

**PROJECT EVALUATION SERIES**

**Final evaluation of the project  
Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine  
Ecosystem (CCLME)**

**GCP/INT/023/GEF**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
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## Acronyms and abbreviations

TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
AFD	French Development Agency
MPA	Marine Protected Area
BGP	GIZ Biodiversity, Gas and Oil Program (Mauritania)
CCC	Canary Current Conference
CCLME	Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem
CFI	Coastal Fisheries Initiative (Guinea and Cape Verde)
NIC	National Interministerial Committee
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO)
ATLAFCO	Regional Convention on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean
COP	Conference of Parties
CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (FAO)
CRODT	Oceanographic Research Centre of Dakar-Thiaroye (Senegal)
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
SRFC	Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
TC	National Technical Coordinator
DEMO	Demonstration Project
ESI	Environmental Sensitivity Index
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
FIRF	Marine and Inland Fisheries Service (FAO)
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System (WMO)
GOWAMER	Governance, marine resource management policies and poverty reduction in the Ecoregion WAMER/PRCM
WG	Working group
IEO	Spanish Oceanographic Institute
IMR	Institute of Marine Research (Bergen, Norway)
IMROP	Mauritanian Institute for Oceanographic Research and Fisheries
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
INRH	National Institute of Fisheries Research (Morocco)
IRD	French Research Institute for Development
IW	International waters
LoA	Letter of Agreement
MAVA	MAVA Foundation for Nature
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NOAA	National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States
ODINA-Africa	Climate change project in Africa
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
PDF	Project Development Framework

PIF	Project Identification form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
NFP	National Focal Point
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
PRAO	West Africa Regional Fisheries Program
PRCM	Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation in West Africa
GIS	Geographical Information System
RCU	Regional Coordination Unit of the project
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NCU	National Coordination Unit
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WI	Wetlands International
WMO	World Meteorological Organization (UN)
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone

## Executive Summary

1. The project "Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem" (CCLME project) is a regional initiative supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through the Abidjan Convention Secretariat, with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project has also received co-funding from the seven countries directly involved in the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) and other partners. The CCLME project started in March 2010, for an initial duration of 5 years; it was extended until December 2016 following the recommendations of its mid-term evaluation. A final project evaluation mission was conducted between September and December 2016. The final evaluation report includes: a review of the project design, the context in which it was designed and the institutional arrangements put in place at the regional and country level; an analysis of the project results as a whole; and answers to specific evaluation questions. Conclusions and recommendations are made for future work.
2. CCLME provides vital food and economic resources for coastal populations living in areas bordering the large marine ecosystem, and also for many countries of West Africa. It ranks 3rd in the world in terms of primary productivity and has the highest fish production among all African LMEs. However, CCLME's ability to support ecosystem goods and services is worrying because it is subject to many threats. At the same time, countries face difficulties in effectively addressing various sensitive issues related to living resources and the environment, many of which are of a transboundary nature. There are various institutional frameworks and regional and sub-regional initiatives that allow or have allowed some transboundary issues to be addressed in all or part of the CCLME area. But the latter are essentially based on a sectoral approach and none of them has the mandate, geographical coverage and/or capacity to support a more comprehensive initiative based on a more ecosystem-based approach and addressing issues shared across the CCLME area. It is in this context that it was deemed necessary to promote a regional initiative that "enables CCLME countries to address priority transboundary concerns related to the reduction of fisheries, associated biodiversity and water quality through governance reforms, investments and management programs".
3. The long-term strategy of the project is in line with the model advocated by the GEF International Waters Programme. It provides for three main steps in the LME ecosystem-based management process: (i) conduct a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) to identify and quantify ecosystem environmental problems and analyze the causes and impacts of these environmental issues; (ii) develop and adopt at the highest level a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) clearly outlining actions to be promoted to address the priority problems identified in the TDA; and (iii) implement the SAP. The CCLME project, in its first phase, focused on the achievement of the first two phases.
4. The project's rating according to GEF criteria is generally Satisfactory, and none of the elements assessed were rated unsatisfactorily. More specifically, the rating (in brackets) given to each of the assessment elements were as follows: Achievement of objectives (Satisfactory); Achievement of outputs and activities (Satisfactory); Progress towards the achievement of the 4 GEF priority areas (Moderately Satisfactory); Cost-effectiveness (Satisfactory); Impact (Moderately Satisfactory); Risks and risk management (Satisfactory); Sustainability (Moderately Satisfactory); Stakeholder participation (Satisfactory); Country ownership (Moderately Satisfactory); Financial planning (Satisfactory); Transposability (Moderately satisfactory); Monitoring (Satisfactory). *Project design.* The project is structured around three highly interrelated components. Component 1 includes and specifies the various expected outcomes of the project in relation to CCLME strategic planning (TDA-SAP process, project governance, and future CCLME governance). The other two components are thematic components related to the improvement of scientific knowledge and

capacity building in support of the TDA-SAP process in the field of living marine resources (Component 2) and biodiversity, habitats and water (Component 3). The two thematic components also include demonstration actions (a total of five Demo projects) aimed at demonstrating the relevance of the sub regional and participatory approach to address priority transboundary issues in the most efficient and cost-effective way.

5. The logical framework of the project is characterized by a significant number of outputs and activities, and by a lack of coherence in some cases between outcomes (8 in total), outputs and activities. It is also worth noting the redundancy of certain activities found in several components. The lack of logical hierarchy between some outcomes and outputs is largely due to the difficulty of reconciling objective-based planning (logical framework) with the program approach. In a context where it was also necessary to take into account when designing the project the initiatives (ongoing or in preparation) carried out by other partners and to integrate them into the desired logical framework of the project. The lack of logical hierarchy can also be explained, in part, by the need to distinguish for administrative purposes between the components executed by FAO and those executed by UNEP.
6. *Project implementation.* The CCLME project received financial support from the GEF of approximately US\$8.1 million. Taking into account co-financing from participating countries and other partners, the total budget of the CCLME project amounted to nearly US\$27.5 million. The project was jointly implemented by FAO and UNEP. FAO was in particular responsible for the implementation of components 1 and 2 as well as Demos 1, 2, 3 and 4. UNEP, on its part, was responsible for the implementation of component 3, including Demo 5. As lead agency for the GEF project, FAO, in close collaboration with UNEP, provided overall coordination of the project. The Marine and Inland Fisheries Sub-service (FIRF) of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department provided technical coordination of the project (Project Technical Officer - LTU) and was FAO Budget Holder. The project established a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the seven countries (2 per country), FAO, UNEP, SRFC and the Abidjan Convention. Organizations and institutions associated with the project were also invited to participate in the meetings as observers. Since 2010, the Steering Committee has met six times. The last meeting of the Steering Committee, held in February 2016, contributed to the technical validation of the SAP and made it possible to agree on a strategy for its signing before the end of the project.
7. The project was implemented through a Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) based in Dakar. The role of the RCU was to ensure the coordination of the project and the implementation of the work plan, both at the regional and country levels. In each country, national project structures (National Coordination Unit - NCU, and National Interministerial Committee - NIC) have been established. NCUs were composed of a Technical Coordinator (TC), preferably from the Ministry of Fisheries, responsible for coordinating the implementation of project activities at national level, and a Focal Point (FP), preferably from the Ministry of Environment, responsible for the overall management of the TDA-SAP process. The role of the NICs was to ensure that the cross-sectoral and participatory dimension of the CCLME ecosystem management approach was taken into account, and to promote and validate national reports in support of the TDA-SAP process.
8. The project also involved the establishment of Working Groups (WGs), the mobilization of a network of partners and the use of a regional platform for dialogue and consultation (Regional Marine and Coastal Forum). The role of the WGs was to contribute to the TDA-SAP process by mobilizing *ad hoc* expertise, composed of national experts designated by the countries and resource persons from the sub-region or elsewhere, around a number of themes. The partnership approach with governmental and non-governmental, national or sub-regional institutions and development partners engaged in initiatives of interest with regard to the project's objectives was expressed in particular through the setting up of co-financing at the time of project design and

the development of memoranda of understanding or service provision contracts between the project and various entities.

9. *Analysis of the project outcomes as a whole.* The two main expected outcomes of the project were TDA (Outcome 1) and SAP (Outcome 2). Despite the rather unfavorable context, these two outcomes were achieved. Outcome 3 on the sustainable legal and institutional framework for CCLME has not yet been achieved. The level of achievement of Outcome 4 on strengthening existing transboundary regional institutions, policies and instruments is generally satisfactory. The level of achievement of Outcome 5 on stakeholder involvement in priority setting and strategic planning of transboundary issues remains difficult to assess given the wide divergence of views among project stakeholders. The level of achievement of Outcomes 6 and 7 relating to the improvement of knowledge and the strengthening of skills for the themes "living resources" (Outcome 6) and "biodiversity, habitat and water quality" (Outcome 7), must be nuanced despite the considerable efforts made by the project in terms of collecting raw data and sampling, involving researchers in the region in scientific campaigns, and organizing training. The level of improvement in scientific knowledge is still below the expectations of the scientific and political institutions of the countries in the region. But this is largely due to the unavoidable gap between the time required to complete the scientific process (up to the production of publications) and the duration of a development project. Outcome 8 concerns demonstration actions on the management of transboundary resources (Demo projects). In general, Demos have greatly contributed in the TDA-SAP process.
10. *Specific evaluation questions - Effectiveness of the project in improving knowledge and building capacity to understand and address priority transboundary issues.* The process of improving knowledge has been well channeled by the different WGs specialized in the different themes concerning transboundary issues. Work on the diagnosis of some ecosystem components is still ongoing, particularly with regard to benthos. Capacity building for researchers was achieved through targeted training in specific workshops and during the preparation and conduct of ecosystem campaigns. Efforts to analyze the data and samples collected during these campaigns, and even scientific publications, should continue. Between the preliminary TDA in 2006 and the final TDA in 2016, there has been progress in knowledge acquisition. However, it will be important to ensure that the TDA is updated as new scientific knowledge is generated, including through the processing and analysis of the data and samples collected during ecosystem campaigns. Overall, the SAP is consistent with other sub-regional or regional initiatives. Although it gives an important place to fisheries, the SAP is able to provide common solutions to transboundary ecosystem issues by proposing general guidelines and targeted actions.
11. *Specific evaluation questions - To what extent have the operational structure and management arrangements been adapted to the nature and needs of the intervention?* Significant backstopping services from FAO, and to a lesser extent from UNEP, to the RCU, combined with effective collaboration between the two institutions, were essential in the successful implementation of the project. FAO's backstopping services could have been more relevant and diversified if the project's Task Force mechanism was fully utilized. The involvement of RCU staff in project activities is indisputable and must be highlighted. Its effectiveness could have been greater if the status of its personnel was more appropriate and if there was greater consultation between its members. The Steering Committee played an important role in the consultation between the various stakeholders of the project. Unfortunately, the long agendas did not allow it to lay emphasis on the strategic direction of the project. Moreover, national structures (NCU and NIC) constituted a weakness in the project's operational mechanism. This is largely due to the lack of human and financial resources allocated to the functioning of NCUs in most countries. All NICs have been created, which is an indicator of the project's success. However, in general, these mechanisms for consultation between the various public and private stakeholders, which are essential in the

ecosystem management approach, have proved to be ineffective in practice. The WG concept, on its part, has proven to be an interesting and efficient mechanism, which should be replicated in the second phase of the project. Co-financing mechanisms are still difficult to implement and/or quantify. The absence of a specific strategy for monitoring and mobilizing partnerships at the national and regional levels in support of the ecosystem management approach, could have led to greater synergies.

12. *Specific evaluation questions - To what extent has the project contributed to the establishment of an appropriate governance framework that enables countries to address transboundary issues effectively and sustainably?* Various forms of partnerships were successfully developed during the preparation of the project and during the implementation of certain activities. The participation of the various partners directly or potentially involved in the ecosystem-based management approach in the development of the final TDA and the draft SAP, was less pronounced for various reasons. Overall, the project has strengthened a number of policies and plans for the management of transboundary resources in the CCLME area. Overall, the external communication of the project can be rated as very satisfactory insofar as it has allowed a good visibility of the project and its achievements on a global scale. The internal communication of the project, focused on promoting the ecosystem approach within the CCLME region, was rather insufficient. In the future, this should be intensified and based on a communication strategy that leaves more room for liaison and regular contacts between the RCU, national structures and national decision-makers. The signing of the SAP reflects the political commitment of countries to pursue the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the CCLME project. However, the SAP is by no means a binding commitment for countries and can be considered as a memorandum of understanding for the second phase of the project. The CCLME Consortium proposal in the annex to the SAP is a proposal for a project structure for the second phase, but it prejudices in no way the establishment of a future and new CCLME regional cooperation institution for ecosystem-based management.
13. *Specific evaluation questions - What are the management approaches to the CCLME project that may be of interest to other major LME projects elsewhere in the world?* With a view to the future governance of the Canary Current LME, CCLME opted for a governance framework based on the concept of a consortium, a structured and non-binding collaboration and cooperation mechanism, based on existing organizations and arrangements. This model is similar to the one used by the Bay of Bengal LME. In this regard, one lesson learned from the CCLME project is that it is important not to systematically advocate the creation of a new entity to support the ecosystem-based management of a LME, first of all to respect the desire of the countries concerned and also for reasons of cost-effectiveness. The CCLME project also shares another strong principle with most other LMEs, namely the principle of the participation of all stakeholders in governance. The CCLME project has also shown that without strong coordination units, whether at national or regional level, it is difficult to promote an ecosystem-based management approach to a LME such as the Canary Current.
14. *Specific evaluation questions - To what extent is the gender dimension taken into account in the TDA-SAP process, including in Demo projects?* In general, because of the theme addressed, the gender dimension could not be central in the project. However, this was well taken into account when implementing certain activities, particularly in the context of the Demos, which laid emphasis on the active participation of women.

## Conclusions

**Conclusion 1.** By formally adopting the SAP, participating countries confirmed their interest and commitment to the ecosystem-based approach to marine and coastal resource management in the Large Canary Current promoted by the CCLME project.

**Conclusion 2.** The project has demonstrated its ability to significantly improve scientific knowledge in support of CCLME's ecosystem-based management of marine and coastal resources, but more time is needed to process and analyze the new data collected and capitalize on the results.

**Conclusion 3.** The project has had a significant impact on the ability of researchers and institutes to network across the region, although capacity-building needs for applied research in support of CCLME ecosystem-based management are still great.

**Conclusion 4.** In general, the level of country ownership of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the project is still insufficient.

**Conclusion 5.** In general, the operational structures and project management procedures have proved to be effective, but they could be improved – particularly with regard to the capacity of the RCU to sufficiently exercise its coordination and facilitation functions and that of the national structures to become more actively involved in the implementation of project activities.

**Conclusion 6.** The identity of the CCLME project is not well understood or sometimes difficult to perceive within national and regional initiatives for the preservation and sustainable management of resources in the CCLME region.

**Conclusion 7.** The project took into account differing situations between countries in terms of capacity to contribute to the TDA-SAP process and the need to rely on regional cooperation, to involve regional expertise to mitigate this challenge.

**Conclusion 8.** The CCLME project has taken advantage of some opportunities to develop partnerships for the implementation of the TDA-SAP, but the sustainability of the CCLME strategic planning process and the implementation of the SAP will require a broader partnership approach in consultation with all stakeholders.

**Conclusion 9.** Non-public stakeholders have been involved at different levels of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach.

**Conclusion 10.** The gender dimension was not given much consideration in the project document due to the nature of the project which aims at promoting ecosystem-based management of the Canary Current LME; consequently, the gender dimension was not really taken into account during the first phase of the CCLME project.

**Conclusion 11.** The success of the CCLME approach will also depend on the continuation of activities during the transition phase (i.e. until the beginning of the design phase of the second phase). This transition phase aims in particular at enhancing the scientific achievements of the project and seeking synergies with other national and regional initiatives contributing to the objectives and expected outcomes of the SAP.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1. To GEF, FAO and UNEP**

In order to meet the countries' desire to continue the ecosystem-based management approach of the Canary Current LME, it is recommended to continue the preparation of the second phase of the project, while clarifying its identity in relation to other national and regional initiatives that could support the implementation of the SAP.

### **Recommendation 2. To GEF, FAO and UNEP**

In order to contribute to greater country ownership of the CCLME project in terms of its contribution to improving scientific knowledge and facilitating the mobilization of partnerships for

the second phase, it is recommended to use the remaining funds from the project for some activities.

**Recommendation 3. To FAO and UNEP**

In order to capitalize on the investments made by the project in data and sample collection, it is recommended that in its second phase, the project finalize their processing, analysis and valorization.

**Recommendation 4. To FAO and UNEP**

In order to build national capacities, it is recommended that, in its second phase, the project contribute more to national and regional training efforts of different stakeholders, building on the comparative advantages of regional cooperation.

**Recommendation 5. To GEF, FAO and UNEP**

In order to improve the effectiveness of project management mechanisms, it is recommended to increase the resources allocated to management, to review certain GEF procedures in order to facilitate the recruitment of sufficient staff and appropriate status of technical project staff, and to strengthen backstopping services.

**Recommendation 6. To FAO and UNEP and countries**

In order to meet all the conditions necessary for the implementation of the SAP, it is recommended to promote during the second phase of the project a partnership strategy and appropriate means to broaden and revitalize collaboration with the partners involved on topics addressed by the SAP, with a view to developing synergies and complementarities.

**Recommendation 7. To FAO and UNEP and countries**

In order to promote greater ownership of the project by policy makers and to strengthen the CCLME's regional cooperation dynamic for ecosystem management, it is recommended that the second phase of the project include more action-oriented activities.

**Recommendation 8. To FAO and UNEP and countries**

Considering that CCLME countries will have to play a decisive role in the implementation of the SAP, it is recommended to examine all ways and means of increasing the effectiveness of national project structures, including inter-ministerial committees (NICs).

## 1. About this evaluation

### 1.1. Background of the evaluation

1. The Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) provides vital food and economic resources for coastal populations living in areas bordering the Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) and also for many countries of West Africa. It is one of Africa and CCLME coastal zone's Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) which provides one of the most important fisheries products and provides important goods and services to coastal countries, including critical fish habitats, timber from mangroves, and coastal and marine areas for agriculture, aquaculture, urban development, tourism and transport.
2. The project "Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem" (CCLME project) involves seven countries: Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Morocco and Senegal. Its objective is to enable countries to address priority transboundary concerns related to the reduction of fisheries, associated biodiversity and water quality through governance reforms, investments and management programs. In particular, the project consists in supporting a set of strategic interventions that should lead to: (i) the validation of a Transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) document, based on scientific evidence; (ii) the adoption at ministerial level in all countries of a Strategic Action Programme (SAP); and (iii) a consensus on the legal, institutional and financial arrangements and mechanisms that will constitute the future governance of the CCLME, including the implementation of the SAP.
3. The CCLME project receives financial support of US\$8,090,000 from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and is jointly implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through the Abidjan Convention Secretariat. The project also benefits from co-financing from participating countries and other partners. Partners include the French Development Agency (AFD), the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), the FAO EAF-Nansen project, the National Ocean and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) of the United States of America, the Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation in West Africa (PRCM) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Taking into account this co-financing, the total budget of the CCLME project amounts to nearly US\$27.5 million.
4. The CCLME project started in March 2010, for an initial duration of 5 years; it was extended until December 2016 following the recommendations of its mid-term evaluation conducted during the first half of 2013.
5. The project document provides for a final evaluation to be conducted jointly by FAO (lead agency) and UNEP offices of evaluation. This evaluation was conducted between September and December 2016 by a team of two independent consultants mandated by the FAO Office (OED). The team consisted of an OED evaluation coordinator and two evaluators (a fisheries specialist and a scientific specialist). The terms of reference of the evaluation are provided in Annex 1.

### 1.2. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

6. One of the main achievements of the project was the adoption, at the beginning of the second half of 2016, of the Regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP) by all the ministers in charge of fisheries and/or environment of the seven participating countries. This was the culmination of the first major step in the CCLME ecosystem-based management process. The second major step will include the implementation of the regional SAP. For this purpose, a Project Identification Form (PIF) to prepare a second phase for the CCLME project, with GEF funding, is being prepared.

7. The final evaluation of the CCLME project which is the subject of this document, thus focuses specifically on Phase 1 of the CCLME project. The purpose of the final evaluation is twofold, namely:
  - review the achievements and level of achievement of the objectives and expected results of project CCLME - Phase 1, in order to meet the need for accountability to the main donor, the GEF, and understand and learn from what has been done and achieved so far by the project; and
  - contribute through its reflections, both on the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach and on the governance of the project, to the preparation of the second phase of the project currently being negotiated between FAO, UNEP, participating countries and the GEF.
8. In accordance with the project document, the specific objectives of the final evaluation are as follows:
  - review the impacts of the project;
  - analyze the sustainability of the project results;
  - assess whether the project has achieved its objectives and produced the expected results;
  - propose recommendations for follow-up actions (including the implementation of the SAP);
  - identify lessons learned during project design, implementation and management;
  - highlight technical achievements and lessons learned.
9. The results of the final evaluation could also be used to contribute to the exchange of experiences and lessons learned between the different LME projects in the framework of the various forums dealing with international waters (e. g. GEF IW learning platform).

### **1.3. Methodology**

10. In accordance with the ToRs, the scope of the evaluation covers the period from March 2010 to September 2016, with greater attention to the changes that have occurred since 2013 following the mid-term evaluation mission. The final evaluation also rest upon a result-based approach.
11. For the purposes of this evaluation, the analysis is organized around specific questions that the evaluation should address, taking into account the nature of the project (LME project) and the background of the evaluation (ongoing preparation of a second phase), while complying with the norms and standards of the UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group). In particular, the evaluation was asked, when analyzing the results, to take a particular look at the project's contribution, added value and comparative advantages in relation to the objective of strengthening the capacities of the Large Canary Current countries to address priority transboundary issues relating to the decline of fish stocks, biodiversity and water quality, through reforms, investments and management programs.
12. As a result, an evaluation matrix was developed at the beginning of the financial year. The main questions raised in the matrix (see also Appendix 2) are as follows:
  - How effective has the project been in improving knowledge and capacity building to understand and address priority transboundary issues?
  - To what extent have the operational structure and institutional arrangements been adapted to the nature and needs of the project?
  - To what extent has the project contributed to the establishment of a governance framework that enables countries to address transboundary issues effectively and sustainably?

- What are the management approaches to the CCLME project that may be of interest to other major LME projects elsewhere in the world?
  - To what extent has the gender dimension been taken into account in the TDA-SAP process, including in Demo projects?
13. It should be noted that the evaluation was not asked to take a look at the PIF currently being prepared.
14. The evaluation matrix was used as a reference to organize the collection and analysis of the data and information needed for the evaluation, but also to structure this report. In order to make it operational during consultations with the various stakeholders, the matrix was used as an interview guide during meetings or telephone conversations, or as a questionnaire for stakeholders who could not be met or interviewed by the mission team.
15. The evaluation team was able to visit individually or collectively almost all the countries participating in the project. Only Guinea could not be visited due to conflicts of dates in the organization of field visits. However, a questionnaire was collected from key persons and institutions in Guinea involved in the project.
16. Groups of key individuals and institutions met or interviewed included the following:
- Project managers: FAO Fisheries Department (Rome), UNEP (Nairobi), Abidjan Convention Secretariat, Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) based in Dakar;
  - National institutions and structures directly involved in the project: ministries in charge of fisheries, fisheries research institutes, ministries in charge of the environment, FAO representations, GEF focal points;
  - Governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the project as partner institutions;
  - Representatives of the private sector and local communities.
17. In total, the evaluation mission was able to interview more than 100 people.
18. A substantial literature review was also done. The documents reviewed (see Annex 3) focused in particular on:
- Project management: draft document, steering committee reports, annual activity reports (Project Implementation Reports - PIR, Activity Progress Reports), mid-term evaluation report, and managers' response;
  - Project achievements: technical reports produced by consultants or service providers (including reports produced as part of demonstration projects), technical reports produced by working groups, workshop reports, scientific publications, TDA document, SAP document;
  - Project communication: website, newsletter and other communication media;
  - Technical and scientific literature produced outside the project but relevant to the final evaluation of the CCLME project.
19. The work program of the evaluation team and the list of people surveyed or interviewed by telephone are provided in Annex 4.

#### **1.4. Methodological limitations of the evaluation**

20. The project managers (FAO, UNEP, Abidjan Convention and RCU) were not fully involved in the preparation of the evaluation matrix questions due to time constraints. This is unfortunate because it would have allowed the mission to better focus its investigations according to the expectations of the various stakeholders, and in particular the project managers.

21. The evaluation matrix refers to a number of indicators that unfortunately could not be constructed due to time constraints. During the exchanges with the various stakeholders, the evaluation mission focused on semi-structured discussions in order to identify the various elements essential for the final evaluation of Phase 1 of the project (a relatively complex project in terms of its objectives and functioning, at national and regional level) and to take the time to analyze the lessons learned for Phase 2 of the project. Such a methodological approach leading to the development of indicators would also have required prior work to inform and raise awareness among the various stakeholders, but this could not be done due to time constraints.

## 2. Project and context description

### 2.1. Context of the project

22. The countries concerned within the recognized CCLME boundaries are Spain (Canary Islands), Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Guinea waters considered as adjacent areas within the CCLME zone of influence. This Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) ranks 3rd in the world in terms of primary productivity and has the highest fish production among all African LMEs. CCLME's fisheries resources, many of which are involved in transboundary migration, represent a significant source of wealth, job creation and food for countries. CCLME also produces many other ecosystem goods and services in the marine and coastal space that play an important role in the economic and social development of countries.
23. Despite its socio-economic importance, CCLME's ability to support ecosystem goods and services is threatened by overfishing, habitat degradation, pollution at sea and on land, and climate change. At the same time, countries face a number of constraints in effectively addressing various sensitive issues related to living resources and the environment, many of which are of a transboundary nature. These constraints include limited institutional and human capacities, lack of knowledge on ecosystem functioning and interactions between its different biotic and abiotic components, and lack of regional institutional arrangements allowing a coordinated and integrated approach between different countries and sectors (fisheries, environment, mining, transport, tourism, etc.) to address priority transboundary problems.
24. There are various institutional frameworks and regional and sub-regional initiatives that allow or have allowed some transboundary issues to be addressed in all or part of the CCLME area, but these are essentially based on a sectoral approach and focus on applied research issues. These include: the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF), the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC), the Regional Convention on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (COMHAFAT), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the EAF-Nansen project, the Abidjan Convention and the PRCM<sup>1</sup>.
25. These frameworks and initiatives provide a valuable base for CCLME's collaborative and integrated management. However, none of them has the mandate, geographical coverage and/or capacity to support a more comprehensive initiative based on a more ecosystem-based approach and addressing common and shared issues across the CCLME area. It is in this context that it was deemed necessary to promote a GEF-supported regional initiative that "enables CCLME countries to address priority transboundary concerns related to the reduction of fisheries, associated biodiversity and water quality through governance reforms, investments and management programs".

### 2.2. Project design

26. The GEF International Waters (IW) program aims at promoting a systematic and rigorous approach in order to strengthen collaborative management for a wide range of complex issues, by providing financial support for the achievement of three main steps:
- Step 1: Conduct a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) based on research, consultations and technical expertise to identify and quantify environmental issues in the ecosystem and to analyze the causes and impacts of these environmental issues;

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<sup>1</sup> There are now other sub-regional initiatives led by development partners that did not exist at the time of the CCLME project design but which are relevant to the objectives of the CCLME project. These include: the AWA (Ecosystem Approach to the management of fisheries and the marine environment in West African waters) research project, the PRAO (West Africa Regional Fisheries Programme), and the GOWAMER (Governance, Marine Resource Management Policies and Poverty Reduction in the Ecoregion WAMER/PRCM) project.

- Step 2: Develop and adopt at the highest level a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) clearly outlining the actions to be promoted to address the priority issues identified in the TDA; and
  - Step 3: Implement the SAP.
27. The CCLME project, in its first phase, focuses on the first two steps.
28. For the preparation of the project, the GEF funded a PDF-B phase with US\$0.7 million. The design phase lasted two years between 2005 and 2006. It resulted in the development of a preliminary TDA-SAP (unanimously adopted by country representatives in 2006) and the preparation of a project document. This design phase also addressed the issue of co-financing with countries and potential partners to support project implementation.
29. The project was designed to be essentially a capacity-building project, focused on solving problems related to the depletion of fish stocks, and relying on the combined implementation of the TDA/SAP process and the 5 modules of the Large Marine Ecosystem<sup>2</sup>. In addition, it was expected that sufficient and high-quality updated information would be collected and that progress would be made in the implementation of the ecosystem approach in the data collection process to support the TDA-SAP. It was recognized that, based on the state of knowledge at the time of project design, data did not allow for the development of prospective analyses or the consideration of scenarios. The project also aimed at encouraging cooperation between countries to adopt common transboundary policies, objectives and management tools so as to effectively address priority transboundary issues, and to monitor the status of the CCLME on a scientific basis.
30. The project was approved by GEF CEO on 27 April 2009.

### **2.3. Logical framework**

31. The CCLME project is part of an overall objective to reverse the degradation of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem caused by overfishing, habitat changes and changes in water quality, through the adoption of an ecosystem-based management approach. This overall objective should be linked to the objectives of enhancing food security and reducing poverty in coastal communities of CCLME countries.
32. The objective of the project is to initiate a sustainable CCLME management process based on the application of three key principles: the implementation of an ecosystem approach, the promotion of sub regional cooperation to effectively address transboundary issues, and the promotion of public-private partnership.
33. The project is structured around three highly interrelated components:
- Component 1 includes and specifies the various expected outcomes of the project in relation to CCLME strategic planning (TDA-SAP process, project governance, and future CCLME governance).
  - Component 2 is a thematic component that focuses on improving scientific knowledge and building capacity in the field of living marine resources in support of the TDA-SAP process.
  - Component 3 is a thematic component that focuses on improving scientific knowledge and capacity building in the field of biodiversity, habitats and water, in support of the TDA-SAP process.

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<sup>2</sup> The LME approach to the assessment, monitoring and management of large marine ecosystems is based on five modules: 1) productivity; 2) fish and fisheries; 3) pollution and ecosystem health; 4) socio-economic issues; and 5) governance.

34. The two thematic components also include demonstration actions (demonstration projects – Demos) aimed at demonstrating the relevance of the sub regional and participatory approach to address priority transboundary issues in the most efficient and cost-effective way.
35. The logical framework of the project is characterized by a significant number of outputs and activities, and by a lack of coherence in some cases between outcomes, outputs and activities. It is also worth noting the redundancy of certain activities found in several components. The lack of logical hierarchy between some outcomes and outputs is largely due to the difficulty of reconciling objective-based planning (logical framework) with the program approach. In a context where it was also necessary to take into account when designing the project the initiatives (ongoing or in preparation) carried out by other partners and to integrate them into the desired logical framework of the project. The lack of logical hierarchy can also be explained, in part, by the need to distinguish for administrative purposes between the components executed by FAO and those executed by UNEP through the Abidjan Convention Secretariat.
36. Eight main outcomes are expected of the project, as shown in Table 1 which matches each of these outcomes with the project components. The final evaluation, which rests upon a result-based approach, mentions these eight expected outcomes. For more information on the project's logical framework, the current project structure per component, expected outcome and output is provided in Annex 5.

**Table 1:** Correspondence between the outcomes and the project components

<b>Expected results of the project</b>	<b>(Lead) corresponding component</b>
1-Multi-country agreement on priority transboundary issues (TDA)	<u>Component 1 (FAO)</u>
2-Multi-country agreement on governance reforms and investments needed to address priority transboundary issues (SAP)	<u>Component 1 (FAO)</u>
3-Sustainable legal and institutional framework for the CCLME	<u>Component 1 (FAO)</u>
4-Enhanced existing transboundary regional institutions, policies and instruments	<u>Component 1 (FAO)</u>
5-Stakeholders involved in priority setting and strategic planning of transboundary issues	<u>Component 1 (FAO)</u>
6-Improved knowledge and skills for the theme "living marine resources".	<u>Component 2 (FAO)</u>
7- Improved knowledge and skills for the themes of biodiversity, habitat and water quality	<u>Component 3 (UNEP)</u>
8-Actions implemented for the management and evaluation of costs/benefits related to the solving of priority cross-border problems	<u>Component 2 (FAO)</u> - Demo 1: Collaborative management of small pelagic - Demo 2: Trawling selectivity - Demo 3: Collaborative management of benthopelagics - Demo 4: Use of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for the management of multiple resources <u>Component 3 (UNEP)</u> - Demo 5: Mangrove conservation



### 3. Project implementation

#### 3.1. Project management

37. The project is jointly implemented by FAO and UNEP (through the Abidjan Convention Secretariat). FAO is in particular responsible for the implementation of components 1 and 2 as well as Demos 1, 2, 3 and 4. UNEP, on its part, is responsible for the implementation of component 3, including Demo 5.
38. As lead agency for the GEF project, FAO, in close collaboration with UNEP, is responsible for the overall coordination of the project to ensure that it remains consistent with GEF policies and procedures. It also ensures that the project is implemented as a coherent and integrated program, not as two separate projects.
39. The Marine and Inland Fisheries Sub-service (FIRF) of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department provides technical coordination of the project (Project Technical Officer - LTU) and was FAO Budget Holder. Other services of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and other FAO Departments are collaborating in the project, as well as the Legal Office and FAO offices in the various countries involved in the project. A Project Task Force within FAO, chaired by the Project Holder Budget, is responsible for supporting and coordinating the implementation of the project.
40. The Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) of the project is based in Dakar. The role of the RCU is to ensure the coordination of the project and the implementation of the work plan, both at the regional and country levels. The RCU is composed of a Regional Coordinator (RC) recruited by FAO, a Thematic Officer for Component 2 (Living Marine Resources) recruited by FAO, a Thematic Officer for Component 3 (Biodiversity, Habitat and Water Quality) recruited by UNEP, an Administrative Assistant recruited by FAO, and other part-time staff (e.g. consultants, service providers) as required.
41. The project agreement provided that the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) – as a sub-regional institution that would play the role of the main counterpart for the whole project (in continuity with the role it had played in preparing the project) – would host the headquarters of the RCU. For various reasons, this could not be possible. Finally, thanks in particular to the combined efforts of the RC and the FAO Representation in Senegal, the Government of Senegal made available to the RCU, in early 2012, spacious premises adapted to the needs of the project.
42. The project's monitoring and evaluation system is based on three elements:
  - Continuous monitoring of the progress and level of achievement of project results: initial report, periodic progress reports, annual project implementation reports (PIR), technical reports and final report;
  - Financial reports (biannual, annual, final) of the project, and co-financing monitoring tables prepared during the steering committee meetings to support the annual programming of the project actions;
  - Independent evaluations (mid-term evaluation, final evaluation).

#### 3.2. Institutional arrangements

43. With a view to implement the project, the following arrangements were provided for: a Steering Committee, a Regional Coordination Unit (RCU), national project structures (National Coordination Unit – NCU) and Interministerial Committee – NIC) in each country, working groups and a network of partners.

#### **Steering Committee**

44. The Project Steering Committee has, in the first instance, a mandate to control and steer the project activities, including the supervision of Demos. However, it also has a role in the technical and political validation process of the TDA and SAP, which gives it an important role in the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach.
45. The Steering Committee meets once a year in ordinary session, and its statutory members are composed of representatives of the seven countries (two representatives per country: the National Technical Coordinator and the National Focal Point), FAO, UNEP, the SRFC and the Abidjan Convention. Organizations and institutions associated with the project are also invited to participate in the meetings as observers.
46. Since 2010, the Steering Committee has met six times. The last meeting of the Steering Committee, held in February 2016, contributed to the technical validation of the SAP and made it possible to agree on a strategy for its signing before the end of the project.

### **National project structures**

47. A National Coordination Unit (NCU) for the project has been set up in each of the seven participating countries. It is composed of two executives from the public service:
  - a Technical Coordinator (TC), preferably from the Ministry of Fisheries, responsible for coordinating the implementation of project activities at national level, in close collaboration, where appropriate, with the RCU;
  - a Focal Point (FP), preferably from the Ministry of Environment, responsible for the overall management of the TDA-SAP process;
48. The project also provides for the establishment in each country of a National Interministerial Committee (NIC) bringing together the main institutions concerned with the sustainable management of the CCLME. The role of the NIC is to ensure that the cross-sectoral and participatory dimension of the CCLME ecosystem management approach was taken into account, and to promote and validate national reports in support of the TDA-SAP process.
49. Operating costs of national project structures are borne by the countries, in accordance with the country co-financing commitments.

### **Working groups**

50. The role of working groups (WGs) is to contribute to the TDA-SAP process by mobilizing ad hoc expertise around a number of themes. Their number was specified during the project's start-up workshop in November 2010. As a result, eight WGs are planned to be set up:
  - WG 1: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA);
  - WG 2: Strategic Action Programme (SAP);
  - WG 3: Climate changes;
  - WG 4: Socio-economy and trade;
  - WG 5: Campaign planning and data analysis;
  - WG 6: Assessment of pelagic resources (in conjunction with the CECAF WG);
  - WG 7: Assessment of demersal resources (in conjunction with the CECAF WG);
  - WG 8: Biodiversity, habitats and water quality.
51. Some of these WGs are directly related to one of the three components of the project. For example, the TDA WG and the SAP WG are clearly linked to Component 1. Similarly, the Demersal Resource Assessment WG and the Pelagic Resource Assessment WG are linked to Component 2. The Campaign Planning and Data Processing WG is linked to both Component 2 and Component 3. On the other hand, the other three WGs ('Climate Change', 'Socio-Economics and Trade', and

'Biodiversity, Habitats and Water Quality') are transversal and therefore likely to be involved in components 1, 2 and/or 3.

52. WGs are composed of national experts nominated by the countries and resource persons from the sub-region or elsewhere. The functioning of WGs is based on the principle of co-financing: countries or institutions provide experts to WGs, and the project finances the holding of several meetings (travel expenses and subsistence allowances).

### Partnerships

53. The partnership approach bringing together national or sub-regional governmental and non-governmental institutions, and development partners engaged in initiatives of interest to the project objectives, is a key element in the success of the CCLME ecosystem-based management process. This was notably expressed through the setting up of co-financing at the time of project design and then the development of memoranda of understanding or service provision contracts between the project and various entities. A remarkable scientific partnership has also been developed with the EAF-Nansen project and various research institutes in the region or in countries not participating in the CCLME, such as the Spanish Oceanographic Institute (IEO).

54. Table 2 summarizes the main partnerships developed since the start of the project within the framework of specific actions.

**Table 2:** Main partnerships developed since the start of the project

Type of action	Partnerships
Carrying out scientific campaigns	EAF Nansen Project, IEO, PRAO Cap Verde (Universidade de Cabo Verde), Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin, University of Bergen, Independent Experts (marine mammals, birds), Old Dominion University (USA), UNESCO
Analysis of material collected during campaigns	IEO, INRH (Morocco)
Extended regional consultation (Regional Marine and Coastal Forum)	PRCM
Demo 1 (small pelagic)	CSRP, AFD, COPACE, EAF Nansen Project, COMHAFAT (RAFISMER), USAID/COMFISH
Demo 2 (trawling selectivity)	IMROP, CRODT
Demo 3 (benthopelagics)	CSRP, IUCN, AFD
Demo 4 (MPA)	CSRP, AFD, CRODT
Demo 5 (mangroves)	MAVA, Wetlands International, IUCN
'Campaign planning and data analysis' WG	IMR Bergen, IEO, research institutes in the sub-region
Resource Assessment WG	CECAF
'Climate change' WG	NOAA, IMR, ODINAfrica, IRD, PRCM
'Biodiversity, habitats and water quality' WG	IEO, GIZ/BGP Programme-Mauritania, Ecole Doctorale Eau du Sénégal

### PRCM Regional Marine and Coastal Forum

55. The Regional Marine and Coastal Forum provides a platform for dialogue and consultation for all stakeholders associated with the PRCM. This Forum makes it possible to promote technical and political initiatives in favor of integrated and concerted coastal zone management at the level of

its area of competence (CSRP zone). One of the peculiarities of this Forum is that it promotes exchanges and concerted actions between public actors (administrations, research centers, elected officials), private actors (e. g. socio-professional organizations) and representatives of civil society, in particular NGOs involved in natural resource management and conservation programs. The Forum is one of the project's main platforms for communication and dialogue under the TDA-SAP process.

### 3.3. Budget and expenditure

56. GEF's contribution to the CCLME project totals US\$8,090,000 (to which should be added US\$700,000 committed during the preparation phase). Out this amount, US\$ 6,590,000 is executed by FAO and US\$ 1,500,000 by UNEP, according to their own financial rules and procedures.

#### Part implemented by FAO

57. The CCLME project was one of the first projects executed and implemented by FAO with direct funding from the GEF. This required a period of adaptation to organize operations in accordance with FAO rules and GEF procedures, with particular reference to the 10% ceiling on project management costs and the rules on the allocation of project staff. In addition, GEF's limited budget did not allow for the recruitment of technical staff (technical assistant positions) at the RCU level, other than the Regional Coordinator, whose cost has been divided between the technical part (80%) and the administrative part (20%). It only allowed for the possibility to recruit a short-term consultant (maximum 11 months) for the post of thematic expert on living marine resources under component 2.

58. To comply with GEF rules requiring financial reporting of expenditures per outcome and component, operations management was based on the implementation of 17 baby projects in the FAO system. These 17 baby projects correspond in fact to the 15 specific technical activities of the project, to which have been added a baby project for project management and a baby project to cover staff costs. The latter was set up to facilitate the recruitment and renewal of staff contracts in accordance with FAO rules. The management of the 17 baby projects was particularly demanding in terms of human resources mobilization.

59. Table 3 presents the budgetary and expenditure situation per component, based on information collected at the project level. Despite the limitations of the analysis and given the breakdown into baby projects, the data indicated in this table nevertheless make it possible to highlight the following elements:

- For actions relating to the preparation of the TDA and the SAP, the budget implementation rate is relatively satisfactory. For other actions planned under Component 1 (with the exception of monitoring and evaluation – where the level of expenditure was almost twice as high as the budget planned following the increase in the number of country visits to strengthen consultation with the various stakeholders – the number of participants for Steering Committee meetings, and the number of country visits for evaluation missions), the budget implementation rate was very low. These include actions related to the future governance of the CCLME and the participation/involvement of stakeholders in strategic planning.
- The key actions (apart from the Demos) planned under Component 2 had different levels of budget execution. Scientific campaigns consumed nearly 21% of the total GEF budget, which is relatively in line with forecasts. It should be noted that the cost shown does not correspond to the total cost of the campaigns since they have been co-financed, in particular via the EAF-

Nansen project<sup>3</sup>. Capacity-building actions, another key action of Component 2, had a relatively low budget implementation rate (3 times lower than expected).

- While Demos 3 and 4 recorded a level of expenditure that was fairly in line with forecasts, Demos 1 and 2 experienced a low budget implementation rate (5 to 10 times lower than expected)
- Project and personnel management costs (RCU) consumed nearly 27% of the budget. This high ratio is mainly due to the extension of the project duration for about 2 years compared to the initial planned duration of 5 years.
- There was a balance of about US\$770,000 at the end of September 2016 on the part of GEF funds implemented by FAO. By December 2016, this balance was expected to be around US\$600,000.

**Table 3:** Project budget and expenditure per component implemented by FAO

Situation budgétaire baby projects FAO au 27/09/16										
Composante	Dotation FEM (\$)		Baby	Budget par baby FAO				Situation au 27/09/16		
	2010	% total FEM		2013	2016	% total FEM	Variation 2013-2016	Dépenses	% total FEM	Reliquat
<b>1. Processus ADT/PAS</b>	2 320 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
a. Compréhension et accords multi-pays sur les questions transfrontières (ADT)	800 000	9,9%	1	800 000	533 574	6,6%	-266 426	515 945	6,4%	17 629
b. Cadres juridico institutionnels et plans de coopération régionale pour le CCLME	700 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Cadre juridico-institutionnel	250 000	3,1%	2	250 000	75 037	0,9%	-174 963	44 478	0,5%	30 559
- PAS multi-pays	300 000	3,7%	3	300 000	184 607	2,3%	-115 393	183 933	2,3%	674
- Plan de financement (mise en œuvre PAS)	-	0,0%	4	150 000	15 000	0,2%	-135 000	46 954	0,6%	-31 954
c. Implication des acteurs dans la planification stratégique	600 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- acteurs institutionnels	300 000	3,7%	5	300 000	99 219	1,2%	-200 781	67 338	0,8%	31 881
- acteurs locaux et privés	300 000	3,7%	6	300 000	6 730	0,1%	-293 270	1 730	0,0%	5 000
d. Evaluation et suivi efficaces	220 000	2,7%	7	220 000	476 110	5,9%	256 110	409 743	5,1%	66 367
<b>2. Ressources marines vivantes</b>	2 960 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
a. Amélioration des connaissances et des capacités de gestion	1 650 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- évaluations transfrontalières	1 400 000	17,3%	8	1 400 000	1 747 539	21,6%	347 539	1 731 962	21,4%	15 577
- renforcement capacités en évaluation	250 000	3,1%	9	250 000	154 197	1,9%	-95 803	93 014	1,1%	61 183
b. Renforcement des politiques, instruments et capacités de gestion	200 000	2,5%	10	200 000	125 827	1,6%	71 632	15 003	0,2%	110 824
c. Organisation d'actions de démonstration	1 110 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Démo 1 (petits pélagiques)	460 000	5,7%	11	460 000	171 245	2,1%	-288 755	95 192	1,2%	76 053
- Démo 2 (captures accessoires)	400 000	4,9%	12	400 000	239 284	3,0%	-160 716	34 634	0,4%	204 650
- Démo 3 (benthopélagiques)	250 000	3,1%	13	250 000	230 008	2,8%	-19 992	146 046	1,8%	83 962
<b>3. Biodiversité, habitats, qualité de l'eau</b>	2 000 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
a. Apport des connaissances manquantes en réponse aux besoins de l'ADT/PAS	900 000	11,1%	14	250 000	18 076	0,2%	-231 924	18 076	0,2%	0
b. Renforcement des capacités, décisions politique et planification pour le PAS	400 000	4,9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
c. Organisation d'actions de démonstration	700 000	8,7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Démo 4 (AMP)	250 000	3,1%	15	250 000	191 898	2,4%	-58 102	169 377	2,1%	22 521
- Démo 5 (mangroves)	450 000	5,6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>4. Gestion du projet</b>	810 000	10,0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Gestion du projet	-	-	16	810 000	199 998	2,5%	-610 002	176 656	2,2%	23 342
- Coût du personnel (UCR)	-	-	17	0	2 109 026	26,1%	2 109 026	2 053 953	25,4%	55 073
<b>TOTAL PROJET (-PDF)</b>	<b>8 090 000</b>			<b>6 590 000</b>	<b>6 577 375</b>		<b>133 180</b>	<b>5 804 034</b>		<b>773 341</b>

<sup>3</sup> At the time of the evaluation mission in 2013, it was estimated that co-financing with the EAF-Nansen project implemented by FAO, mainly to cover the operating costs of the *RV Dr. Fridtjof Nansen*, already amounted to around US\$4.2 million. At the end of 2015, co-financing provided by the EAF-Nansen project amounted to about US\$5.9 million, taking into account the last scientific campaign conducted in 2015.

## **UNEP Budget and expenditure**

60. Financial aspects related to Component 3 of the project (except Demo 4 on MPAs and actions related to RV Dr F. Nansen campaigns) shall be borne by UNEP, through the Abidjan Convention Secretariat.
61. The budget, for a total amount of US\$1,500,000, is presented per major heading according to UNEP format, as follows:
- Component "Personnel Management" - Total US\$ 641,500;
  - Component "Subcontracting with UN cooperation agencies (e. G. IMO for anti-pol issues) and non-profit organizations (e. g. WCMC) - Total US\$ 632,700;
  - Component "Training" - Total US\$ 120,000;
  - Component "Miscellaneous" (including publication costs) - US\$ 105,800.
62. UNEP has recently changed its internal system for operations management (*Umoja* system). This has led to numerous malfunctions and delays in payments: delays in recruiting consultants (e. g. study on discards into the sea, development of a management plan on critical habitats, inventory of land-based sources of pollution) and delays in honoring letters of agreement with service providers (e. g. IUCN/Wetlands - Demo 5). Unfortunately, it was not possible to get information on the statement of expenditure for Component 3 implemented by UNEP despite the requests of the evaluation mission.

## 4. Analysis of the project outcomes as a whole

### Findings:

- The two main expected outcomes of the project were TDA (Outcome 1) and SAP (Outcome 2) and these were achieved.
  - Outcome 3 on the sustainable legal and institutional framework for CCLME has not yet been achieved.
  - The level of achievement of Outcome 4 on strengthening existing transboundary regional institutions, policies and instruments is generally satisfactory.
  - The level of achievement of Outcome 5 on stakeholder involvement in priority setting and strategic planning of transboundary issues remains difficult to assess given the wide divergence of views among project stakeholders.
  - The level of achievement of Outcomes 6 and 7 relating to the improvement of knowledge and the strengthening of skills for the themes "living resources" (Outcome 6) and "biodiversity, habitat and water quality" (Outcome 7), must be nuanced despite the considerable efforts made by the project in terms of collecting raw data and sampling, involving researchers in the region in scientific campaigns, and organizing training. The level of improvement in scientific knowledge is still below the expectations of the scientific and political institutions of the countries in the region. But this is largely due to the unavoidable gap between the time required to complete the scientific process (up to the production of publications) and the duration of a development project.
  - Outcome 8 concerns demonstration actions related to the management of transboundary resources (Demo projects). In general, Demos have greatly contributed in the TDA-SAP process.
63. A first level of overall analysis consists of looking at the level of achievement of the project's expected outcomes (eight in total) as they appear in the project document.
64. The two main expected outcomes of the project, TDA and SAP, were achieved.
65. The TDA was published in 2016, after the presentation of its project at the Seventh Coastal and Marine Forum in November 2013 and later on at the Fourth Meeting of the Project Steering Committee (December 2013). In general, a comparison of the 2006 preliminary TDA with the 2016 final TDA shows significant progress in the state of knowledge of the CCLME ecosystem and the causes of its degradation. However, the TDA could have benefited from further analysis of certain scientific issues to formulate even more specific recommendations for the preparation of the SAP. The issue of the project's contribution from its inception in 2010 to the consolidation of the 2006 preliminary TDA is discussed in more detail in the following section (specific evaluation questions).
66. The SAP was signed by the Ministers of Fisheries and/or Environment and/or Economy of all countries between June and August 2016, after its project was presented at the sixth meeting of the Project Steering Committee (February 2016) and finalized and validated at a sub-regional workshop held in Morocco in March 2016. Besides, each country had been previously asked to convene an NIC meeting to discuss the document. Awareness-raising work was also carried out during the second quarter of 2016 by the RCU with country officials. Finally, in accordance with the strategy defined at the sixth meeting of the Steering Committee in support of the SAP signing process, the CEO of FAO invited Ministers from CCLME countries to sign the SAP.

67. In general, the SAP is consistent with the main guiding principles of LME strategic planning. The SAP signed by countries will be a reference document to support the promotion of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach.
68. Also appended to the SAP is a proposed participatory governance mechanism for the future governance of the CCLME, entitled "Canary Current Consortium". This is a contribution to the achievement of the third expected outcome of the CCLME project, namely a sustainable legal and institutional framework for the CCLME. However, this proposed governance mechanism is only applicable to a project context such as the CCLME project. Reflections with a view to institutionalize a CCLME participatory governance mechanism should continue during Phase 2 of the CCLME project.
69. The level of achievement of the fourth outcome on strengthening existing transboundary regional institutions, policies and instruments (in the area of the management of living marine resources and the marine and coastal environment) is overall satisfactory, as discussed in more detail in the following section. To do this, the project relied on Demos and existing regional initiatives, in particular through the Abidjan Convention.
70. The fifth expected outcome was related to stakeholder involvement in priority setting and strategic planning on transboundary issues. It is difficult to make an objective assessment of the level of achievement of this outcome given the wide differences in views observed during the various interviews. It is worth noting the significant gap between the opinions of project managers, who consider this involvement in the TDA-SAP process to have been very good on the whole, and those of some stakeholders (national project structures, national institutions, regional organizations, development partners), who consider their involvement to have been insufficient. On the other hand, it is important to stress that the project has had a definite impact on the development of exchange platforms, including the establishment or strengthening of networks between scientists and experts in the CCLME area, particularly through scientific campaigns and working groups.
71. Another very important expected outcome of the project was the improvement of knowledge and capacity building for the themes "living marine resources" (Outcome 6) and "biodiversity, habitat and water quality" (Outcome 7). In this field, the project raised many expectations, given scientific innovations (organization of ecosystem campaigns), the significant resources implemented by the project (through partnerships with the EAF Nansen project and the IEO) and the strong coherence of this field of action with countries' public policy objectives to manage resources and the marine environment. As further analyzed in the following section (specific evaluation questions), more progress was expected in improving scientific knowledge on the functioning and status of the Canary Current LME in its various ecosystem components. These unmet expectations are largely due to the time required to produce scientific publications in a context where the project has accumulated a considerable database of raw data and samples to be processed. On the other hand, the project has significantly improved scientific knowledge through its contribution to resource assessment within the framework of CECAF activities and the capitalization of existing knowledge on biodiversity, habitat and water quality issues through its working groups.
72. The capacities of research institutions in the region to conduct scientific campaigns have been strengthened. The capacities of researchers in the region to contribute to the production of scientific publications are still being strengthened. However, an important achievement of the project in the scientific field should be highlighted, with regard to the promotion of South-South cooperation initiatives between research institutes. Indeed, the project supports the development of a center of excellence at INRH (Morocco) for the processing and analysis of plankton data. This center recently welcomed researchers from other countries in the region.

73. The last expected outcome of the project was related to demonstration actions for the management of transboundary resources in the CCLME area as part of the Demos. The decision to include Demos in a separate category of actions is rather questionable, as pointed out several times in the framework of the project's monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Demos are indeed individualized projects within the CCLME project that will contribute to the achievement of one or more of the project's expected outcomes. In addition, many Demos are the continuation or reinforcement of initiatives launched before the CCLME project; this explains in large part why they were not necessarily oriented towards the objective of contributing to the TDA-SAP process.
74. However, some Demos have produced very interesting results by demonstrating the added value of driving changes in the governance of natural resources based on local initiatives. On the basis of tangible results, these will gradually influence national (Demo 4 on MPAs) or even sub-regional (Demo 5 on mangroves) policies. Demo 1 (small pelagic) and Demo 3 (benthopelagics) consolidated pre-existing initiatives for collaborative management of shared stocks, in particular by broadening the management scale to make it more consistent with resource range (Demo 1) and by stimulating pre-existing sub regional cooperation mechanisms (Demo 3).
75. The budget execution rate of the Demos has been very variable, ranging from about 10% to 70% for the four Demos implemented through FAO (the evaluation was unable to get information on the level of expenditure of Demo 5 implemented through UNEP). A specific annex provides, for each of the Demos, a description of the objectives and achievements as well as a brief analysis of their contribution to the TDA-SAP process (see Annex 6).
76. In summary, the assessment of the level of achievement of the eight outcomes by the evaluation is broadly similar to that contained in the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), with the exception of the assessment of the outcome related to stakeholder involvement in the TDA-SAP process. This can be explained by the inadequacies of the monitoring and evaluation system, which only involves project managers and is based solely on product and activity indicators (e.g. holding meetings, formal development of a mechanism). The use of process indicators, particularly for the monitoring-evaluation of NICs and partnerships, would allow a more accurate assessment of outcomes' level of achievement and possibly suggest adjustments to be made during the project when necessary.
77. In addition, it is important to highlight an unexpected outcome of the project (with reference to the project's outcome indicators): the significant impact the project had in some countries on bringing together and strengthening dialogue between the ministries in charge of fisheries and the environment. This institutional issue was addressed during specific activities related to Demos or Working Groups.
78. Another outcome of the project is the launching, since early 2016, of the process to prepare a Project Identification Form (PIF), with a view to mobilizing GEF funding to support the implementation of the SAP as part of a second phase of the CCLME project.

## 5. Specific evaluation questions

### 5.1. *How effective was the project in improving knowledge and building capacity to understand and address priority transboundary issues?*

#### Findings:

- The process of improving knowledge has been well channeled by the different Working Groups specialized in the different themes concerning transboundary issues.
- Work on the diagnosis of some ecosystem components is still ongoing, particularly with regard to benthos. The next step should be to provide a baseline to monitor the evolution of targeted wildlife environments and communities and propose management measures to decision-makers based on possible scenarios.
- Capacity building for researchers was achieved through targeted training in specific workshops and during the preparation and conduct of ecosystem campaigns. Efforts to analyze the data and samples collected during these campaigns, and even scientific publications, should continue.
- Between the 2006 preliminary TDA and the 2016 final TDA, progress in knowledge acquisition has been made on aspects related to the decline of living marine resources and ecosystem change, habitat degradation, and declining water quality. However, it will be important to ensure that the TDA is updated as new scientific knowledge is generated, including through the processing and analysis of the data and samples collected during ecosystem campaigns.
- Overall, the SAP is consistent with other sub-regional or regional initiatives. Although it gives prominence to fisheries, the SAP is able to provide common solutions to transboundary ecosystem issues by proposing general guidelines and targeted actions. However, as its implementation proceeds, it will be important to strengthen the integrated management of the marine and coastal environment and all its uses on the land and marine parts of the LME.

#### Improvement of knowledge

79. The improvement of knowledge on priority transboundary issues was based on the compilation of pre-existing scientific and technical work in the region and on the analysis of the outcomes obtained as part of the project activities (ecosystem-based campaigns, assessment campaigns, specific studies, etc.). This overall improvement in knowledge has helped in drafting technical reports, in specific thematic working groups, and in developing the TDA. The process of improving knowledge has been well channeled by the different Working Groups specialized in the different themes concerning transboundary issues. However, the work of the Climate change WG could have been further developed if it was associated with E-RSE-type expertise and exchange platforms and existing global monitoring networks (Global Ocean Observing System-GOOS/World Meteorological Organization-WMO; IRD, see presentation COP 22, CNP12; UNESCO/IOC).
80. Among the information collected and analyzed, a considerable amount of data and samples were provided through six scientific missions at sea addressing priority transboundary concerns. This was done in collaboration with the EAF-Nansen project and national scientific institutions, and with the support of foreign scientific institutes (in particular the Bergen IMR and the IEO) for analyses, methodological training and the development of a geo-referenced database.
81. The campaign at sea on pelagic fishery resources, conducted in the region from October to December 2015, is a good complement to the acoustic activities carried out by RV Dr Fridtjof Nansen until the mid-2000s. The interest was also to use the same methodologies in order to allow comparability of results and to provide training for researchers on the strategy and methods of analysis for effective monitoring of resources. The information collected during this campaign

was used to consolidate the scientific basis to support the promotion of collaborative management of small pelagic in the CCLME area (Demo 1).

82. As part of Demo 4 on MPAs, the methodology for participatory assessment and monitoring of resources and demersal fishing sites was developed and applied to the MPA sites of Kayar (Senegal) and Tanbi (Gambia). Sub-regional guidelines for the co-management of fisheries and the participation of fishermen from the Northwest African region were also approved in August 2015. These guidelines were later on successfully presented at the IW Conference in May 2016.
83. As concerns, Component 3, a compilation and analysis of data on legislative aspects for the protection of biodiversity, environments and water quality in the CCLME region was completed, resulting in a publication. This report provides a good starting point for proposing improvements to promote integrated management processes.
84. Work on ecosystem diagnosis shows slow progress, due to slow taxonomic identification, particularly for the description of new species. Discoveries have been the subject of several communications at conferences, symposiums, and in a number of scientific publications. Several publications have been announced. A synthesis of the outcomes for all components of the Large Canary Current ecosystem was announced during the fifth meeting in May 2016 of the WG on the planning and analysis of ecosystem campaigns. On this occasion, the structure of a publication on a baseline was also identified. It is unfortunate that this publication was not launched earlier in the TDA-SAP process. But it is important to remember that the deadlines for scientific production are often difficult to reconcile with those of a project displaying a series of expected outputs with specific deadlines.
85. In line with the previous remark, and with a view to future research initiatives, it would be desirable to design a real strategy for planning this applied research in support of management and governance. This would help in taking these deadlines into account, in properly defining the degree of investigation (e. g. going as far as DNA identification? going as far as identification at the level of families, genus or species?), and in specifying the expectations of the research (e. g. study of communities, their relations with habitats, life cycles, and/or the functioning of an ecosystem, etc.). This would also ensure that the scale, frequency of sampling strategies, methodologies, instruments used, and science products that may be suitable for management measures and indicator development are well defined. A sufficiently developed research planning strategy would also make it possible to quantify uses and their impact on resources for the different sectors, and to locate them in a geo-referenced system that can be accessible to decision-makers and, if possible, as in other regions of the world, to all users in the region.
86. In general, work on ecosystem diagnosis is still in a preliminary phase, particularly with regard to benthos. The next step should be to establish a baseline that will eventually monitor the evolution of targeted wildlife environments and communities and propose management measures to decision-makers based on scenarios.

### **Capacity Building**

87. In addition to their primary function of research, missions at sea have also provided training platforms for scientists in the region. In the last pelagic survey from October to December 2015, a total of 12 different nations were represented, including 21 scientists from the CCLME region. After the ecosystem campaigns, two scientists from Cape Verde and Mauritania spent 3 and 4 months respectively at the University of Vigo in Spain, where they successfully received training to treat the benthic collection of Cape Verde and Mauritania from campaigns at sea. The training of young researchers for zooplankton has been carried out at INRH, which could become a center of excellence in this field for the region.

88. Participants from CCLME countries in campaigns at sea received on board training on fish data collection, the use of a specific database to store these data, oceanographic data collection, phytoplankton, zooplankton and benthos data collection (ref. campaign reports). After each campaign, participants left with a CD with all the raw data collected (station data, tows per species and station, distribution of fish sizes, preliminary benthic data by station, etc.), as well as a preliminary version of the campaign report and a duplicate of the samples collected during the campaigns.
89. Capacity building for researchers was also addressed through targeted training courses in specific workshops. This included the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and the use of the Nansis software, in collaboration with the EAF-Nansen project. Training on the EAP was conducted as part of Demo 1 (small pelagic) and Demo 3 (benthopelagics). As part of Demo 1, 13 managers were trained; this enabled them to participate in the analysis of the baseline report, contribute to the identification and definition of operational priorities and objectives, and discuss management measures and indicators.
90. According to scientists from the IEO and the EAF-Nansen project, and after verification by the evaluation, it was found that in most cases the research areas were not always in line with the field and level of competence of the participants. Actually, some participants were technicians and not scientists concerned by the different research fields covered. In addition, in some countries, the samples brought back from the campaigns could not be processed or analyzed due to a lack of research resources at the national level. As a result, for some beneficiaries, the training provided during the campaigns, as well as the samples brought back for analysis, could be useless. According to other participants interviewed, the training provided was minimal and insufficiently targeted (for example, one hour of training throughout the campaign to explain data collection and archiving strategies). Training could be improved in order to strengthen the skills of scientists in the region in conducting a campaign from A to Z, as well as in defining the sampling strategy to be encouraged and the methods of analysis to be implemented after the campaign according to the conditions prevailing in the laboratories.
91. The training workshop held in Cape Verde in February 2015 to build capacity in mapping and geographic information systems (GIS) was well appreciated by the 12 participants from the five CCLME countries and the representative of the Abidjan Convention. The workshop held in Dakar in November 2016 on the harmonization and sharing of cartographic data on the region made it possible to successfully transfer the database to the Abidjan Convention site and subsequently to Vigo.
92. A draft regional emergency plan for the response to marine oil spill pollution in the CCLME area has been developed by countries as part of a specific initiative. This project is likely to find a legal basis in the form of an additional MoU to the Abidjan Convention. The CCLME project organized a training workshop on this draft emergency plan in Casablanca, Morocco, in 2016, in collaboration with US-AFRICOM and the Abidjan Convention. This workshop was greatly appreciated by the participants.
93. With regard to the participatory management of demersal fisheries in an MPA in Kayar (Senegal) and Tanbi (Gambia), the evaluation was able to assess the positive impact of the training provided to local stakeholders on the participatory management system. In total, the training courses involved 65 participants. Meanwhile, information and awareness-raising meetings (16 in total) were organized at the local level and three radio programs on the theme of MPAs were scheduled.
94. A note on the use of regional expertise in the CCLME project, prepared by the RCU, is attached for information, as Annex 7.

### **Project's contributions to the TDA preparation process**

95. Between the 2006 preliminary TDA and the 2016 final TDA, progress in knowledge acquisition has been made on some aspects, but not on all aspects identified in the preparatory phase. These are the three aspects: decline of living marine resources and ecosystem change, habitat degradation, and declining water quality.
96. Regarding the decline of living resources, the project targeted small pelagic, demersal species, elasmobranchs, tunas, marine turtles and marine mammals. There has been a significant improvement in the knowledge of pelagic and demersal species, although not all research results are yet fully available and therefore could not be taken into account in the 2016 TDA. Other species (in particular tunas and marine turtles) are being monitored by other organizations at the regional or international level and their work has continued and has been included in the new version. It should be noted that a new species of marine mammal has been discovered during scientific campaigns (May-June 2012 and May 2013), and that this has led to scientific publications in specialized journals.
97. Regarding habitat degradation, the targeted elements were mangrove decline, seabed and seamount changes, and wetland degradation (coastal areas, coral reefs, estuaries). Apart from mangroves and benthos studies, which have yielded many results (although more than half of the benthos data collected is yet to be analyzed), the other themes have not benefited from specific activities by the project. However, these themes are regularly studied and monitored by other organizations at the regional and international levels, and new data and knowledge acquired recently have been collected. In the field of habitat degradation, the project's contributions to the TDA preparation were significant, particularly on mangroves.
98. Concerning the declining water quality, ecosystem measurements carried out during sea campaigns made it possible to collect a large amount of data in this regard. However, due to the delay in their analysis, the results could not be taken into account as part of the TDA. However, this information will be used in the future. For the land part, in particular the coastal zone and rivers, pollution, eutrophication or pesticide levels, information could be collected from different ministries and taken into account to support the drafting of the TDA.
99. During the project, other themes were addressed and analyzed or updated. These are in particular themes related to climate change or socio-economic aspects. This has broadened the scope of the experts' vision and provided a better understanding of the interactions between the various sectors in support of the integrated and sustainable management of fisheries resources.
100. During the preparation of the 2016 TDA, the experts involved in its drafting were aware of the delays in providing new information on the three aspects identified during the preparatory phase. But in accordance with the precautionary principle, they drafted a document representing the countries' vision and their level of knowledge of the issues. Therefore, it will be important to plan updates of the TDA in the future, as new knowledge on these three aspects becomes available. These updates should be carried out by integrating all the administrations concerned. Thus the need for coordination and cooperation at all levels.

### **Adequacy of the SAP with priority transboundary issues**

101. The preparation of the SAP was based on two levels of information: on the one hand, the policies, strategies, legislation and data available at the national level, and, on the other hand, the sub regional, regional and international instruments to which countries are parties.
102. Overall, the SAP is consistent with other sub-regional or regional initiatives (e. g. PRAO, PRCM) and can provide common solutions to transboundary issues in the future. However, it is worth

noting that many of these issues can only be fully solved at the regional level if efforts are also made at the country level. It should also be noted that many of the entry points listed in the SAP had already been identified in the preliminary TDA (e.g. combating IUU fishing, improving the regulation of access to resources, stricter enforcement of environmental regulations, etc.).

103. The SAP however has some weaknesses. Among these is the focus of the approach on one theme, namely fisheries, which might impede the ecosystem-based management approach in its broadest concept. This is due to the current high prevalence of fishing issues in the CCLME area. Although it gives prominence to fisheries, the SAP is able to provide common solutions to transboundary ecosystem issues by proposing general guidelines and targeted actions. However, as its implementation proceeds, it will be worth strengthening the integrated management of the marine and coastal environment and all its uses on the land and marine parts of the LME.
104. In addition, the SAP rarely mentions the results produced as part of the Demos. However, a summary of the Sub-Regional Guidelines for Co-management of Fisheries in the MPAs of the North-West African region (produced as part of Demo 4) is provided as an annex to the SAP.
105. In its form, the SAP is consistent with the format of documents produced in other LME projects. It is a fairly comprehensive planning document, including an important list of actions. However, the SAP would gain in readability if it better identifies the causal links between ecosystem quality objectives, specific objectives (broken down into "targets") and priorities set out in the form of actions.
106. It can also be noted that the SAP does not address the issue of the estimated cost of its implementation, which was provided for in the project document. In addition, the information on partnerships to be mobilized for the implementation of the SAP only highlights opportunities for regional partnerships. It would be desirable that partnerships to be mobilized at the country level should be identified during the early stages of the SAP implementation process.
107. Moreover, it is important to remember that the SAP alone will not reduce or remove all transboundary issues. Indeed, it will be necessary to take concerted and joint decisions in parallel within the framework of existing regional arrangements and instruments, especially if they are binding, and these decisions will have to be implemented by countries, through regulations and actions aimed at changing the behavior of populations and socio-economic actors.
108. Finally, it is interesting to note that unlike other LMEs (e. g. Guinea Current LME), where a key role was played at the national level in the process of developing the regional SAP, it was the regional approach that prevailed and provided the starting point for the planning process in the CCLME area. However, the SAP includes an annex on national priorities in the light of the joint actions it provides for. It also states that these priorities will be specified at the time of the SAP implementation in order to adapt to each country's situation. The SAP can be seen as a general policy document at the regional level, which will later be used to develop more elaborate programming documents at the country level.

## **5.2. To what extent have the operational structure and management arrangements been adapted to the nature and needs of the intervention?**

### **Findings:**

- Significant backstopping services from FAO, and to a lesser extent from UNEP, to the RCU, combined with effective collaboration between the two institutions, were essential in the successful implementation of the project. FAO's backstopping services could have been more relevant and diversified if the project's Task Force mechanism was fully utilized.

- The involvement of RCU staff in project activities is indisputable and must be highlighted. Its effectiveness could have been greater if the status of its personnel was more appropriate and if there was greater consultation between its members.
- The Steering Committee played an important role in the consultation between the various stakeholders of the project. Unfortunately, the long agendas did not allow it to lay emphasis on the strategic direction of the project.
- Moreover, national structures (NCU and NIC) constituted a weakness in the project's operational mechanism. This is largely due to the lack of human and financial resources allocated to the functioning of NCUs in most countries. The allocation of these resources was the responsibility of the countries as part of co-financing. All NICs have been set up, which is an indicator of the project's success. However, in general, these mechanisms for consultation between the various public and private stakeholders, which are essential in the ecosystem management approach, have proved to be ineffective in practice.
- The WG (Working group) concept, on its part, has proven to be an interesting and efficient mechanism, which should be replicated in the second phase of the project.
- Co-financing mechanisms are still difficult to implement and/or quantify. The absence of a specific strategy for monitoring and mobilizing partnerships at the national and regional levels in support of the ecosystem management approach, could have led to greater synergies.

#### **FAO and UNEP**

109. As mentioned above, the GEF rules have made the operations management of the project, particularly at FAO level, more complex and have limited the allocation of human resources at the RCU level. In addition, the change in UNEP's internal financial system has exacerbated the operational difficulties of the project, which has led to delays in the implementation of some activities under Component 3. All this has affected the effectiveness of the project.
110. FAO, through its Fisheries Department, and UNEP, through the Abidjan Convention Secretariat, were able to provide significant backstopping services to the RCU for the implementation of project activities. However, there is reason to think that these backstopping services could have been even more relevant, continuous and varied in terms of area of expertise for various reasons.
111. At FAO level, the LTO developed numerous collaborations, on a case-by-case basis, with other FAO technical services. This also contributed to the development of synergies and complementarities with other initiatives of the FAO Fisheries Department relevant to the CCLME project (e.g. EAF Nansen project, CECAF, Guidelines on Small Fisheries, CFI project under preparation, FishCode program, Blue Economy Initiative, etc.). A better use of the Task Force mechanism (foreseen by the project) would have allowed to develop even more synergies and, in so doing, strengthen the efficiency and multidisciplinary nature of FAO's backstopping services. The Task Force did not meet formally until the beginning of the project.
112. As far as UNEP is concerned, backstopping services were affected by the high turnover of project lead experts. Three changes of lead experts took place between 2010 and 2016. And this had a significant impact on the launch and continuity of certain actions throughout the duration of the project.
113. In the opinion of each partner, the collaboration between FAO and UNEP (Nairobi headquarters and Abidjan Convention Secretariat) was generally satisfactory. In particular, it helped in preparing the Steering Committee meetings properly and facilitating the integration of each component activities in support of the TDA-SAP process.

## **Regional Coordination Unit (RCU)**

114. The functioning of the RCU has been impacted by the rules of GEF funding, which limit the possibilities of recruiting project staff. Apart from the Regional Coordinator (RC), the other experts attached to the RCU are consultants (11-month contract, renewable). The inadequacy of the personnel status, apart from that of the RC, largely explains the turnover observed in the two thematic expert positions. In addition, these positions remained vacant for several months (6 months for the fisheries expert recruited by FAO, and 3 months for the environment expert recruited by UNEP). This has affected activity continuity and contributed to delays in the delivery of some outputs and in the TDA-SAP process.
115. The evaluation also noted the lack of consultation between the various members of the RCU, particularly in the last years of the project. This was due in particular to purely practical reasons: the headquarters of the RCU is in Dakar, whereas the current environment expert (recruited in June 2015) is based in Abidjan. This is also partly due to the absence of regular meetings between the various members of the RCU throughout the project (such meetings could also have been held by teleconference towards the end of the project). In addition to consolidating team spirit within the regional coordination unit, the holding of periodic meetings between the members of the RCU would have facilitates coordination between the various components of the project.
116. Under conditions that are not always obvious in terms of resources, the RCU has been however able, thanks to the commitment of its staff, to carry out complex processes while ensuring that they are linked to regional cooperation dynamics. The level of achievement of project outcomes, as noted above, was overall satisfactory. And this is largely thanks to the RCU staff.

## **Steering Committee**

117. The Steering Committee is a platform for information and exchanges between managers, direct beneficiaries and current or potential project partners. This mechanism was very much appreciated. Six Steering Committee meetings have been held since the beginning of the project, each meeting being reported in a very informative manner, in English and French. According to interviewees, meetings are being better prepared and organized, compared to the situation at the time of the mid-term evaluation mission. This is largely due to the increased involvement and coordination between FAO, UNEP and the RCU.
118. However, the time for discussion is reduced due to long agendas, which affect consultation and often makes it difficult to analyze in depth key issues such as the development of synergies and complementarities with other national or sub-regional initiatives.

## **National project structures**

119. In each country, a National Coordination Unit (NCU) composed of a Technical Coordinator (TC) and a Focal Point (FP) has been set up. As concerns the composition of these units, countries were expected to respect some sort of parity between fisheries and the environment experts when designating TCs and FPs. In practice, some countries did not respect this parity. For example, for Morocco and Mauritania, the two positions (administration and research) were assigned to executives from the Ministry in charge of fisheries. For Cape Verde, both positions were assigned to executives from the Ministry in charge of the environment. These arrangements did facilitate inter-ministerial cooperation, which is at the heart of CCLME's ecosystem-based management approach.
120. There has also been significant turnover of TCs and FPs since the beginning of the project (e.g.: Mauritania, Guinea, Senegal, Cape Verde). This jeopardized the continuity of some project activities and complicated the liaison and coordination work between the national units and the RCU. In some countries, a certain lack of involvement of TCs and FPs in project activities was also observed. This lack of involvement is related to the fact that in most cases, TCs and FPs were

appointed by their line ministries without the latter providing a specific budget (e.g. to organize meetings with other stakeholders) and relieving the designated persons of some of their regular work.

121. In summary, the effectiveness of the NCU mechanism was quite low overall. This is one of the main reasons for the difficulties and the extension of the deadlines (the project had to be extended by almost 2 years) to complete the TDA-SAP process. The effectiveness of this mechanism would also strengthen the development of partnerships with other existing national initiatives, facilitate the integration of project activities into national public policies, and contribute to a better ownership of the ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the CCLME project.
122. Generally, it is difficult for regional projects such as the CCLME project to take proper account of country specificities and realities since the project actors (TC and FP) are not necessarily representative of the countries' institutional diversity. This is why the mechanism of the National Interministerial Committee (NIC), beyond its political validation function, also aimed at providing a platform for exchange and consultation with other institutions concerned with watershed management, maritime affairs management or the promotion of the blue economy, in the strategic planning process. As analyzed below, unfortunately the NIC mechanism was not able to meet this expectation.
123. NICs were established in each of the countries participating in the CCLME project. It is worth noting that in all countries, NICs were established by inter-ministerial decree or ministerial order, with a mandate limited to matters related to the implementation of the CCLME project. This means that these inter-ministerial consultation structures are project structures, which will become obsolete once the CCLME project is completed.
124. The NICs in Gambia, Guinea and Senegal were established in 2012, Guinea Bissau in 2013, and Cape Verde, Morocco and Mauritania in 2015. In order to take into account the existence of inter-ministerial consultation mechanisms, some countries proposed innovative arrangements. In Morocco, for example, the High Council for the Safeguarding and Exploitation of the Fishing Heritage, set up in 2000, performs the duties of the NIC within the framework of the CCLME project. In Senegal, the NIC is a steering committee for the CCLME project that reports to the Interministerial Committee for the Sea (CIMER) set up in 2010.
125. As indicated above, some NICs were set up, i.e. at the time of TDA validation. The late setup of these consultative bodies shows the difficulty of integrating the ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the CCLME project in some countries. In addition, in general, NICs met only on rare occasions, during specific events organized by the RCU (e.g. consultation mission for the SAP preparation, SAP validation workshop in countries that have expressed the need for it). Some NICs even met only once, i.e. at the time of their creation.
126. All NICs were set up and this was an indicator of success from the project perspective. Unfortunately, it must be noted that these mechanisms were not very effective. Can this be explained by a lack of legitimacy of these structures, a lack of interest from countries to use them to support the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach, or a lack of capacity from countries to facilitate NICs, including prepare meetings? These questions will need to be given particular attention in the second phase of the project.

### **Other structures and mechanisms involved in the implementation of the project**

127. Working Groups have proven to be a much-appreciated mechanism. Beyond their ability to gather information and prepare reports that have proven to be very useful to the TDA-SAP process, working groups have fostered exchanges between experts in the sub-region and bridged the fisheries/environment divide that may still exist in some countries. The ability to network and

work relatively autonomously in working groups, sometimes with the help of a consultant and light support from the RCU, should also be highlighted.

128. The working group concept is an interesting mechanism in many respects, and moreover an efficient one, which should be replicated in the second phase of the project. In order to improve their effectiveness, mechanisms for exchange and consultation between the different WGs could also be set up, in particular through the organization of teleconferences involving, where appropriate, a larger number of members of the scientific community in the region who are not represented in the WGs.
129. The PRCM Regional Marine and Coastal Forum was a consultation mechanism highly appreciated by the CCLME project. This mechanism made it possible to consolidate the project's internal communication strategy at each decisive stage of the TDA-SAP process, through the organization of side-events. It also provided an additional regional dialogue platform for the project, in addition to the Steering Committee.
130. The Forum also provided a platform for consultation between project managers and the various project partners at the bilateral level. Finally, the Forum, by virtue of its composition, also fostered exchanges between CCLME project managers, private stakeholders (e. g. socio-professional fisheries organizations) and NGOs involved in activities to protect marine and coastal environments. This is something that the Steering Committee does not allow and which is a plus in the project governance.
131. A total of four Forums were held during the first phase of the CCLME project: 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2015. It should be noted that in some cases, the project financially supported the participation of representatives from the CCLME region.

### **Co-financing**

132. Beyond the incremental approach required to be eligible for GEF funding, the principle of country co-financing is commendable because it enshrines the principle that beneficiaries contribute to the implementation of the project, in kind or in cash, and are therefore more inclined to take ownership of the project. This also facilitates the inclusion of GEF projects in country budget programming.
133. In practice, with the exception of a few countries such as Morocco, Guinea, Mauritania or Cape Verde, which have contributed through the provision of equipment and/or operating resources for scientific activities (e.g. evaluation campaigns, sample processing), country co-financing has proven to be very difficult to implement. For example, while all countries have been able to mobilize executives to assume TC or FP functions, in general, few resources have been mobilized from the national budget to support the implementation of project activities, and especially to operationalize national project structures (NCU, NIC) as mentioned above.
134. As far as partner co-financing is concerned, the situation is mixed. Because beyond the remarkable co-financing that the project has been able to develop in the scientific field with the EAF-Nansen project and the IEO, many of the partner co-financing displayed in the project document have in reality not been, or only slightly, implemented. This failure can be explained by the gap between the time when the project was designed and the time when the project actually started.
135. Other factors related to the very nature of the project, which focused on scientific aspects during its first phase, and the particular institutional context of the CCLME area, can also be given to justify this failure. With regard to this second point, many interviewees said there was a lack of clarity regarding the legal and institutional basis of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach. Sometimes, they had the feeling that competences were overlapping with those of

other regional organizations, particularly in the fisheries sector (SRFC, COMHAFAT, CECAF). This probably hindered the development of partner co-financing.

136. Another reason given for the mixed effectiveness of partner co-financing is the lack of a clearly defined strategy at the project level and the lack of resources allocated to the liaison function within the RCU. Such arrangements could have mobilized more co-financing partners in view of the many national and regional initiatives relevant to promoting the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach.

### **5.3. To what extent has the project contributed to the establishment of an appropriate governance framework that enables countries to address transboundary issues effectively and sustainably?**

#### **Findings:**

- Various forms of partnerships were successfully developed during the preparation of the project and during the implementation of certain activities. The participation of the various partners directly or potentially involved in the ecosystem-based management approach in the development of the final TDA and the draft SAP, was less pronounced for various reasons.
- Overall, the project has strengthened a number of policies and plans for the management of transboundary resources in the CCLME area.
- Overall, the external communication of the project can be rated as very satisfactory insofar as it has allowed a good visibility of the project and its achievements on a global scale. The internal communication of the project, focused on promoting the ecosystem approach within the CCLME region, was rather insufficient. In the future, this should be intensified and based on a communication strategy that leaves more room for liaison and regular contacts between the RCU, national structures and national decision-makers.
- The signing of the SAP reflects the political commitment of countries to pursue the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the CCLME project. However, the SAP is by no means a binding commitment for countries and can be considered as a memorandum of understanding for the second phase of the project. The CCLME Consortium proposal is presented in the annex to the SAP. This is a proposed project structure for the second phase, but it prejudices in no way the establishment of a future and new CCLME regional cooperation institution for ecosystem-based management.

#### **Partners' contribution to the TDA-SAP process**

137. As previously noted, partnership agreements as approved at the time of project design in 2006, including for the implementation of the Demos, were no longer applicable at the time the project started in 2010. Indeed, some partners had ceased, or were about to cease, their contributions at the time the CCLME project began. This had an impact on the implementation of some Demos, and in general, on the implementation of the partnership approach.

138. The promotion of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or Letters of Agreement (LOAs) between the project and institutions in the region, including the SRFC, has proven to be an effective tool for the implementation of partnerships. These collaborations have enabled the involvement of various national or regional, public or non-governmental institutions in the implementation of several project activities, particularly within the framework of the Demos. However, criticism were expressed on a case-by-case basis to the evaluation mission about the lack of complementarities and synergies between activities promoted under the CCLME project and activities carried out by other regional organizations, including the SRFC. This is due in

particular to overlapping competences on certain matters. But overall, the feedback from the partners directly involved in the implementation of the project was rather positive.

139. On the other hand, the finding concerning the involvement of partners in the actual drafting process of TDA and SAP documents must be mixed. Some partners contributed to the process (e.g. NOAA, IMR, UNESCO/Marine Mammals, IEO, Ecole Doctorale de l'Eau). Other partners in the region, however, said to the mission that their involvement were often limited to exchanges of information and requests for feedback on draft documents. In addition, it is unfortunate that the alignment with other ongoing initiatives at the national or regional level that are related to the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach, was insufficient. Examples include: the GIZ Biodiversity-Gas-Petroleum Project in Mauritania, initiatives related to coastal development in Senegal, the Blue Belt Initiative in Morocco, and the AWA project on climate change studies in West Africa. Some initiatives to bring the project closer to other potential partners have often been limited to invitations to a working group meeting, a specific workshop or a Steering Committee meeting.
140. The insufficient involvement of some partners in the process of developing the TDA and SAP was also due to other factors. One of these factors concerned the low effectiveness of national project structures, which could not therefore contribute sufficiently to bringing the TDA-SAP approach closer to other national initiatives of common interest. Another factor was the difficulty of reconciling the production needs of a project in a given time frame – in addition to relatively limited resources – with the reality of institutional processes that take time and that sometimes clash with other sub-regional initiatives, particularly in the fisheries sector. Another important factor that has impacted the involvement of some stakeholders and their partners was the extent of the geographical coverage of the CCLME area. Indeed, the latter was due to very different realities from one country to another in terms of the capacity of institutions in charge of marine resources management and the marine and coastal environment to involve in strategic planning approaches.
141. Partnerships developed by the project with other major LME projects in other parts of the world, were however highly appreciated by both parties. This enabled the sharing of good practices in promoting ecosystem-based management approaches, particularly through GEF forums and the IW program and LME projects' exchange platforms.

### **Project's contribution to ecosystem-based management plans**

142. Overall, the project has strengthened a number of policies and plans for the management of transboundary resources in the CCLME area. To this end, various documents have been produced with the support of the project:
- Policy document on trade policies and market mechanisms, prepared by the members of the Socio-Economics and Trade Working Group. This document identifies priority transboundary issues and contains recommendations for strengthening national and regional policies. "Guidelines for improving regional fish trade" are annexed in the SAP;
  - Fisheries policy document for the conservation and management of small pelagic resources in waters off Northwest Africa, in collaboration with the SRFC. and "Management guidelines on spawning areas and other essential fishing habitats" (Demo 1);
  - Management plans for specific benthopelagic fisheries such as mules, curves and tassergals in Mauritania and Senegal (Demo 3);
  - Regional geo-referenced database on habitats and biodiversity, including a map of critical habitats (including WAMI's work on countries in the region and maps produced by UNEP-WCMC on biodiversity and mangroves in the region);

- Evaluation document of policy and legal measures to protect biodiversity, habitat and water quality in the CCLME, including gap analysis.
143. The project also supported several initiatives related to the Abidjan Convention:
- Provision of a legal basis for the Mangrove Charter signed in 2010 by the ministers in charge of the environment (political commitment) in the form of an Additional MOU to the Abidjan Convention (Demo 5);
  - Preparation of a draft emergency plan to combat and prevent oil pollution at sea on the basis of workshops and networking among the countries of the region;
  - Development of a regional action program on the impacts of land-based activities on water and sediment quality - this program follows an evaluation report on strategies to reduce land-based pollution in the CCLME coastal and marine area and refers to an Action Plan for the management and monitoring of land-based activities developed within the framework of the Abidjan Convention;
  - Preparation of a draft Regional Action Plan for the management and monitoring of critical habitats;
  - Review of a draft emergency plan to prevent or limit marine pollution in the CCLME region, in relation to the Additional MOU on Integrated Coastal Zone Management to the Abidjan Convention to be adopted in Banjul in March 2017.
144. It should be noted that other additional MOUs to the Abidjan Convention on themes addressed by the CCLME are currently being prepared or ratified:
- MOU on Integrated Coastal Zone Management;
  - MOU on Environmental Standards for Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Activities;
  - Strategy on the management of marine and coastal invasive species (Sargasso) carried out with the support of USAID and GRID-ARENDAL;
  - MOU on Climate Change.
145. Reportedly, Morocco is currently expressing its desire to join the Abidjan Convention. Such an accession would allow all CCLME countries to rely on the same binding environmental tool, with many themes integrated into other sectors.

### **Project communication**

146. Overall, the external communication of the project can be rated as very satisfactory insofar as it has allowed a good visibility of the project and its achievements on a global scale. Project communication is done mainly via a regularly updated bilingual website. It is worth noting that this website was ranked 2nd in a competition organized during the GEF International Waters Conference held in Dubrovnik in October 2011.
147. The Regional Coordinator regularly participates in various international events organized on LMEs around the world (e.g. African LME Caucus, Annual Consultative Meeting on LME and Coastal Partners, LME LEARN Project Meeting). This helps to strengthen the project's external communication.
148. In contrast, the internal communication of the project should be improved. Many people surveyed by the mission, including partners directly involved in the project on specific activities (e. g. Demo, Working Groups), have very limited knowledge of the project, its objectives and its overall approach. In addition, the following key words are often used during discussions: "research project", "scientific campaigns" or even "Nansen".

149. Internal communication is mainly based on the distribution in all countries of a biannual Newsletter (a total of 13 Newsletters have been produced since the beginning of the project). These newsletters are also available on the project website. The other important vehicle for the project's internal communication is the organization of site-events during the PRCM Marine and Coastal Forum, such as the one in Banjul in 2012. Communication materials have also been developed as part of specific activities (e.g. TV spots in support of the activities of Demo 4 on MPAs).
150. The main weakness of the internal communication strategy can be linked to the lack of availability of the RC to carry out regular liaison and information work in the various countries. This is due to their heavy workload on scientific or technical activities of the project (e.g. chairing several working groups, contributing to the organization of scientific campaigns). However, this remark must be qualified with regard to the last year of the project, during which the RC was able to carry out several missions in different countries to inform and support the SAP validation process.

### **CCLME's future governance**

151. The reflection process on CCLME's future governance was based on a fairly comprehensive study on the matter by a legal consultant (who visited all countries), and on their presentation and discussion at regional meetings, including the Steering Committee meetings. This led to the development of a proposal for a "Canary Current Consortium", which was annexed to the SAP signed by the countries. This proposed institutional arrangement provides for three bodies:
- Canary Current Conference (CCC), a policy and consultation body convened every five years, with a mid-term review meeting (i.e. a meeting every 2 or 3 years);
  - Regional Steering Committee (RSC), meeting at least once a year and mainly responsible for the management of the SAP;
  - Regional Coordination Unit (RCU), a permanent body responsible for administrative and monitoring aspects.
152. The signing of the SAP by the relevant ministers of the seven countries reflects the strong political commitment of countries to pursue and support the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the CCLME project. However, the SAP is not a binding commitment for countries. It can rather be considered as a memorandum of understanding in relation to the project. As a result, the attached CCLME Consortium proposal is a proposed project structure for the second phase of the CCLME project, which will focus on the implementation of the SAP. This proposal prejudices in no way the establishment of a future and new CCLME regional cooperation institution for ecosystem-based management. This idea was rejected by the countries considering other existing regional fisheries and environment organizations or arrangements in the CCLME area (CSRP, COMHAFAT, CECAF, Abidjan Convention), and the desire to avoid duplication and conflicts of competence.
153. The proposal for the Canary Current Consortium is based on the governance of the CCLME project set up during its first phase. However, an interesting innovation has been introduced with regard to the establishment of a Conference whose mandate includes the revision of the SAP. This should reinforce the political legitimacy of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the project.

### **5.4. What are the management approaches to the CCLME project that may be of interest to other major LME projects elsewhere in the world?**

#### **Findings:**

- With a view to the future governance of the Canary Current LME, CCLME opted for a governance framework based on the concept of a consortium, a structured and non-binding collaboration and cooperation mechanism, based on existing organizations and arrangements. This model is similar to the one used by the Bay of Bengal LME. In this regard, one lesson learned from the CCLME project is that it is important not to systematically advocate the creation of a new entity to support the ecosystem-based management of a LME, first of all to respect the desire of the countries concerned and also for reasons of cost-effectiveness.
  - The CCLME project also shares another strong principle with most other LMEs, namely the principle of the participation of all stakeholders in governance.
  - The CCLME project has also shown that without strong coordination units, whether at national or regional level, it is difficult to promote an ecosystem-based management approach to a LME such as the Canary Current.
154. In general, good practices in LME and regional projects include: strengthening existing institutions, arrangements and frameworks; promoting binding legal frameworks to support the implementation of the SAP; and adopting structured and non-binding collaboration and cooperation mechanisms, typically based on the partnerships established during the development of the TDA and the SAP (such as the Alliance or Consortium approach).
155. The CCLME project shared these good practices and strategic vision with other projects or initiatives related to LME management through an appropriate and consensus-based governance framework. These include: ASCLME (Agulhas and Somali Current LME) ; BCBLME (Benguela Current LME) ; BOBLME (Bay of Bengal LME) ; CSLME (Caribbean Sea LME) ; GCLME (Guinea Current LME) ; GMLME (Gulf of Mexico LME) ; HCLME (Humboldt Current LME) ; IATSEA (Indonesian Seas) ; MEDLME (Mediterranean MedPartnership under the Barcelona Convention) ; et YSLME (Yellow Sea LME).
156. With a view to the future governance of the Canary Current LME, CCLME shares the same vision as the Bay of Bengal LME, namely a governance framework based on the concept of a consortium, a structured and non-binding collaboration and cooperation mechanism, and based on existing organizations and arrangements. This mechanism was favored in a context where it was difficult and even counterproductive to promote the creation of a new institution specifically mandated to manage transboundary issues of the Canary Current LME. Such a consortium mechanism also meets the wishes of countries and the efficiency requirements of the future governance envisaged for CCLME ecosystem-based management.
157. The CCLME project also shares another strong principle with most other LMEs, namely the principle of the participation of all stakeholders in governance.
158. The CCLME project has also shown that without strong coordination units, whether at national or regional level, it is difficult to promote an ecosystem-based management approach to a LME such as the Canary Current. This implies that in the context of the implementation of the SAP (second phase of the CCLME project), it will be necessary to review all ways and means of strengthening the effectiveness of consultation mechanisms, in the sense of building shared and common opinions between the various institutions concerned with the responsible use and conservation of marine and coastal resources in countries. It also implies that it will be important to provide the RCU with adequate resources so that it can provide, where necessary, appropriate support and consulting services to national structures and promote consultation and technical cooperation between countries.

### 5.5. To what extent has the gender dimension been taken into account in the TDA-SAP process, including in Demo projects?

#### Findings:

- In general, because of the theme addressed, the gender dimension could not be central in the project.
  - The gender dimension has been however well taken into account when implementing certain activities, particularly in the context of the Demo projects, which laid emphasis on the active participation of women.
159. Given the theme of the project, the gender dimension was not considered as a key element, neither at the time of its design nor during its implementation. Nevertheless, when considering the CCLME Regional Coordination Unit, it is worth noting the parity among its members. The RCU is indeed composed of 2 women and 2 men. Similarly, with regard to the project's resource persons (current technical coordinators and focal points), there are 7 women and 9 men.
160. The project encourages the participation of women and men in the various project activities. For example, in the case of Demo 5 dedicated to the restoration and conservation of mangroves, most of the project managers are women, and they are involved in particular in the development of ancillary activities at the Sandeng and Bondali sites. In the case of Demo 4 on MPAs, during the two training sessions for local stakeholders held in Kayar, Senegal, and Tanbi, Gambia in March and April 2015 respectively, nearly half of the participants were women.

## 6. GEF rating

161. In order to be able to report comparable results for the GEF, and also to contribute to the GEF Learning Programme (IW Learning), the evaluation assessed the success of the project using the GEF rating system which distinguishes 6 levels of ratings: VS - Very Satisfactory; S - Satisfactory; MS - Moderately Satisfactory; MU - Moderately Unsatisfactory; U - Unsatisfactory; VU - Very Unsatisfactory.

**Table 4:** GEF project rating

Rating elements	Rating	Comments
Achievement of objectives	S	The project succeeded in initiating an ecosystem-based management approach by the Canary LME by playing a catalytic role in fostering dialogue within and between stakeholders in the different sectors concerned (fisheries, biodiversity, environment) at national and regional levels, and by carrying out complex planning processes in a context where the project was also dependent on the results of other sub-regional initiatives.
Achievement of outputs and activities	S	The two main expected outcomes, a TDA and a SAP approved by countries, were achieved. The other two important expected outcomes, a sustainable legal and institutional framework (for CCLME governance) and scientific knowledge coupled with strengthened institutional capacity in the region, were only partially achieved. The processes are well advanced but have not yet been completed. A final category of expected outcomes was related to demonstration activities for the management of transboundary resources. Some Demos yielded interesting outcomes, while others experienced many difficulties and had only a minor contribution to the TDA-SAP process.
Progress towards the achievement of the 4 GEF priority areas	MS	1. Development of a SAP: yes, it has been implemented and signed by all countries. 2. Development of demonstration activities to initiate the implementation of the SAP: 4 out of 5 Demos have been implemented (only a few preliminary activities on Demo 2 concerning the selectivity of fishing gear have been conducted). 3. Capacity building to effectively manage CCLME: a significant number of people received training on research activities and public policy activities related to ecosystem management and participatory management. Given the significant investments made by the project in research capacity building, countries' expectations of the project's impact on the research landscape in the region were particularly high. These were only partially satisfied in the area of data and sample analysis and processing, and in the production of scientific publications. 4. Development of a regional political and legal framework: The proposed framework annexed to the SAP is only applicable to a future project. The latter does not yet address the issue of CLME sustainable governance.

Cost-effectiveness	S	<p>A significant part of the project's expenditure was earmarked for scientific campaigns, the data processing of which is still ongoing. The outcomes achieved for the TDA and the SAP could have been achieved without these expenditures, but the fallouts of these investments will be felt during the 2nd phase of the project.</p> <p>Despite the operational and budgetary constraints (related to the resources made available to the RCU) that impacted the implementation of certain activities, and the participatory processes implemented to support the preparation of the TDA-SAP which extended the deadlines, the two main expected outcomes, the TDA and a signed SAP, could be achieved. The fact that the overall cost-effectiveness was considered satisfactory is also explained by the significant partner co-financing that could be mobilized and also by the complementarities and synergies developed with other initiatives (e.g. EAF Nansen, PRCM).</p>
Impact	MS	<p>To date, the project's impacts on policies, institutions (national and regional), the regulatory framework, CCLME's mechanisms for sustainable management and stakeholder behavior have been limited. However, the project has strengthened the dynamics of scientific cooperation and broadened the research themes at the regional level.</p>
Risks and risk management	S	<p>The main risks of the project were well managed overall (continued engagement of stakeholders in the process, political commitment to the development of cooperation, fulfilment of co-financing commitments). Only the risk of country co-financing was not properly managed and this had an impact on the work of national structures (NCU and NIC).</p>
Sustainability	MS	<p>The SAP has been signed by all countries in the region, this will allow the Canary Current LME to continue its ecosystem-based management approach under the 2nd phase of the CCLME project. However, with regard to CCLME governance, sustainability is not yet achieved from an institutional perspective. The sustainability of the project is also considered to be Moderately Satisfactory given that the capacity building process is still not completed.</p>
Stakeholder participation	S	<p>Overall, stakeholder participation through the project's various consultation mechanisms and partnership arrangements has been good. It could have been even more so if the national and regional institutions and initiatives concerned with CCLME ecosystem management had been consulted far more when the SAP was finalized.</p>
Country ownership	MS	<p>By signing the SAP, countries confirmed their commitment to the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach and expressed their desire to continue it. However, it is difficult to assert that countries have fully taken ownership of project activities, considering the limited resources deployed to support the work of national project structures in most countries and the legal status of NICs. Additional efforts will be needed to continue to improve the ownership of the project by decision-makers in the 2nd phase.</p>
Financial planning	S	<p>The start of the project experienced some initial difficulties due to the time required to adapt FAO and UNEP procedures to GEF rules. It was also the first project of its kind managed by FAO. Subsequently, financial planning was particularly effective and adapted to the planned activities, in particular those under FAO's responsibility. The financial planning of</p>

		activities under UNEP's responsibility has been affected by the change in internal procedures during the project.
Transposability	MS	Some practices of the CCLME project can be transposed to other LMEs. These are the mobilization of partnerships and co-financing that have facilitated the implementation of some project activities and the promotion of the Working Group concept. The latter have proved to be very useful in efficiently collecting and analyzing multifaceted and multidisciplinary information in the preparation of the TDA, and also in helping to bridge sectoral divides, an essential condition for ecosystem-based management.
Monitoring and evaluation	S	The project's monitoring and evaluation system has been satisfactorily implemented. However, it could have drawn the Steering Committee's attention more closely to certain difficulties encountered by the project and to the adjustments to be recommended, if the project indicators had not referred only to output and activity indicators. The use of process indicators, particularly for the monitoring and evaluation of NICs and partnerships, would have been useful in this regard.
<b>Overall rating</b>	<b>S</b>	

## 7. Conclusions and recommendations

### 7.1. Conclusions

**Conclusion 1. By formally adopting the SAP, participating countries confirmed their interest and commitment to the ecosystem-based approach to marine and coastal resource management in the Canary Current promoted by the CCLME project.**

162. Despite its shortcomings due to delays in the TDA-SAP process and in a context that is not always enabling, the SAP was signed in 2016 by the ministers in charge of fisheries and/or the environment and/or the economy of all countries. The weak enabling context refers to: the lack of resources allocated to regional coordination; partnerships that are difficult to implement with other regional cooperation organizations; the importance of the economic challenges associated with the concerted management of certain transboundary resources such as small pelagic species; the poor capacity of countries to operationalize national project structures and mechanisms; the administrative culture that is not conducive to fisheries / environment consultations; and the heterogeneity of situations between countries.

163. The preparation of the SAP proved to be a complex exercise, and it is worth highlighting the considerable efforts made by the project to achieve this result, including the facilitation of the working group responsible for developing the draft SAP, whose members were senior executives in their line ministries.

**Conclusion 2. The project has demonstrated its ability to significantly improve scientific knowledge in support of CCLME's ecosystem-based management of marine and coastal resources, but more time is needed to process and analyze the new data collected and capitalize on the results.**

164. A strong expectation expressed by countries for the project was to improve the information and scientific basis in order to better understand the functioning of the ecosystem as a whole and the interactions between the different biotic and abiotic components, and thus to support the process of integrated marine and coastal resource management at the country and regional levels. Since its inception, the project has made considerable efforts, including through the organization of ecosystem campaigns, to enrich the CCLME ecosystem database and knowledge. But to date, this expectation remains unsatisfied given the low number of scientific publications and books for the general public, including on the knowledge capitalized through its working groups.

165. Additional efforts must be made to process and analyze new data collected and to publish and disseminate the results. New knowledge from the campaigns will provide useful elements for CCLME ecosystem-based management, including knowledge of largely unknown environments (deep bathyal benthos). The scientific investigation area of the project would also benefit from a greater focus on physical oceanography, which is one of the components of the LME and of great interest to CCLME management<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, with regard to knowledge on biodiversity, habitats and water quality, the evaluation considers that very significant progress has been made, although unfortunately the results could not be taken into account in the TDA-SAP process due to delays in the implementation of activities.

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<sup>4</sup> Current scientific literature indicates a fluctuation in the CCLME price and physical properties (rising temperatures) that may be related to climate change and other phenomena currently occurring in the world's oceans (hypoxia, acidification, eutrophication, destruction of habitats, resources, etc.). This could also encourage the project to support modelling work on the region's water bodies and the establishment of a monitoring network.

**Conclusion 3. The project has had a significant impact on the ability of researchers and institutes to network across the region, although capacity-building needs for applied research in support of CCLME ecosystem-based management are still great.**

166. Networking was based on the setup of many working groups, some of which held annual meetings as part of their operations. In these frameworks, participants adopted essential elements to promote a regional approach. This includes in particular the standardization of study and analysis methods, the establishment of a data exchange protocol, the joint development of a database, and the development of databases for a Geographical Information System (GIS) integrating all sectors and thus adapted to decision-making.
167. With regard to capacity-building for researchers and technicians in the region, the training provided during and after the campaigns has been too brief overall. Moreover, the lack of follow-up and resources in the countries did not allow to continue these trainings. It should also be noted that the project has facilitated the recruitment and training of a number of students, whose results will be felt in the coming years through Master's degrees, PhD and scientific publications.
168. In the future, it would be desirable to set up multidisciplinary teams composed of managers, researchers and technicians responsible for applying permanent monitoring methodologies for all the themes addressed by the ecosystem approach. These teams should receive additional training on the matter beforehand. Local and international NGOs could also be involved in this work, as can be observed elsewhere in other regions, to enable them to have a look at the resource and the possible impacts on it.

**Conclusion 4. In general, the level of country ownership of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach promoted by the project is still insufficient.**

169. The evaluation's opinion, shared by many executives in the government, research institutes and partner institutions from different countries, is that the project logic – which aimed at the signing of the SAP – took precedence over the process logic, which was the only guarantee of countries' ownership and sustainability. This was expressed in particular through the lack of time devoted to consultation at the time of finalizing the TDA and the SAP, the priority given to the development of targeted partnerships based on the expected results of the project, and the lack of resources devoted to the liaison, animation and coordination work of the various national project structures. The generally low level of resources allocated to the functioning of national project structures is also an indicator of insufficient ownership to date of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach. The inadequacies of the project's internal communication system, including problems related to the translation of documents, also contributed to the lack of national ownership of the approach.
170. In addition, the activities implemented as part of the Demos did not yield enough tangible results, particularly for fisheries. This did not help to "demonstrate" through action the validity and added value of the CCLME approach with regard to the objective of reversing the process of resource degradation. This is in a context where, since 2010, the ecosystem continues to deteriorate due to a series of factors internal or external to the sub-region<sup>5</sup>.
171. Another explanation for the low country ownership of the CCLME approach is related to the lack of linkage between the TDA-SAP process and other similar or complementary approaches or initiatives, encouraged by countries at the national and regional levels.

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<sup>5</sup> Uncontrolled coastal urbanization, coastal erosion, aquatic pollution, increased land and sea use conflicts, persistent IUU fishing, accumulation of fishing overcapacity, emergence of new fishing sectors that have increased pressure on transboundary resources and the marine environment (e. g. processing plants for small pelagics), etc.

**Conclusion 5. In general, the operational structures and project management procedures have proved to be effective, but they could be improved – particularly with regard to the capacity of the RCU to sufficiently exercise its coordination and facilitation functions and that of the national structures to become more actively involved in the implementation of project activities.**

172. The main weaknesses that will need to be addressed for the second phase of the project are the insufficient human capacity of the RCU in terms of human resources and staff status, combined with an underutilization of the FAO and UNEP backstopping mechanism that could have been even more effective, diversified and visible. In addition, the GEF did not sufficiently appreciate the resources needed to manage operations for this type of project, particularly for FAO as lead agency.

173. But the main stumbling block to the institutional arrangements provided for by the project is the weak effectiveness of national structures, and in particular NICs, which ultimately aim at bridging sectoral divides and building shared opinions and decisions for ecosystem-based management of marine and coastal resources and spaces. Appropriate solutions at all levels (increased facilitation role by regional coordination, and strengthened financial commitments and political will on the part of countries) will have to be provided during the 2nd phase of the project in order to strengthen the effectiveness of these national structures.

**Conclusion 6. The identity of the CCLME project is not well understood or sometimes difficult to perceive within national and regional initiatives for the preservation and sustainable management of resources in the CCLME region.**

174. During its investigations, the mission found that some stakeholders, at the technical or political level, still have difficulty describing the logical path of the TDA-SAP process and clarifying the identity of the CCLME project in the implementation of this process. Some of these investigations also stress the primacy of the scientific nature of the project, while others highlight the redundancy of certain project activities with those promoted by other national or regional initiatives.

175. The issue of the legal and institutional basis of the CCLME initiative also raised many questions, in a context where there were already many cooperation mechanisms in place at the start of the project to address some of the priority transboundary issues in CCLME management. Because of this, the identity of the CCLME project in the early years of its implementation was not clear enough.

176. In addition, given the complexity and diversity of the issues raised by CCLME's integrated and collaborative management, the project tended to disperse by getting involved in many scientific and technical matters. Yet, due to a lack of sufficient resources and its priority to complete the TDA-SAP strategic planning process, the project could not provide real added value, particularly in terms of fisheries cooperation, compared to other ongoing national and regional initiatives. Instead, the project's contributions to strengthening the dynamics of regional cooperation in the field of research and to diversifying applied research themes in support of the ecosystem-based management process, are undeniable.

177. Because of the above elements, many stakeholders deem the identity of the CCLME project not sufficiently defined and this undermines its legitimacy and effectiveness. With a view to the second phase, it will be important to clarify the identity of the CCLME project and to build on the comparative advantages of the 'CCLME project' mechanism in relation to other existing sub-regional arrangements and organizations to progress on the Canary Current LME ecosystem-based management approach.

**Conclusion 7. The project took into account differing situations between countries in terms of capacity to contribute to the TDA-SAP process and the need to rely on regional cooperation, to involve regional expertise to mitigate this challenge.**

178. Among the challenges common or specific to each CCLME country are the weakness and dispersion of research capacities, and the lack of human and financial resources available to institutions responsible for providing services in support of marine and coastal resource management. The disparity in situations across countries has been a barrier to CCLME's approach to ecosystem-based resource management.

179. The project was able to take this challenge into account through the concept of a working group that fostered the exchange of experience and expertise between countries and encouraged their involvement in the preparation of the TDA-SAP. At the end of the first phase, south-south cooperation initiatives were also promoted, for example through the concept of a center of excellence for plankton processing. Significant efforts have also been made to train and involve research personnel from countries of the region partaking in research campaigns, although to date their involvement has focused mainly on the scientific data collection phase. However, in order to promote opinions that better reflect countries' views and concerns in CCLME strategic planning, it will be important to continue efforts to involve regional scientific and technical expertise in the implementation of the SAP.

**Conclusion 8. The CCLME project has taken advantage of some opportunities to develop partnerships for the implementation of the TDA-SAP, but the sustainability of the CCLME strategic planning process and the implementation of the SAP will require a broader partnership approach in consultation with all stakeholders.**

180. The evaluation noted that there was a significant divergence in the assessment of the level of involvement of current or potential partners in the TDA-SAP process, depending on whether one refers to the views of project managers – who consider this involvement to have been very good overall – or to those of many stakeholders (national project structures, national institutions, regional organizations, development partners) – who consider that their involvement was insufficient, particularly as concerns the finalization of the documents. This divergence of assessment can be explained by a number of reasons, including: overlapping regional initiatives on common topics, particularly in the fisheries sector; low effectiveness of national project structures (which did not facilitate the establishment of links between the project and national initiatives); and lack of internal communication of the project. Another explanation is the difficulty of reconciling the imperatives of the project to produce results in a given time with the reality of more time-consuming institutional processes.

**Conclusion 9. Non-public stakeholders have been involved at different levels of the CCLME ecosystem-based management approach.**

181. Non-public stakeholders have been involved on a case-by-case basis in some project activities, notably under the five Demos projects and through the holding of the Marine and Coastal Forum. However, the level of involvement of national or international NGOs, socio-professional stakeholders and communities in the process of preparing and validating the TDA-SAP has been relatively low, according to them, and will need to be strengthened in the next steps of the CCLME ecosystem-based management process.

**Conclusion 10. The gender dimension was not given much consideration in the project document due to the nature of the project which aims at promoting ecosystem-based management of the Canary Current LME; consequently, the gender dimension was not really taken into account during the first phase of the CCLME project.**

182. The gender dimension was not taken into account during the implementation of the project. And this can be explained by the very nature of the project, which focuses on improving scientific knowledge and regional cooperation in support of CCLME's ecosystem-based management. However, the gender dimension has been addressed in some demonstration projects such as Demo 5 on mangroves. Moreover, gender parity has been relatively well respected in the composition of the RCU and taken into account by countries while appointing national coordinators and focal points. However, the gender dimension has not been sufficiently taken into account in the organization of scientific campaigns. With a view to the second phase of the project, it will be important that gender be more fully taken into account, particularly in the data collection and processing activities of scientific campaigns.

**Conclusion 11. The success of the CCLME approach will also depend on the continuation of activities during the transition phase (i.e. until the beginning of the design phase of the second phase). This transition phase aims in particular at enhancing the scientific achievements of the project and seeking synergies with other national and regional initiatives contributing to the objectives and expected outcomes of the SAP.**

183. Phase 1 of the CCLME project should end in December 2016, while the preparation phase of Phase 2, which includes the signing of the PIF and GEF approval of the project, is not expected to begin until the end of the first half of 2017. This interruption may be detrimental to the regional dynamics that the project has been striving to promote since its inception, particularly with regard to the development of partnerships around the CCLME approach, and to the outcome of activities that will contribute to a better visibility of the project in terms of improving scientific knowledge.

## 7.2. Recommendations

### Recommendation 1. To GEF, FAO and UNEP

**In order to meet the countries' desire to continue the ecosystem-based management approach of the Canary Current LME, it is recommended to continue the preparation of the second phase of the project, while clarifying its identity in relation to other national and regional initiatives that could support the implementation of the SAP.**

184. The preparation of the second phase has begun with the ongoing development of the implementation project or PFI. A draft document is being reviewed with countries. Contacts have been initiated to this end with various partners involved in the sub-region in order to work in a complementary manner. In addition, the CCLME project is involved in numerous strategic planning meetings with other sub-regional initiatives.

185. However, according to the evaluation, the CCLME project will need to build an identity first to distinguish it from other regional arrangements and initiatives and secondly to strengthen its relevance to the ecosystem-based management of the Canary Current LME. The main idea is that the CCLME project has a real strategic mission in integrated marine and coastal planning and management at the regional level, taking into account the characteristics of environments and resources and the impact of human activities, from watersheds to waters under national jurisdiction.

186. Among the key ideas attached to this identity, the following can be highlighted:

- The CCLME project provides a framework for improving the information and scientific basis for the functioning and status of the ecosystem as a whole and for continuous monitoring (based on indicators and warning mechanisms), and for identifying and promoting the actions necessary for its ecosystem-based management at the most appropriate scale in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity (local, national and regional scales).

- The CCLME project promotes synergies and complementarities with the various existing national and regional initiatives, and aims at consolidating and building on (not replacing) existing regional fisheries or environmental organizations in order to modify or adapt management models, particularly in the fields of fisheries and the environment.
- The CCLME project contributes to the capacity building efforts of the various stakeholders through the promotion of innovative tools and initiatives across the CCLME. These include the opening of regional centers of excellence (e.g. INRH on the study of plankton, ONISPA on the monitoring of the marine environment) and the establishment of platforms for the exchange of expertise and experience between countries on good and/or new practices in relation to targeted themes. These themes could include: marine spatial planning, coastal management; prevention and preparedness for marine or land-based pollution response; promotion of the blue economy; development of MPAs as a co-management tool; protection of sensitive areas; quota fisheries management; selectivity of fishing gear; mangrove restoration, etc.

## **Recommendation 2. To GEF, FAO and UNEP**

**In order to contribute to greater country ownership of the CCLME project in terms of its contribution to improving scientific knowledge and facilitating the mobilization of partnerships for the second phase, it is recommended to use the remaining funds from the project for some activities.**

187. At the time of the evaluation, the information that the first phase of the CCLME project was already extended to the end of August 2017 had not yet been confirmed. In this perspective, the evaluation proposes that the remaining funds from the project should also be used to carry out the following activities:

- The review of existing initiatives at national and regional level related to the conservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in the CCLME area (e.g. marine environmental monitoring, improvement of scientific knowledge, marine pollution preparedness and response, coastal planning, development of marine protected areas, etc.) This review should then lead to the development of a cross matrix between what the SAP plans to promote, which is already being addressed in the countries or at the sub-regional level, and the identification of priority areas that do not benefit from funding and/or specific initiatives, based in particular on the organization of a regional multi-stakeholder workshop. Appendix 8 provides an indicative list of projects or initiatives of interest to CCLME ecosystem-based management.
- The capitalization, processing and use of the data and information collected in the first phase of the project in the form of a "Reference State" (the preparation of which has already been discussed during the WG on campaign planning and data analysis). This activity should lead to a scientific publication project and the development of communication materials to facilitate the popularization of science for managers.
- The development of the outline of a regional action plan on applied research in support of CCLME ecosystem-based management by using the results of the TDA and organizing a regional workshop. The two main expectations of this action plan would be, on the one hand, to clarify the major questions of science applied to CCLME governance to be addressed in the coming years, and, on the other hand, to make proposals on how these questions could be addressed within a real strategy (implementation at the level of national institutes, outsourcing of certain research, north-south cooperation, south-south cooperation at the CCLME area level). The regional workshop should also provide an opportunity to conduct preliminary discussions on how to support the project in the implementation of this regional action plan.

### **Recommendation 3. To FAO and UNEP**

**In order to capitalize on the investments made by the project in data and sample collection, it is recommended that in its second phase, the project finalize their processing, analysis and valorization.**

188. As concerns the valorization of data, particular attention should be paid to the development of management tools adapted to the region and easily usable and understandable by decision-makers. In this respect, multi-layer GIS (i.e. including human activities), indicator monitoring systems and permanent monitoring stations for flagship species and habitats should be encouraged. The development of an Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) mapping GIS (Norwegian Mareano model) would help to integrate all the themes and activities relating to the integrated management of the marine and coastal zone around the vulnerability of habitats and biodiversity (fishing, maritime transport, oil and gas exploitation, pollution, conservation areas, tourism, coastal erosion, coastal urbanization, impact of climate change, invasive species, etc.). Other environment monitoring would make it possible to use indicators to define tolerance thresholds at the scale of the large ecosystem and to guide the process of adjusting management measures accordingly.
189. In general, it will be important to ensure that the supply of applied research produced under the CCLME project is in line with the demand of managers and professionals in the countries concerned (science for governance). The development of a regional action plan on research, as suggested in recommendation 2, should meet this objective.
190. In addition, with regard to knowledge dissemination, it would be interesting to adopt the ICAWA model, which is highly appreciated by countries as it allows the results of the AWA program to be shared annually at the sub regional level and provides a platform for exchanges between researchers from the North and the South working on issues related to the marine and coastal environment. In absolute terms, it would be desirable to hold the two back-to-back events in order to bring the two scientific initiatives closer together and to share some of the costs associated with the participation of researchers and experts from the countries.

### **Recommendation 4. To FAO and UNEP**

**In order to build national capacities, it is recommended that, in its second phase, the project contribute more to national and regional training efforts of different stakeholders, building on the comparative advantages of regional cooperation.**

191. At the time of the preparation of the second phase of the CCLME project, initiatives had already been taken to continue the process of national capacity building. For example, it is expected that CCLME researchers and decision-makers be trained on various aspects of fisheries management in partnership with the EAF-Nansen program. Similarly, collaboration with the IEO is planned to organize training courses at the IEO in Spain on benthos or at the INRH in Morocco on plankton. With regard to fisheries, the CCLME project is also linked to CECAF activities, which allows scientists in the region to continue to exchange views on certain topics related to fisheries and the environment.
192. In addition to these initiatives, and with a view to the second phase of the project, the evaluation suggests reviewing the capacity of the region's research institutes to ensure they can carry out all the tasks required for the provision of scientific advice in support of decision-making. These tasks include measuring the indicators necessary to understand the ecosystem as a whole but also to monitor its evolution, so that decision-makers can be provided with options or recommendations concerning the exploitation of the natural resource or the occupation and

activities of the coastal zone. Countries should also be provided with a budget for continuous training so that their experts can update their knowledge and know-how regularly or when necessary (new technologies). It would also be appropriate to use existing training facilities in the region such as the Regional Training Centers supported by different partners (e.g. EAF-Nansen, IODE/IOC/UNESCO/Ocean Teacher, ODINAFRICA, UN e-marine, GRID-ARENDAL, UNEP, NOAA learning platform, ICES WGLMEBP, GEF IW TT, etc.).

193. It would also be relevant to strengthen the involvement of national scientific and technical expertise in the implementation of project activities. This could be done through the establishment of a regional platform for the exchange of experiences and expertise on topics of common interest in specific areas of research or governance related to CCLME ecosystem-based management, and the provision of a specific budget for groups of experts from the region ('champions' in specific areas) to share their expertise through country missions. It was also suggested by some countries to use diaspora expertise in capacity building to better embed the project and its vision of "science applied to governance" in the region. Finally, the concept of regional centers of excellence to support the development of cooperation between countries for research or monitoring activities should continue to be encouraged.
194. Besides, many countries will soon be confronted with a generational gap of researchers, managers and/or technicians. One example is the renewal of scientific observer corps. It would be relevant to share the training cost of this renewal for each of these countries at the sub-regional level, with the project acting as a catalyst for these initiatives. In addition, such initiatives would promote the harmonization of data collection and analysis methods and facilitate the development of shared opinions among the various countries in the CCLME region.

#### **Recommendation 5. To GEF, FAO and UNEP**

**In order to improve the effectiveness of project management mechanisms, it is recommended to increase the resources allocated to management, to review certain GEF procedures in order to facilitate the recruitment of sufficient staff and appropriate status of technical project staff, and to strengthen backstopping services.**

195. During the first phase of the project, the resources allocated to the management of the CCLME project – which is a complex project in terms of geographical coverage, diversity of themes addressed, variety of types of interventions at country or regional level, and institutional arrangements – were insufficient in terms of the resources required for operations and the fully satisfactory fulfilment of the RCU's mandate. Considering that GEF procedures provide that only 20% of the budget can be allocated to staff (the remaining 80% should be earmarked for technical activities), the evaluation is aware of the difficulties in implementing this recommendation. This would imply an increase in the resources allocated to staff, particularly at the RCU level. Nevertheless, the evaluation draws attention to the fact that, although the implementation of the SAP will mainly take place at the country level through national structures, the success of the project will also depend on the ability of the RCU to provide satisfactory coordination, facilitation and advisory support services to national structures. This should include the ability to recruit and offer attractive and secure conditions for technical project experts.
196. Ideally, the RCU should cover the following themes: coordination, liaison, scientific issues, governance, communication (including preparation of policy briefs) and popularization of science.
197. In order to increase the backstopping capacities of FAO and UNEP and to ensure that the advice and guidance provided is better aligned with the ecosystem approach, which requires a multidisciplinary and holistic approach, it will be important to strengthen the project's Task Force mechanism and to continue collaboration with other LME projects through the platforms provided

for this purpose in the second phase of the project. It will also be important for UNEP and/or the Abidjan Convention Secretariat to strengthen their capacity to provide backstopping services.

#### **Recommendation 6. To FAO and UNEP and countries**

**In order to meet all the conditions necessary for the implementation of the SAP, it is recommended to promote during the second phase of the project a partnership strategy and appropriate means to broaden and revitalize collaboration with the partners involved on topics addressed by the SAP, with a view to developing synergies and complementarities.**

198. Partnership development is a continuous and adaptive process, in a context where partners align their actions with their priorities and resources, and according to their own specific time constraints. For example, the long time elapsed between the design phase and the actual start of the project largely explains the shortcomings observed in partnerships during the implementation of project activities. For the second phase, it will be imperative to design and promote a partnership strategy and to ensure its regular monitoring-evaluation on the basis of result and process indicators. And this in a context where the CCLME project will contribute to the implementation of the SAP approach, alongside other national and regional initiatives. The evaluation believes that such a partnership strategy should include, among other things, the following points:

- mainstream in the regional coordinator's terms of reference their liaison, coordination and facilitation work on the basis of intensive travel in the sub-region;
- provide a specific framework for consultation between FAO, UNEP and other partners involved in programs/initiatives of interest for the CCLME management, considering that the Steering Committee mechanism is not adapted for this purpose;
- develop communication and monitoring-evaluation tools dedicated to the promotion of partnerships (based on the results of the review of existing initiatives at the national and regional levels as suggested in recommendation 2);
- involve FAO representations more closely in the monitoring and evaluation of the project in the countries in order to facilitate the integration of other FAO initiatives of interest in the implementation of the SAP (e.g. initiatives on blue growth, small-scale fisheries, etc.).

#### **Recommendation 7. To FAO and UNEP and countries**

**In order to promote greater ownership of the project by policy makers and to strengthen the CCLME's regional cooperation dynamic for ecosystem management, it is recommended that the second phase of the project include more action-oriented activities.**

199. In addition to continuing efforts to improve knowledge on transboundary resources and strengthen institutional capacities, which remain priorities for countries, it would be appropriate to promote concrete actions to slow or reverse the process of ecosystem degradation through "pilot projects"<sup>6</sup>. To some extent, "pilot projects" was the concept applied for Demos 4 (MPA) and 5 (mangroves).

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<sup>6</sup> In its broadest sense, the term "pilot project" refers to an initiative whose purpose is to validate a management approach to a specific fishery through action and experimentation, in order to demonstrate its validity and usefulness and to share its results. These are also projects with a well-defined scope of intervention relating to a fishery, a fishing sector and/or area, and addressing targeted themes to constitute entry points likely to be successful for further reforms of the management system. This concept of "pilot projects" has, for example, been successfully developed for the management of shared resources or resources of common interest under the SmartFish programme in the Southwest Indian Ocean.

200. For example, pilot projects could work on the identification and implementation of technical measures for the management of certain transboundary resources that are both relevant and equitable, from an ecosystem standpoint, in their application at the CCLME scale (e.g. protection of sensitive areas with a regional impact in each of the countries concerned, harmonization of regulations on the technical characteristics of fishing gear).

#### **Recommendation 8. To FAO and UNEP and countries**

**Considering that CCLME countries will have to play a decisive role in the implementation of the SAP, it is recommended to examine all ways and means of increasing the effectiveness of national project structures, including inter-ministerial committees (NICs).**

201. Several lessons learned during the first phase of the project related to the need for better effectiveness of national structures can be highlighted. In particular, it is imperative that national coordination units (NCUs) be provided with a minimum of operating resources in accordance with the principle of country co-financing. Some stability is also needed in the appointment of technical coordinators and focal points, and the latter would reflect as much as possible the diversity of institutions involved in the management of marine and coastal resources. It is also important to appoint high-ranking officials to these functions in order to facilitate consultation between the various technical departments of their institutions.

202. Another lesson learned is that NCUs, as they currently stand, have difficulty representing at the national level the full diversity of policies and institutions involved in CCLME ecosystem-based management. This contributes to preventing good country ownership of the project. In order to correct this, the possibility of setting up NCUs extended to other representatives of national or even local structures and resource persons (such as those who participated in working groups), providing them with a real secretariat and organizing frequent consultation meetings should be examined, while emphasizing that the NCU mechanism must be more flexible than the NIC mechanism. These extended NCUs could also be the subject of technical support on a case-by-case basis (via consultants and/or members of the RCU), at their request, to enable them to fully exercise their mandate, including for the preparation and facilitation of NIC meetings, and also to participate in the capacity building effort of national institutions.

203. The establishment of extended and effective NCUs in their functioning appears to be one of the conditions that will enable countries to move from a logic of sharing information and comments to a logic of common proposed opinions and decisions with a view to presenting them for adoption to the NICs.

204. In its second phase, the project should also improve its internal communication strategy and provide NCUs with appropriate tools to ease the involvement of the various institutions involved in CCLME ecosystem-based management. The project could also explore the possibility of promoting a network of parliamentarians, such as the PRCM/IUCN initiative<sup>7</sup>, to encourage advocacy on issues and institutional aspects related to CCLME ecosystem-based management.

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<sup>7</sup> IUCN has established a network of parliamentarians at the regional level (PRCM area) on environmental issues. The highlights of this initiative are: (i) the funding of parliamentary assistants in each country (PRCM zone, 7 countries) to advise and support volunteer and interested parliamentarians (about 40 parliamentarians have joined the approach in Senegal, about 40 in Mauritania, etc.); (ii) the organization of specific events by national networks of parliamentarians (e.g., coastal caravan in Mauritania, the 7 Wonders of the Coast competition in Bissau, awareness-raising on the harmful effects of IUU fishing in small-scale fishing, etc.) - some of these initiatives would have made it possible to unblock situations and progress on issues; and (iii) the federation of national networks at the subregional level within an Alliance of Parliamentarians and Local Authorities for the Protection of the West African Coast.

## **8. List of annexes**

The annexes to the report are available in French on the website of the FAO Evaluation Office:  
<http://www.fao.org/evaluation/fr/>

Annex 1. Terms of Reference of the Evaluation

Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix

Annex 3. List of the main documents (produced by the project) reviewed

Annex 4. Work program of the evaluation team and list of people surveyed

Annex 5. Project structure per component, outcome and expected output

Annex 6. Demonstration Projects (Demos): Objectives, Achievements and Contribution to the CCLME Ecosystem-based Management Approach

Annex 7. Note on the use of regional expertise in the CCLME project (prepared by the RCU)

Annex 8. Projects or initiatives of interest to CCLME ecosystem-based management