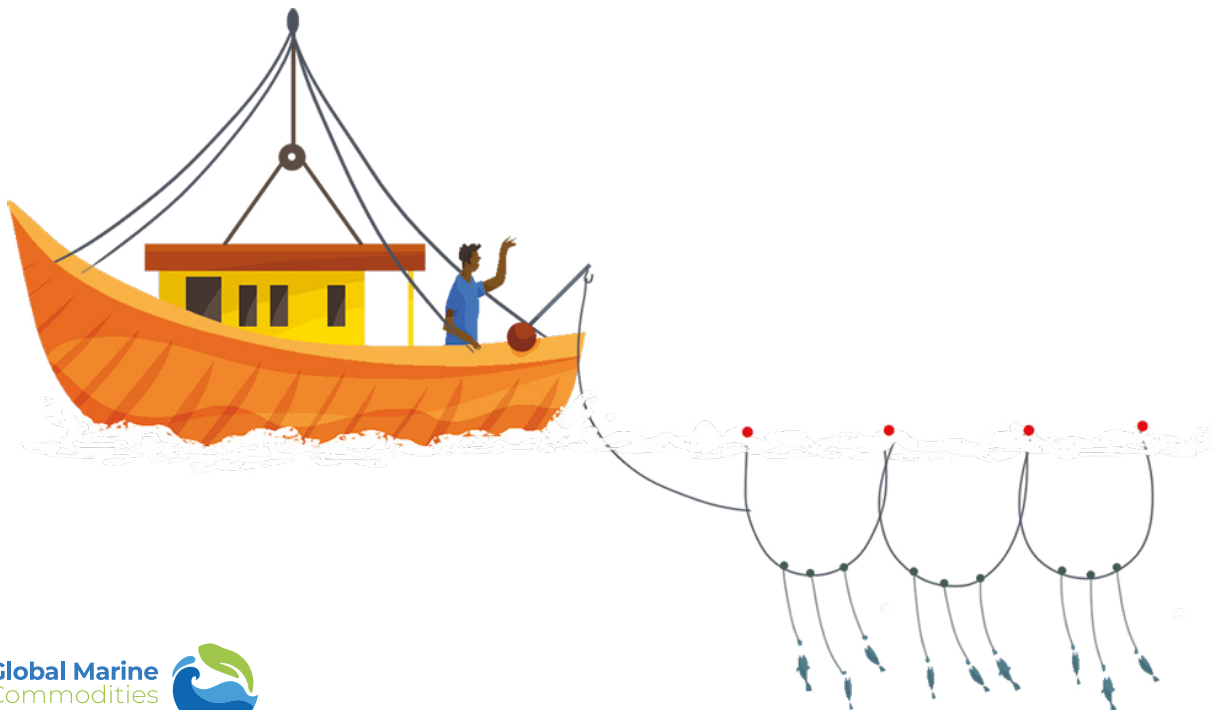
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Key Considerations for Fishery Improvement Projects



Key Considerations for Fishery Improvement Projects

August, 2021

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Introduction

The Global Sustainable Supply Chains for Marine Commodities (GMC) Project is a Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded interregional initiative implemented by the Ministries and Bureaus of Fisheries, Production and Planning of Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia and the Philippines, with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and facilitated by the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP). The GMC Project contributes to the transformation of international seafood markets by mainstreaming sustainability in seafood supply chains originating in developing countries.

The project harnesses both top-down market-driven incentives, and a

bottom-up public governance model to effectively drive sustainability to “meet in the middle” of the fishery - supply chain interface. First, the project helps establish or strengthen Sustainable Marine Commodity Platforms (SMCPs) as overarching policy dialogue spaces where government, NGOs and academia, exporters, fisherfolk and producers come together to debate and formulate national policy and management plans for the sustainability of the target fishery commodities. The SMCP is the “bottom-up” consultative body that seeks to empower multiple groups of stakeholders to formulate management strategies aimed at promoting shared objectives for the long-term sustainable use of fishery resources.

Simultaneously, the project takes into consideration the market incentives from international seafood buyers and retailers to encourage producing countries to take necessary actions so that they can achieve “verified improvements” or “certified sustainable/responsible” fisheries. For example, through the Supply Chain Roundtables (SRs), SFP hosts fora for international seafood buyers who source directly from a specific seafood sector so that the buyers can work together in a pre-competitive environment to foster improvements in fisheries or aquaculture. Members of the SRs often prioritize sourcing seafood from fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and can even provide financial contributions to FIPs, ensuring adequate market support for the implementation of the incremental improvements needed to achieve sustainability.

SFP also helps large international retailers and food service companies to craft sustainable seafood purchasing policies, in which these companies make commitments to increase their seafood sourcing from certified sustainable or improving fisheries. When large companies commit to purchasing sustainable seafood, the market influence generated helps drive home the importance of sound fisheries governance and management systems in producing countries.

The aim of this document is to assist those involved in fishery improvement projects and related dialogue platforms by providing information that sets out the circumstance under which a FIP may be most likely to succeed. It makes use of a mix of lessons learned from the GMC project implementation teams and wider reviews of FIP implementation experiences from around the world.

The value of FIPs is their ability to engage market players in the journey towards sustainability and this ability can be enhanced if they engage with any existing, government established processes that have the same aims. It needs to be acknowledged that FIPs are neither unique in terms of consultation mechanisms in fisheries nor the main instrument for making progress on fisheries management. This in no means diminishes their value which can be enhanced by making connections to similar concepts such as comanagement, which is widely recognized as being a useful tool for engaging and consulting stakeholders.

We provide some ‘best practice’ suggestions which are relatively broad as the circumstances under which FIPs are created can be variable and there is no single pathway to success. We draw attention to both the similarities and differences between FIPs and other



consultation forums (dialogue platforms and comanagement) to ensure that overlaps and gaps are addressed by project managers and FIP participants.

Finally, we speculate on what the future may hold for FIPs and market driven improvements in fisheries more generally. While much remains to be done to

ensure that the basics of fisheries management are addressed, the recent focus on labour related challenges has rekindled interest in how social issues in fisheries are progressed more widely. Another important area is gender, which has been a topic among academics and fisher groups for many years.

From a project perspective, eight key messages guide the establishment, support and management of fishery improvement projects, as follows:





What is a **fishery improvement project?**

Fishery improvement projects are mechanisms by which seafood supply chain participants (such as companies involved in processing, wholesaling, and retail) can help contribute to improved fisheries management in a structured way. Increasingly, FIPs can also take on some social challenges, including labour, human rights and gender issues. A FIP is designed to actively involve those in the private sector with a commitment to providing incentives for producers to improve fisheries management.

Fishery improvement projects have grown in popularity since their inception in the mid 2000s. FIPs are commonly promoted as a pathway to certification, with the

most common certification standard pursued being that owned by the Marine Stewardship Council. This does not mean that other standards are irrelevant and there is a small but growing number of FIPs working to the Marine Trust standard which focuses on fish meal and oil and the GMC project has worked closely with one of these FIPs (Ecuador small pelagics). However, the much larger number of MSC destined FIPs has created a database which can be analyzed for trends and lessons learned. In the future, other frameworks, which may not be standards based, such as the Asia Seafood Improvement Collaborative, are likely to become available to help set goals for improving fisheries management.



The key elements of a FIP are as follows:

- **The establishment of a project steering committee** – this can include fishers, supply chain participants, technical personnel and, ideally, government representatives.
- **The creation of a gap analysis** – this is commonly a comparison of selected fishery attributes against an independent sustainability standard.
- **The preparation of an action plan** which sets out tasks to be undertaken to address the gaps in fishery performance.
- **Public reporting progress** on implementing the actions.

Fishery improvement projects have increased in number around the world. There is a growing literature base aimed at understanding the circumstances

under which they work. There is a strong learning by doing culture and FIPs continue to evolve.



A note on the role of government and FIPs

The concept of FIPs was created to harness the interest of the private sector in driving a transition towards sustainable use of fishery resources. Governments are almost universally the owners of these resources and are tasked with making decisions about who may access these resources and under what conditions. FIPs are designed to enable the private sector to take responsibility for, and exercise leadership in, seeking actions designed to pursue sustainable use. Government is not only a source of information and technical skills, but it also has the authority to create the rules required to enable the conditions for sustainable use to be created. In most circumstances having both industry and government at the table together helps develop the partnership approach. There may be circumstances where the private



sector needs to have its own conversations, and these should be respected but a FIP should be guided by the general principles of inclusiveness and transparency.

Where do FIPs fit in?

FIPs need to be seen in the context of the wider fisheries management framework. They are not stand alone exercises as they are explicitly designed to engage stakeholders in making improvements to a fishery and these are

largely about ensuring that the fishery is better managed. Understanding where FIPs fit in helps designers to work out how they can be best designed so that they are accepted (especially by government) and make progress as quickly as possible.



The GMC project creates dialogue platforms as a mechanism for engaging the private sector and government in designing pathways to sustainable production. From this perspective, FIPs can create a bridge between sector level platforms and fishery specific efforts as they operate along similar principles. The primary difference is that platforms are designed to be government coordinated and FIPs are designed to be led by the private sector. Platforms are also more focused on larger scales of organisation (e.g., whole of country, whole of commodity etc.) while FIPs can be more targeted.

FIPs also need to work closely with any government mandated consultation bodies and relevant staff managers and scientists) established under law or policy. These may operate at a jurisdictional level or at a fishery level and establishing a working relationship (either via a Memorandum of Understanding or overlapping membership) will ensure that outputs from the FIP are incorporated into government decision making processes.

Fisheries management is not a project and requires an ongoing investment of resources and commitment. If government mandated consultation structures are in place, then the FIP may simply dissolve when it has achieved its goals. If the FIP is the only consultation forum in place

then consideration should be given to transitioning it to a formal, government endorsed advisory body.

In fisheries, there is a well-developed concept known as comanagement which has been widely adopted across the world and this approach is based on getting registered/licenced stakeholders and government together to progress management. There is thus a solid basis in countries that implement comanagement to build upon when designing dialogue platforms and adding market actors would be an iterative step.

The attainment of sustainable use in fisheries is based upon the implementation of good fisheries management. Central to this is the design and implementation of rules that define how much fish can be taken, conserving the supporting aquatic environment, and ensuring that the exploitation of the fish stocks meets societal objectives in terms of social and economic benefits. Discussion is important but is not an end in itself and this is also true for consultation forums.





The global **experience** of FIPs

FIPs are a global phenomenon, which attests to their flexibility across different types of fisheries and jurisdictions. While the FisheryProgress.org website does not cover all types of FIPs, it does demonstrate how FIPs can be utilized as a tool in developed and developing countries. FIPs may or may not work towards standards but for those that do, the standard is a mechanism for defining fishery management performance and goal setting. Standards act as a 'currency' such that buyers in one country can instantly understand and accept fisheries that are working towards standards they know.

The Global Marine Commodities project has worked with both the Marine Stewardship Council and Marine Trust standards. However, there are others currently in existence and, undoubtedly more will emerge.

There are several papers in the peer reviewed literature that analyses the performance of FIPs (see for example [Cannon, J. et al \(2018\)](#), and [Crona, B. et al \(2019\)](#)). In their in-depth analysis of extant FIPs, California Environment Associates or CEA ([2020](#)) found that the factors documented as being most conducive to FIP success include:

- **Leadership** – within this category are factors such as having strong connections to government processes, a good understanding of FIP processes and local leadership.
- **Stakeholders** – having the right stakeholders involved to be able to leverage the sorts of changes required.
- **Level of investment of time and resources** – mainly focused on having continuity and sufficient funding.
- **Market leverage** – supply chain structure and market leverage influence the degree of incentives for driving change. Shorter supply chains with a small number of actors have a greater chance of driving success.

The finding related to markets is a consequence of the deliberate focus of FIPs on market actors in supply chains.

According to CEA (2020) a country's fishery management capacity is the best predictor of how well a FIP performs. FIPs in higher-income countries are more likely to report improvements as these countries

tend to perform better when it comes to managing fisheries – FIP or no FIP. This raises questions about the ability of FIPs to achieve the sorts of major reforms required in countries with low governance capacity in the short or medium term and suggest that extra resources/capacity and time may need to be allocated in such circumstances.

Individual leadership, more than implementing organization or type, is more commonly associated with successful FIPs. Committed individuals are crucial for driving a project forward and this observation is consistent with findings from the literature evaluating co-management interventions. These individuals tend to be local people with preexisting relationships with fisheries managers or government officials, who are engaged for years and who have a strong technical understanding. These relationships are important as FIPs must compel governments to adopt changes needed to reform the fishery, particularly if certification is sought as this requires good management to be in place. In the absence of such individuals external parties can train local people in how to develop and run a FIP.



Lessons learned from FIPs associated with the GMC Project

The GMC project has interacted with fishery improvement projects in all four pilot countries. The nature of the interactions has varied as follows:

Ecuador

The Small Pelagic FIP was established with the GMC project alongside the dialogue platform and has used the Marine Trust standard as a goal. The FIP is industry driven and the platform government driven.

Filipinas

The Blue Swimming Crab FIP was established prior to the GMC project commencement but was not well connected with government. The government's Technical Working Group on the crab fisheries became the dialogue platform and a closer relationship with the FIP was developed.

Costa Rica

The Large Pelagic FIP was established and registered in fisheryprogress.org, though as a result of lack of agreement between some stakeholders and the current FIP coordinator, some members have started a new FIP following the GMC recommendations and using the information generated by the project.

Indonesia

There are a number of FIPs operating in Indonesia and most were underway prior to the commencement of the GMC project. The GMC project has provided support to Tuna and Blue Swimming Crab FIPs.

In reviews of the lessons learned from the involvement of the GMC Project in FIPs, the following general advice can be put forward:

- **Clear frameworks** – The framework under which the FIP operates needs to be

clearly defined. This includes setting rules for existing and new participants and arrangements for cost sharing. A useful approach is for the participants to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) such that roles and responsibilities are



clear. In the absence of a legislative basis for a FIP, then private sector agreements such as MoUs can play a role.

- **Public-private partnerships** – While FIPs should be led by the private sector, government should be considered for inclusion in any FIP. Without government the chance of recommendations regarding policy or legal reform will go nowhere. Having government involved will aid the integration of the FIP activities into other activities being undertaken outside of the remit of the FIP. These could include research or management on species or gear types that are relevant to the FIP.

- **Information** – The FIP requires good information on the state of the fishery. This is needed to conduct the gap analysis that will be used as the basis for a fishery action plan. Ongoing data collection is required to check to see if the plan is having the desired effects.
- **Capacity** – The FIP will require support in the form of expertise (including fisheries management, social issues and environmental management), funding and capacity building (such as training).

Circumstances will vary from FIP to FIP and it is important to understand the motivations of those involved (and those that are not).

GMC dialogue **platforms and FIPs**

The GMC dialogue platforms are explicit mechanisms for facilitating interactions between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders of all kinds. To date they have had more of a focus on the harvest sector (fishers) and less on the post harvest sector. In a similar fashion to FIPs, they have been designed to focus on commodities and thus have a more explicit market connection than comanagement.

In an overview of the operation of the dialogue platforms established as part of the Global Marine Commodities Project, ten key lessons for [Multistakeholder Dialogue Spaces have been identified](#). In summary the main lessons relate to ensuring that platforms are well connected to any existing arrangements both in terms of administration and personnel and there is access to support in terms of finance, information and capacity.



The findings of these analyses emphasize the need to build upon what is already in place and to ensure that stakeholders are sufficiently empowered to participate

in a meaningful way. Time is always an important consideration as is ensuring that all parties have the capacity to engage in a way that draws out valuable advice.



Comanagement and FIPs

Managing fisheries commonly requires government to make decisions that may have a material impact on who may fish in a given area and when, where and how they may fish. These decisions can be contentious and a source of significant conflict if not approached correctly. Comanagement aims to develop a relationship between government as the creator of laws and stakeholders as the potential beneficiaries

of not only fishery exploitation, but the decisions and rules put in place to facilitate sustainable use.

The term comanagement is quite broad and covers a range of scenarios including where government consults but makes the decisions, government and stakeholders agree on decisions, through to stakeholders making the decisions and government implementing them. All of these are based

on dialogue and all result in decisions being made that, at least in theory, result in more sustainable use.

There are some common themes that emerge from experiences across the world that are relevant for the establishment and operation of FIPs and dialogue platforms. These include:

- The need for formal structures -stakeholders will take the forum seriously and respect the results if a comanagement forum is a formal part of the fishery management process. Where possible, a consultation forum needs to tap into and work with any existing arrangements, including any traditional management.
- Consultation will be enhanced if all players (government and non-government) have sufficient capacity to engage.
- Consultation arrangements need to be inclusive, transparent (meetings announced and minutes taken and distributed), accountable and able to demonstrate that the fisheries agency takes their views seriously.
- Good information is required if stakeholders are to be fully informed about the existing circumstances, the options for making progress and the consequences of those options. Data derived from monitoring programs will

assist stakeholders to judge whether their fishery is progressing according to any management plan.

- Comanagement is about fisheries management and tough decisions commonly need to be made. Good planning is essential and fishery management plans need to have a conflict resolution mechanism in place and good enforcement measures.

Fisheries management takes time and building trust may take many years and the consultation process will be ongoing. Many well managed fisheries have a dedicated consultation forum permanently in place as a fishery requires ongoing intervention and responses to changing circumstances and new information.

The comanagement approach is not necessarily linked to market demands for sustainable seafood but it is very much related to the need to improve fisheries management. However, as will become apparent from the material set out below, there is a great deal of overlap with the central tenets of both dialogue platforms and FIPs. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) member country governments in Asia have adopted comanagement as the preferred way forward for managing their fisheries and this makes the additional steps associated with FIPs and dialogue platforms easier to put in context.



Some **universal** themes

There are some consistent themes that emerge from the analyses presented above which not only help demonstrate that new consultative forums like dialogue platforms and FIPs

are consistent with more established approaches like comanagement but are also consistent with key elements of internationally agreed documents such as the [Guidelines for Small Scale Fisheries](#).

Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines	Comanagement	Dialogue Platforms	FIPs
Article 6. Consultation and participation	Central to the comanagement concept. Roles need to be clear in regulations/policy.	Central to the establishment and operation of dialogue platform MoUs used.	Central to the establishment and operation of FIP MoUs used.
Article 7. Rule of law	Emphasised as being crucial. Sanctions and enforcement are important.	Government involvement means that law making is possible.	Cannot create laws but working to standards that require laws.
Article 8. Transparency	Central to building trust	Central to building trust?	Central to building trust. Public reporting is a key feature.
Article 9. Accountability	Specifically mentioned in peer reviewed papers and project reports.	Implied via the need to develop trust.	Implied via the need to develop trust.
Article 10. Economic, social and environmental sustainability	Government and stakeholders tend to look more broadly than environmental.	Government and stakeholders tend to look more broadly than environmental.	More environmentally focused. Wider considerations at a very early stage of development
Article 11. Holistic and integrated approaches	Relationship with other structures and arrangements within the country is a high priority. Integration of tools needed.	Relationship with other structures and arrangements within the country is a high priority. Links with related agencies and other layers of government needed.	More focused on integration along the supply chain. Framework and coordination needed.
Article 12. Social responsibility	Usually, a major topic of interest for stakeholders.	Not much information in this area.	Not specifically covered in FIP standards.
Article 13. Feasibility and social and economic viability	Baseline information important – fishery, economic and social. Stakeholders and government can discuss feasibility of options.	Baseline information important - fisheries, economic and social. Stakeholders and government can discuss feasibility of options.	Baseline information important – main focus is on fishery status. Stakeholders can discuss feasibility of options.

Table 1 – comanagement, dialogue platforms and FIPs help implement the FAO Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines



In addition to the attributes above, there are also some observations that cross all three approaches such as:

- Capacity building – participants in the consultation forums (both government and non-government) require training on fisheries management and the forums will require time from personnel to gather information, prepare materials (including meeting records), seek out funding and provide advice and briefings.
- Time – it takes time to get people onboard and focused. Moreover, some of the issues will take many years to resolve.
- Monitoring and information – ensuring that plans have an adequate information

base is important but, equally, the lack of complete information should not prevent a plan from being agreed and implemented. There needs to be a mechanism in place to monitor progress and address information gaps.

- Funding – implementing good fisheries management costs money and without the investment of funds, history shows how fisheries can degrade. While the need for funds for activities such as research, monitoring and enforcement is commonly accepted, the need for an investment in consultation is less well understood despite the evidence that consultation can build the trust needed to create and respect management rules.

Making good governance work in favour of sustainability – FIPs, dialogue platforms and comanagement

Fisheries can be complex and a clear pathway to sustainability may be obscured by competing environmental, social and economic needs. Often, there are trade-offs to be made and, for many fisheries, there is a need to reduce catches to restore stocks. Although many stakeholders would like simple solutions, the reality is that the transition to sustainability will need to be determined by dialogue and negotiation. Mechanisms

to facilitate dialogue in the pursuit of sustainable fisheries are common around the world and the growing interest in, for example, FIPs and dialogue platforms, is an encouraging sign that stakeholders see the value in becoming involved in fisheries management.

With this broader range of options for involving stakeholders there comes a need to ensure duplications and gaps are



avoided. Furthermore, given the poor state of many fisheries there is a need to use scarce resources wisely and ensure that governments feel empowered to make decisions that are in the best interests of both fishery sustainability and people.

The key elements of good fisheries management ([Cochrane and Garcia 2009](#)) are set out in Table 2 below. The potential role of the consultation forums is described as followed:

Main elements required for good fisheries management	Comanagement	Dialogue Platforms	FIPs
Information/data collection and analysis	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market focus	Possibly	Yes	Yes
Involving stakeholders in discussions	Yes	Yes	Yes
Setting goals, objectives and harvest control rules	Possibly	Possibly	No
Creating laws and regulations controlling fisheries	Possibly	Possibly	No
Controlling the environmental impacts of fishing	Possibly	Possibly	Possibly
Allocation of access to fish resources (who can fish, where and how much)	Possibly	Possibly	No
Enforcement	No	No	No
Writing and adopting management plans for specific fisheries	Possibly	Possibly	No

Table 2 – How consultation forums may play a role in key elements of good fisheries management

- ‘Yes’ - there is existing evidence that this type of forum has been active in the element of interest based on reviews.
- ‘Possibly’ - the management element requires government involvement but whether this takes place is dependent on whether the consultation forum is configured to facilitate that. For example, FIPs rarely (if ever) result in government making regulations via agreement at

the FIP level. For dialogue platforms, whether a government chooses to make a regulation depends on whether the dialogue platform is operating at a fishery level or at a policy level.

- ‘No’ – the forum has no formal role. This is largely focused on FIPs due to the voluntary nature and the fact that they are commonly established without any government mandate.

What does best **practice look like?** **Recommendations for successful FIPs**

The aim of FIPs is to improve fisheries management. Those that work to recognized standards need to make progress on fisheries management measures as set out in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and interpreted by independent standards. For FIPs to have market recognition there needs to be verifiable progress made. The available literature suggests that the majority of FIPs make most progress on information gathering and least progress on changes in management. This may be related to a lack of good integration with existing management arrangements run by government, which may include dialogue platforms. FIPs should build on what is already in place in terms of existing consultation structures and policy commitments. FIP practitioners need to recognize the limitations of what can be achieved with the current FIP model and act to identify and address any gaps.

1. Open and inclusive participation

A FIP needs to ensure that it has the right people involved, especially those in government who can make decisions when the stakeholder group makes commitments. Participation should be

open to all with an interest in the fishery and this includes women and marginalized groups. A FIP needs to have clear rules, an open-door policy (allowing observers for example) and be transparent (advertising meetings well ahead of time, taking minutes and distributing those minutes). Where possible, the FIP should be led by stakeholders (fishers or supply chain).

2. Consultation framework

The FIP needs to be formally constituted to ensure it has a level of authority that generates respect among the participants. Those that participate need to be legally recognised (such as, for example, companies or licensed fishers) and if government representatives are included, these should be at a senior level.

3. Capacity building

A FIP requires adequate capacity in several forms. It will require technical expertise (available either in-country or externally), administrative support and access to information. FIP participants may also require training to enable them to broaden their knowledge of fisheries management processes.

4. Funding

A source of funding is required to enable members to participate, for documents to be prepared and for external expertise to be retained. Funding will also be required to enable some of the activities set out in the action plan to be undertaken, such as data collection. Participants need to look broadly for funding and include FIP participants themselves (e.g., companies), aid donors, philanthropic organizations and governments.

5. Working with existing or new structures

Where there are existing consultation structures in place, especially those formally established by government, the FIP needs to establish links such that duplication and potential antagonism is avoided. The stakeholders may wish to consider a formal agreement or having members that are common across both the FIP and the existing structures (being aware of the time and costs impositions this may create). Where there are no existing structures, the FIP may wish to consider a transition strategy such that the FIP becomes formally recognized as a consultation body for government fishery management purposes.

6. Information (availability and timeliness)

A FIP requires sufficient information to enable it to function successfully and it also needs to be a source of information as well. A baseline

assessment of the fishery is needed to prepare the action plan and the implementation of the plan needs to be tracked and reported upon. The fisheries management process relies on information derived from research and monitoring.

7. Flexibility and growth

Fisheries management is a dynamic process that needs to respond to changes in the environment, the marketplace and in community expectations. So too a FIP needs to be responsive but aware of the limitations of the market-based approach in terms of the range of issues that are solvable. FIPs should be grounded in internationally agreed principles to ensure that the changes sought are founded on well researched and thoroughly discussed measures.

8. Market leverage

What sets a FIP apart from other consultation forums is the key involvement of the seafood supply chain. The participants need to have a commitment to responsible sourcing and a willingness to communicate this to suppliers and governments.



GMC dialogue platforms and FIPs

The reliance of existing FIPs on private standards may result in issues that are of local or regional importance either not being covered or not being a priority. Neither the MSC nor Marine Trust standards have well developed social components even though social issues have been central to fisheries management challenges for thousands of years. With the increasing recognition that fisheries sustainability issues are largely governance issues, there has been a growing focus on how governance failures manifest themselves. Examples include the inequities of sharing the benefits of fisheries exploitation and a plethora of illegal activities ranging from slavery to drug smuggling.

In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on some social issues such as the conditions under which fishers and seafood workers are employed. The primary concern has been about ensuring compliance with laws and, in their absence, international norms. While such a focus is long overdue, the lack of integrated analyses of any links to poor fisheries management may result in the underlying issues being missed. For example, incentives for illegal behaviour may be created by declining catches and no amount of extra enforcement will force better pay if

fish stocks and associated financial returns are declining.

Labour and employment considerations are but a small component of social issues in fisheries and these are closely linked with economic issues. Fish stocks can be used for commerce, subsistence or cultural reasons and who benefits depends on how government allocates access to those stocks. For example, if all the fish are allocated to subsistence fishers then this will be beneficial for local supplies. Allocating the fish to an industrial sector may create value added processing related jobs onshore and thus increase net economic benefit but if poorly implemented then subsistence food sources may be negatively impacted. Equity issues such as allocation also extend to considerations around gender. Research has shown that men and women have different roles along the seafood production chain, but men dominate decision making and access to resources and information.

Extending the scope of FIPs to include social and economic issues may provide some opportunities for further reform of fisheries but there will need to be care devoted to how the actions undertaken are devised and implemented. If the standards to which FIPs



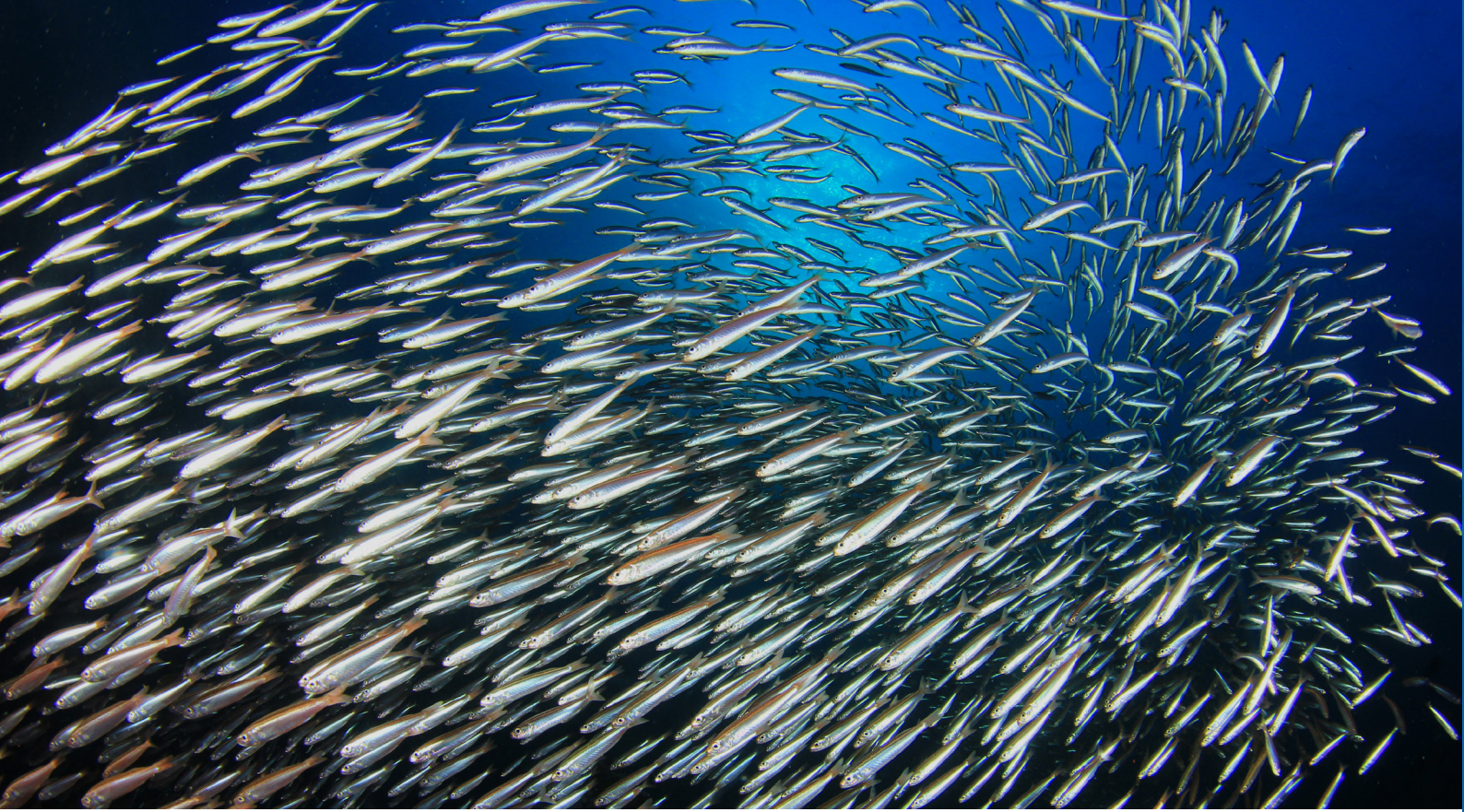


work are altered to include social and economic issues, there are questions like whose values were used to set the standards and over what time period can reform be expected to take place? At present, even though the supply chain is involved in FIPs, the role of companies is focused on pushing for change at the fisheries management level, not on reform of themselves in terms of aspects such as gender. Thus, the configuration of FIPs needs to be thought through and whether they are fit for purpose in dealing with issues which are outside of the scope of the current standards used.

For complex equity issues such as gender, the lack of agreed goals and objectives makes the establishment of verifiable actions challenging. Nevertheless, with respect to gender, the GMC

Project has recently identified some generic areas that FIPs can incorporate into their planning activities. For example, a recent [gender in FIPs guidance document](#) provides advice on how a FIP action plan can address such issues.

Further work needs to be undertaken to determine where in the FIP action plan these requirements would be best suited because, as mentioned above, the current plans are oriented towards standards that currently do not address social issues. At present, the stock, ecosystem and management components are addressed in separate modules and one option may be to design a separate nodule for social issues which could include, among other facets, gender, labor and human rights, each with clear performance goals to define best practice.



Conclusion

There is a wide variety of fisheries around the world and the need for reform is as urgent as it has ever been. There is no single solution for driving reform but at their core, fishery problems are people problems. Getting people together and enabling them to decide what the issues are and what solutions will work best has been found to be critical to success across the world.



Fishery improvement projects have evolved as a useful tool for evolving the private sector, and especially supply chain entities, in the drive for sustainable use. The FIP concept has proven to be adaptable because it taps into lessons learned in other consultation approaches such as comanagement. Finding commonalities across these different approaches, such as the need for inclusiveness, transparency,

capacity building, funding and information, helps FIPs to be more readily accepted and to harness their ability to tap into market demand for responsible sourcing.

This guidance document is aimed at helping those that either need to establish or support a FIP to have a deeper understanding of where FIPs can fit in. In some countries there may be no consultation structures in place at all and so a FIP can create a long-lasting forum. In other cases, a FIP may need to work closely with existing arrangements. The guidance in this document will enable a FIP supporter/implementer to tap into any existing resources (people, information, structures) to enable a FIP to be established efficiently and with minimum duplication. It should be read in conjunction with other guidance documents made available by the Global Marine Commodities project.

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