



Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10558

Project Type

FSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Fisheries and Ecosystem Based Management for the Black Sea - (FishEBM BS)

Countries

Regional, Georgia, Türkiye, Ukraine

Agency(ies)

FAO

Other Executing Partner(s)

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

Executing Partner Type

Others

GEF Focal Area

International Waters

Sector

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Climate Change, Climate Change Adaptation, Livelihoods, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, International Waters, Large Marine Ecosystems, Strategic Action Plan Implementation, Learning, Areas

Beyond National Jurisdiction, Marine Protected Area, Coastal, Fisheries, Acquaculture, Pollution, Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan Preparation, Biodiversity, Species, Threatened Species, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Mainstreaming, Influencing models, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Demonstrate innovative approache, Stakeholders, Beneficiaries, Local Communities, Private Sector, SMEs, Large corporations, Communications, Strategic Communications, Awareness Raising, Education, Behavior change, Type of Engagement, Participation, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Access and control over natural resources, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Innovation, Enabling Activities, Knowledge Exchange

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

No Contribution 0

Climate Change Adaptation

Significant Objective 1

Biodiversity

No Contribution 0

Land Degradation

No Contribution 0

Submission Date

3/23/2020

Expected Implementation Start

9/30/2022

Expected Completion Date

8/31/2026

Duration

48In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

475,000.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
IW-1-2	Strengthening Blue Economy opportunities-catalyze sustainable fisheries management.	GET	5,000,000.00	31,350,393.00
Total Project Cost(\$)			5,000,000.00	31,350,393.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

To reverse the overexploitation of select commercial living marine resources by enhancing the capacity of Black Sea countries to manage fisheries, including through the application of ecosystem-based management tools.

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
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Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Component 1: Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF.	Technical Assistance	<u>Outcome 1:</u> Fisheries managers and stakeholders use sound information generated on the status of key commercial fisheries to support improved management and selected value chain interventions, particularly for SSF, in view of maximizing the sustainability of production.	<p>Output 1.1: Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socioeconomic analysis and fisheries management (including gender-disaggregated data collection).</p> <p>Output 1.2: Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including for SSF and recreational fisheries.</p> <p>Output 1.3: Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for innovation, including the certification of select fisheries.</p> <p>Output 1.4: Reinforced synergies with the private sector to support market-driven opportunities in the fisheries sector.</p> <p>Output 1.5: Participation in</p>	GET	1,997,588.00	9,310,884.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Component 2: Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing.	Technical Assistance	<u>Outcome 2</u> : Fisheries management better accounts for the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea and incorporates control measures, including through the use of emerging technologies.	<p>Output 2.1: Losses in national economies generated by IUU fishing activities assessed through the application of an ad hoc methodology at the country level.</p> <p>Output 2.2: Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments.</p> <p>Output 2.3: Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and fisheries crimes collected, analyzed and disseminated, including through a regional repository.</p> <p>Output 2.4: Application of technology in the field of control and surveillance, including small-scale fishing, tested and tailored to the capacity of countries.</p> <p>Output 2.5: International Plan of Action</p>	GET	1,435,288.00	11,848,639.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Component 3: Integrated ecosystem-based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries.	Technical Assistance	<u>Outcome 3:</u> Healthier marine ecosystems with more productive fisheries in place, through the synergistic application of ecosystem-based conservation/management tools and improvements in fisheries tenure governance.	<p>Output 3.1: Area-based and innovative management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity.</p> <p>Output 3.2: Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries ensured and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated.</p> <p>Output 3.3: Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and those of other potential stressors.</p> <p>Output 3.4: Training programmes and case studies to strengthen national capacity towards the development of fisheries tenure interventions (referring to gender-responsive training</p>	GET	773,357.00	7,554,713.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
Component 4: Knowledge management and outscaling.	Technical Assistance	<u>Outcome 4:</u> Integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management promoted at the regional and global level.	<p>Output 4.1: Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.</p> <p>Output 4.2: Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of aligning different national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Output 4.3: Outreach & Communication Strategy developed and implemented, including coordination and awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners and participation in relevant global GEF related fora (including gender-responsive outreach and communication strategy developed).</p>	GET	555,672.00	1,136,157.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
				Sub Total (\$)	4,761,905.00	29,850,393.00

Project Management Cost (PMC)

	GET		238,095.00		1,500,000.00	
			Sub Total(\$)	238,095.00	1,500,000.00	
			Total Project Cost(\$)	5,000,000.00	31,350,393.00	

Please provide justification

Kindly note that the total of Component 4 is \$570,703. In the project budget, this is the result of \$309,153 for technical activities under Comp. 4, and \$261,550 for M&E.

C. Sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Other	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ? Institute of Oceanology	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	288,942.00
Other	Sofia Institute of Fish Resources	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	646,002.00
Private Sector	Catapult CX	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	11,150,000.00
Private Sector	Collete Localisation Satellites - CLS	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	37,200.00
Other	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe- CPMR	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	26,305.00
Other	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)	Grant	Investment mobilized	6,000,000.00
Other	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	EAFA-Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry of Bulgaria	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	97,000.00
Recipient Country Government	EAFA-Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry of Bulgaria	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	609,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia - MEPA	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	2,156,098.00
Other	International Centre for Black Sea Studies - ICBSS	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	201,612.00

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Private Sector	MetOcean Telematics	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	39,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Republic of Turkey	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	6,000,000.00
Other	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ? Institute of Oceanology	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	72,234.00
Private Sector	Collete Localisation Satellites - CLS	Loans	Investment mobilized	27,000.00
Total Co-Financing(\$)				31,350,393.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

? Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ? Institute of Oceanology is contributing by the means of the implementation of the three correlated projects in the Black Sea region. The USD 72,234 in-kind co-financing refers to the staff that will work to the three projects. ? CLS?s investments (USD 27,000), include activities related to MCS, including technical support and loaning electronic EMS/REM to monitor and control industrial & semi-industrial vessels and run tests on field. ? GFCM is providing grant co-financing (USD 6,000,000) through a mix of in-kind and extra-budgetary funds supporting GFCM annual work plans and strategic work. These funds have been mobilized to support already approved activities in GFCM which will directly or indirectly support the execution of the FishEBM BS project. ? Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry of Bulgaria contributes to the project with modernizing patrol vessels and with securing the functioning of the GFCM subregional technical unit in Burgas, Bulgaria. The USD 97,000 in-kind co-financing refers to the ministry staff allocated to these activities who indirectly contribute to the success of the FishEBM BS project. ? Georgia?s mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. These projects, which will directly or indirectly support the execution of the FishEBM BS project and the achievement of its objectives.

D. Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
FAO	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	5,000,000	475,000	5,475,000.00
Total Grant Resources(\$)					5,000,000.00	475,000.00	5,475,000.00

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

14,250

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
FAO	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	150,000	14,250	164,250.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					150,000.00	14,250.00	164,250.00

Core Indicators

Indicator 7 Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Shared water Ecosystem	Black Sea	Black Sea		
Count	1	1	0	0

Indicator 7.1 Level of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program (TDA/SAP) formulation and implementation (scale of 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Black Sea	3	3		
Select SWE				<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicator 7.2 Level of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional management institution(s) (RMI) to support its implementation (scale of 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Black Sea	3	3		
Select SWE				<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicator 7.3 Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees (IMC; scale 1 to 4; See Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Black Sea	1	1		
Select SWE				<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicator 7.4 Level of engagement in IWLEARN through participation and delivery of key products(scale 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Black Sea	1	3		
Select SWE				<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicator 8 Globally over-exploited fisheries moved to more sustainable levels

Metric Tons (Expected at PIF)	Metric Tons (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Metric Tons (Achieved at MTR)	Metric Tons (Achieved at TE)
326,860.00	326,860.00		

Fishery Details

Engraulis encrasicolus: 240,000 MT Squalus acanthias: 160 MT Trachurus spp: 34,000 MT
Mullus Barbatous: 1,300 MT Sprattus sprattus: 39,000 MT Merlangius merlangus: 11,000 MT
Scophthalmus maximus 1,400 MT

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	5,000	13,000		
Male	5,000	10,000		
Total	10000	23000	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

a. The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

The Black Sea, with a total coastline of 4340 km, is bordered by Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Ukraine. It is connected to the Mediterranean Sea by the narrow Turkish Straits. The littoral States, and most notably Turkey, have a very long tradition in fisheries with industrial, semi-industrial and small-scale fisheries coexisting in the basin. The Black Sea, unlike many other marine areas in the world, is fully delimited, with the six littoral States having concluded agreements among them to set extended maritime boundaries [2]. Also, beyond a certain depth, the Black Sea is anoxic, one of the peculiar characteristics of this basin.

a) The root causes

a.1 A sector overlooking ecosystem-based approaches:

As demonstrated by the dramatic environmental changes that have occurred in the region of late decades, Black Sea fisheries are extremely susceptible to human impacts, including their abundance and distribution. Apex pelagic predators in the Black Sea have suffered an important decline, while anchovy, arguably the key species in the ecosystem and the stock that sustains the region's largest commercial fishery, collapsed in the late 1980s and has been displaying abrupt fluctuations since then, affecting total landings at a regional level (see figure 1 below). Other commercial fisheries, such as sturgeon, are even more threatened by human impacts as they are anadromous species linked to the Danube river ecosystem [3]. As a matter of fact, Black Sea waters are affected by pollution from land-based sources due to river discharge and runoff. The semi-enclosed nature of the Black Sea contributes to a greater extent in making the basin a rapidly polluted environment, due to contaminants from surrounding countries, as well as in accelerating the impacts of climate change and the outbreak of non-indigenous species. This was already diagnosed roughly 25 years ago by the Black Sea Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) which identified, among others, overcapitalization, overexploitation (especially of anadromous stocks), information gaps, degraded ecosystems, overfishing, habitat destruction and inadequate fisheries enforcement among the most critical transboundary problems that had to be urgently addressed by the littoral States. With respect to fisheries, the primary causes for their overall decline were reported at that time to include IUU fishing and use of destructive harvest techniques, loss of valuable spawning and nursery habitats, eutrophication and pollution and the lack of an effective regional cooperative fisheries management. Nonetheless, and although almost all commercially exploited fisheries in the Black Sea are a unit stock shared by the littoral States, the need to ensure strong cooperation in the elaboration and implementation of common fisheries management plans has remained a pending priority for many years following the TDA. Yet the importance of the fishery sector can hardly be overlooked.

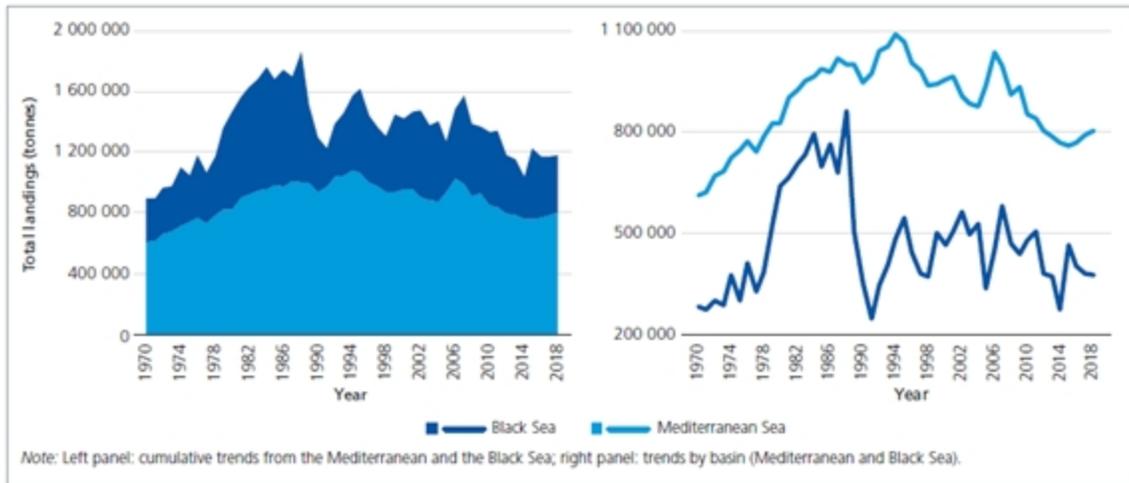


Figure 1 ? Total landings in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea per year, 1970-2018 [see Annex M]

With a reported annual production currently amounting to roughly 400,000 tons of fish per year, the fishery sector in the Black Sea offers employment opportunities to approximately 23 000 people (not including post-harvest and other fisheries-dependent employment), it supplies quality protein for human consumption in local and regional markets, and it creates many other indirect benefits, such as the safeguarding of coastal communities where it provides a stable source of livelihoods (with employment overwhelmingly concentrated in non-EU countries, although reliable data are limited, particularly for Georgia ? see figure 2 below).

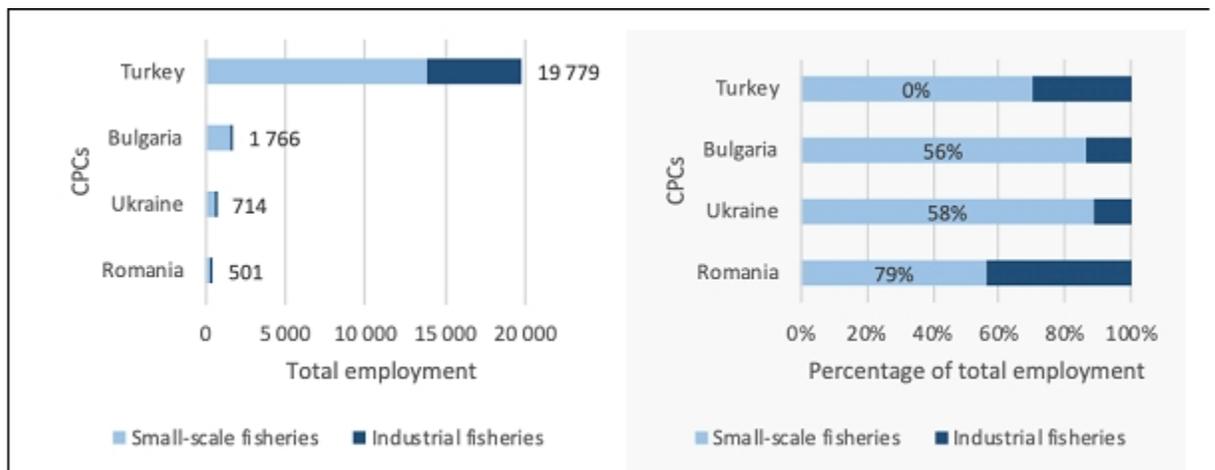


Figure 2 ? Employment onboard small-scale and industrial fishing vessels in the Black Sea [see Annex M]

Nonetheless, with fisheries being part of broader agricultural policies usually coming within the scope of national authorities in charge of agriculture and rural development, the littoral States have long favored a production-oriented sector. However, fisheries production, although being in line with food security systems, cannot be equated to agriculture production as sustainability must be considered when harvesting living marine resources. With anthropogenic impacts steadily increasing their pressure on the Black Sea stocks, the notion of a production-oriented sector has been challenged by the need for an ecosystem approach to fisheries. Arguably, the level of investments, both public and private, in the fishery sector of Black Sea countries has induced preliminary yet not transformational change to the management of this critically importance resource. These investments have included, but are not limited to, investments in improving vessel monitoring and control, investments in modernized vessel design and improving gear selectivity, and investments in improving fish landing sites and cold chain facilities, among others. Most recent exploitation trends, as reported herein, are alarming which implies in turn the need to urgently rethink the Black Sea fishery sector.

Only through sound ecosystem-based management of Black Sea fisheries can the potential for stronger productivity be unlocked in a sustainable way. This implies a shift toward a more participatory approach to fisheries and a change in thinking policy and management by both government agencies and stakeholder groups. Small-scale fisheries tend to be inadequately addressed, both with regard to resource management and from a broader social and economic development perspective.

The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), endorsed by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2014, were developed to address this situation, and adapted to the specificities of the region via the Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (RPOA-SSF). This instrument now needs to be implemented to have its intended impact of enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods. Empowering small-scale fisheries stakeholders to engage in decision-making processes has shown to be a powerful and effective tool for sustainable management and this realization has led to new institutional arrangements in the form of co-management in which a set of agreed fishery stakeholders together with government agencies jointly participate in fishery management and decision making, and specifically the development, implementation and enforcement of fishery regulations and management measures. While co-management is increasingly recognized as a good practice, resource users feel marginalized from decision-making and lack incentives to engage in management and development processes. This concerns both fishers and fish workers in the postharvest sector. The understanding of the coastal fisheries value chain dynamics and how coastal fisheries are situated in a wider environmental, economic and social reality is not sufficiently considered. Capacity building and skills development are often fundamental requirements in order to recognize the mutual benefits of engaging in such participatory processes and to put in place mechanisms that will foster dialogue and build trust. Participatory management systems, such as co-management, should be promoted in accordance with national law and States should involve small-scale fishing communities, with special attention to equitable participation of women, in the design, planning and, implementation of management measures affecting their livelihoods.

a.2 Markets not accounting for the predominant SSF:

Currently, more than 88.2% of Black Sea fisheries are considered small-scale, operating in coastal waters and therefore instrumental to secure livelihoods in coastal communities. However, the benefits accrued by the fishery sector in the Black Sea are not equally distributed across the various vessel groups (e.g. large-scale trawlers and purse seiners vs. the smaller-scale vessels using passive or polyvalent gear). Small-scale vessels provide 71% of employment in fisheries in the Black Sea, but only account for 22% of revenue (see figures 3 and 4 below). On average, small-scale fishers earn about a quarter of what their peers on trawlers can expect to make, and about 15 percent of what their peers on purse seine vessels make, despite SSF being generally considered to be more selective and to have a lower environmental impact (see figure 5 below)[5]. This lower remuneration points to higher vulnerability of small-scale fishers, who often work alone or in small groups and face high variability in their catch, limited bargaining power vis-?-vis the markets, as well as limited access to financial instruments to further invest in their activity. On the other hand, these vulnerabilities point to opportunities where value chain interventions and targeted investments in management systems could produce considerable socio-economic impacts. Should Black Sea fisheries, including SSF, be given the consideration they arguably deserve, considering available information on their value, the littoral States will likely accrue significant benefits.

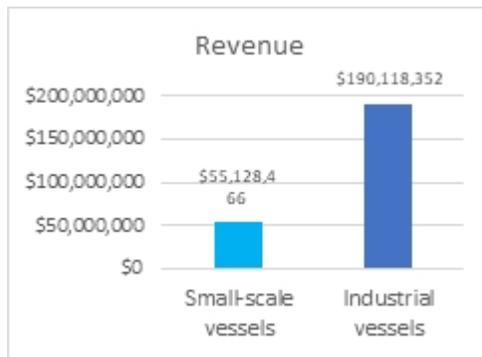


Figure 3 ? Total revenue from industrial and small-scale fisheries in the Black Sea [see Annex M]

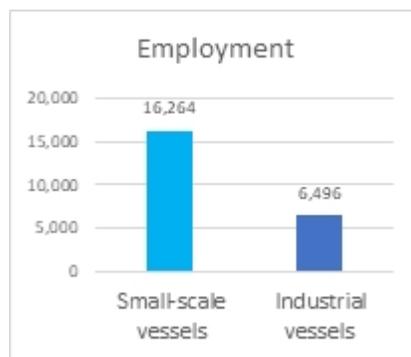


Figure 4 ? Total employment in industrial and small-scale fisheries in the Black Sea [see Annex M]

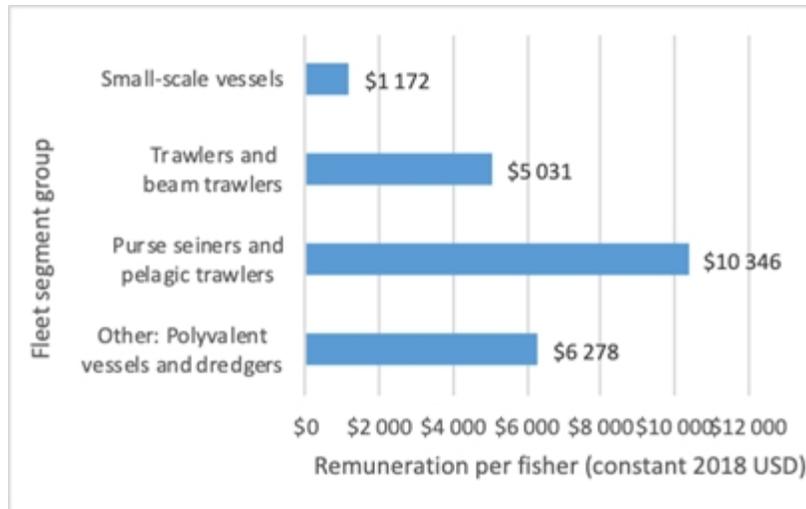


Figure 5 ? Remuneration per full-time equivalent by fleet segment in the Black Sea [see Annex M]

Noting the demand for fish in the Black Sea market, as well as the fact that most Black Sea countries remain net importers of fish products, as there is high demand from other regions of the world ? with only Turkey currently exporting more fish than they import [6] ? public and private sector investments, particularly in SSF and including in capacity development and organizational structures such as cooperatives, could generate a high return [7]. Nevertheless, the general poor state of main Black Sea commercially important stocks, together with gaps in the availability of data and time-series, presently reduce the capacity of marine ecosystems and Black Sea fisheries to provide socio-economic benefits for coastal communities. This cannot be addressed without significant increases in data collection and data processing, including related capacity building support to carry out these actions along the value chain, as well as consideration of the Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK) of fishers.

a.3 Vulnerability of coastal and small-scale fishing communities

Local economies in coastal communities mostly depend on fishing and related activities based on small-scale fisheries, that encompass all activities along the value chain, from pre-harvest to post-harvest, and play an important role in securing livelihoods. Many small-scale fishers and fish workers are self-employed and engaged in directly providing food for their household and community as well as working in processing and marketing. Securing and increasing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and poverty eradication faces many challenges and constraints due to the vulnerability of these communities. Where poverty exists in small-scale fishing communities, it is of a multidimensional nature and is not only caused by low incomes but also due to other factors which hinder proper access to public services and social protection, among others. Small-scale fishing communities are commonly located in remote areas and tend to have limited or disadvantaged access to markets, and may have poor access to health, education and other social services. The economic opportunities available are limited, as small-scale fishing communities face a lack of alternative livelihoods, youth unemployment and unhealthy and unsafe working conditions. Pollution, environmental degradation, climate change impacts and natural and human-induced disasters add to the threats facing small-scale fishing communities. All these factors make it difficult for small-scale fishers

and fish workers to plan for the long-term and to make their voices heard, defend their rights, and secure the sustainable use of the fishery resources on which they depend.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare some of the main vulnerabilities of this sector. Measures taken by countries to contain the pandemic have had important impacts on the fishing sector's ability to catch and market fish, and has also affected fisheries management, control and research activities. According to an analysis carried out by the GFCM, the region's fisheries experienced an initial reduction in operating vessels of up to 80 percent in some countries, as well as an initial decrease in production of around 75 percent. Fish market prices also decreased between 20 and 70 percent during this initial phase, particularly for species typically destined to the hotel, restaurant and catering (HoReCa) sector. Furthermore, restrictions on the movement of people and goods across borders had an immediate impact, particularly for those countries highly reliant on exporting their catches to international markets and those fleet segment groups which a high reliance on foreign labour. These conditions had dramatic impacts on many fisheries-dependent livelihoods. However, the pandemic also provided some insight into how to promote resilience in the sector. In some cases, fishers were quick to adapt to changing conditions by shortening value chains and selling catch via direct sale and e-commerce, for example, or by switching to targeting species better adapted for local markets or for processing and sale at a later date. Where conditions facilitated this adaptability, the dramatic early impacts began fading towards summer 2020 and production returned to pre-crisis levels in some – but not all – countries. Nevertheless, demand has remained volatile and uncertainty persists over the longer-term economic outlook for the sector. Furthermore, the pandemic has affected the ability of fisheries scientists to collect data in the field, with potential impacts on the quality and quantity of data available for assessments. The pandemic has, however, provided clear evidence that anthropogenic activities put significant pressure on marine ecosystems, including through the displacement of marine animals from parts of their habitats and increased turbulence and noise. Moreover, marine pollution remains high and the observed increase in the use of single-use plastic packaging, masks, gloves and other litter associated with the pandemic may also have some impacts over the short, medium or long term.

a.4 Overexploited stocks:

Bearing in mind the role the fishery sector plays worldwide in providing livelihoods for coastal communities and considering the dependence of this sector on the long-term sustainability of living marine resources, the findings of recent stock assessments of main commercial fish stocks in the Black Sea should be carefully considered. According to the latest assessments (see figure 6 below), a majority of Black Sea priority stocks examined by the GFCM are regarded as being in overexploitation (meaning more fish are being caught than the population can naturally replace), with one species considered depleted (Piked dogfish). Nevertheless, there are positive signs, as the rate of overexploitation has decreased since 2014 in general (see figure 7 below) and for some species in particular such as turbot (see figure 6 below). This trend coincides with the formulation and adoption of the first ever regional management measures for Black Sea fisheries. These management measures come after several decades of limited cooperation on fisheries management in the region and are fruit of the concerted approach being promoted by the GFCM, as well as improved understanding by littoral States of how alarming the current exploitation trends are. These initial GFCM measures may, however, prove to be insufficient without further investments to implement and enforce management plans by the littoral States and to build adequate capacity in fisheries science, management, and control at the national level.

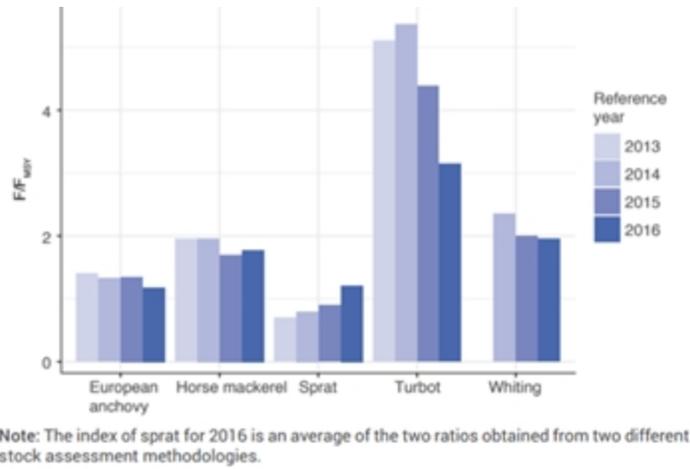


Figure 6 ? Overexploitation index ($F_{current} / F_{MSY}$) of five Black Sea priority species since 2013

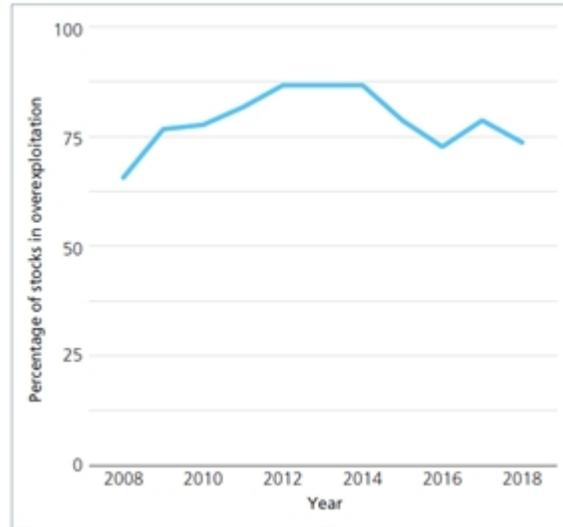


Figure 7 ? Percentage of stocks in overexploitation in the GFCM area of application, 2008-2018

A foundation to promote concerted actions now exists though as the GFCM has been making strides to improve the quality of the scientific advice provided to littoral States via its ad hoc Working Group on the Black Sea (see figure 8 below). Because this advice currently addresses only a percentage of exploited stocks, marine populations, ecosystems and areas, reverting the effects of prolonged unsustainable management will not be possible without more consultations among experts and managers addressing both socio-economic considerations as well as conservation-related concerns [8]. The GFCM, in its capacity of the competent regional fisheries management organization for Black Sea fisheries, has been decisive in providing a forum for such consultations thereby strengthening the regional governance framework after decades of unsuccessful attempts. Arguably, the lack of a stable regional governance framework has long crippled previous attempts to manage Black Sea fisheries. Subsequent to the initiative promoted by the Soviet Union to establish a separate fisheries commission under the Varna Convention in 1959, Turkey, the major fishing nation in the region, has been steering a

dialogue to find a practical and effective solution to the joint management of Black Sea fisheries in the context of the FAO, which established the GFCM back in 1949. To this end, Turkey has recently supported a project dedicated to enhancing cooperation among littoral States on Black Sea fisheries which resulted, among others, in enhancing the role of the GFCM in the basin. With Georgia and Ukraine attaining cooperating non-Contracting Party status within the GFCM in 2015, strengthening fisheries governance by consolidating initial results obtained by littoral States through the GFCM has turned into the only viable solution to foster regional cooperation in management. Both Georgia and Ukraine are currently reported being in the process of acceding to the GFCM. Concerted actions, such as those advocated by the proposed project, are expected to result in accelerating this process. This will be particularly the case with those actions stemming from the proposed project addressing existing gaps in the collection of data by these two countries, the formulation of management measures and the monitoring of national fleets.

Eventually, the proposed project will contribute to consolidate fisheries governance in the Black Sea which in turn will lead to the provision of sound scientific advice and the formulation of rational plans for the management of relevant commercial stocks, unlocking in turn investments in support to the fishery sector and triggering blue economy opportunities.

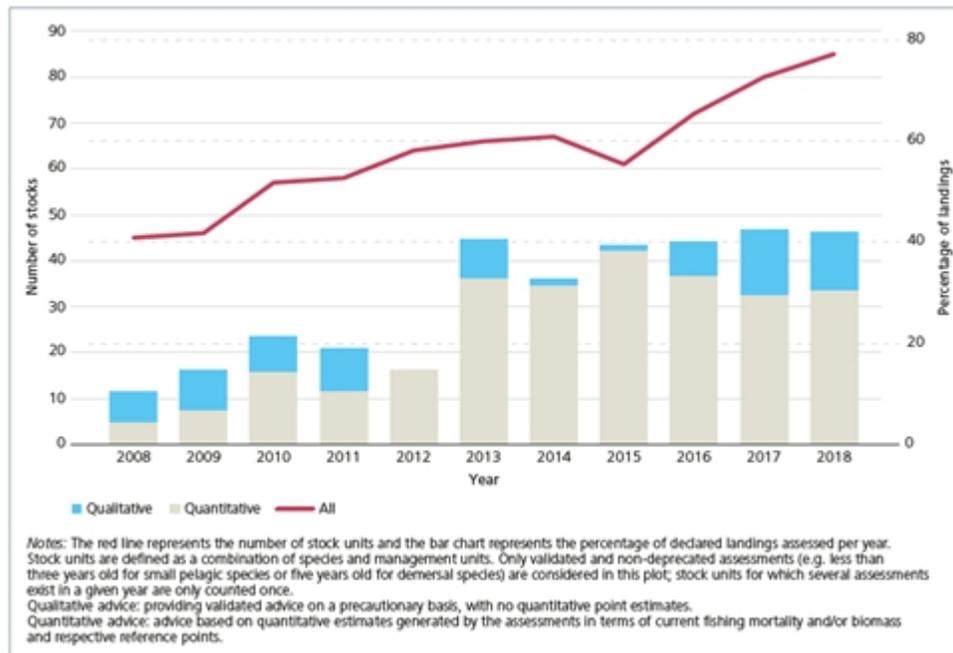


Figure 8 ? Number of stock units and percentage of declared landings assessed per year, 2008-2018 with an indication of the quality of the advice (i.e. qualitative or quantitative) emerging from the assessments

a.5 Lack of capacity:

In past decades, the limited capacity of national administrations to implement sound and adequate management measures has been a major constraint, therefore also hampering coordinated efforts at the regional level. In recent years, however, regional organizations have been instrumental in building

capacity at the national level. The incremental value of the GEF intervention sought via the proposed project is therefore to further empower GEF eligible Black Sea countries in the ecosystem-based management of commercial stocks thanks to continued and enhanced support by these regional organizations. The long-term objective being to ensure that capacity is transferred to national level stakeholders, thereby enabling greater autonomy in both technical implementation of policies formulated and financial management. Currently, lack of capacity is being experienced at country level in connection with the ability to generate scientific knowledge, including at the level of human resources addressing scientific/technical issues of relevance to the work of the GFCM, the ability to properly collect and analyze data, the ability to transpose regional policies into national legislation and monitor their implementation and the ability to set in motion administrative actions needed in support to the fishery sector (e.g. establishment of VMS systems, launching of surveys, replacement of equipment such as fishing nets and refrigerators, etc.). Furthermore, as noted previously, the COVID-19 pandemic has, in many cases, further hampered the collection of regular time series data and/or has deviated funding resources to other priorities, further limiting country capacity to act on these issues.

In addition to insufficient capacity of national administrations to implement policies and measures, there are also considerable needs in ensuring that the legal frameworks are adequate and allow for implementation of relevant international instruments such as the SSF Guidelines. Government structures tend not have the capacity and mechanisms to support the involvement of fisheries organizations in decision-making and development activities and fishers and fish workers often lack the capacity and the organizational structures needed to be effective partners in decision-making processes and engage in SSF Guidelines implementation activities. In particular in the small-scale fisheries sector, these actors often have low educational levels and technical skills as well as a general lack of organizational and planning capacities. They also tend to lack clarity on how they should participate in decision-making processes and co-management. Coastal communities do not have the capacities and opportunities required to participate in fisheries management and development processes; co-management is promoted but the regulatory and institutional tools and capacities are not yet in place for its successful implementation, including the capacity of coastal communities to effectively engage in and contribute. States should facilitate, train and support small-scale fishing communities to participate in and take responsibility for, taking into consideration their legitimate rights and systems, and the management of the resources on which they depend for their well-being and livelihoods.

The proposed project will support building capacity of the GEF eligible Black Sea countries in the fishery sector, but also demonstrate that healthy marine environment and sustainable fisheries are an integral part of blue economy investment-driven policies. This will enhance capacity building at country level in the context of a blue economy where fisheries are fully integrated and actively contribute. A different understanding of the fishery sector will emerge thanks also to the progress expected under the proposed project in addressing existing barriers.

b) Barriers preventing the management of resilient and sustainable fisheries

The proposed project is expected to address overfishing, IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices (direct stressors), vulnerability of coastal and small-scale fishing communities and the negative effects of anthropogenic activities on commercial fish stocks, with pernicious impacts on local coastal economies and national capacity (indirect stressors). More precisely:

b.1 Overfishing:

Representing the most serious threat to the conservation of marine living resources in the Black Sea, to the extent that overfishing seriously puts at risk the socio-economic well-being of coastal communities in littoral States. The Black Sea region has been strengthening collaboration towards the common management of fisheries resources thanks to the GFCM. Significant progress has been made in improving the knowledge and conservation of the region's living marine resources. Action has also been taken by the GFCM to urge the adoption of management plans to reverse the trend of the most critically and unsustainably exploited commercial stocks and to protect their most vulnerable habitats. Although improvements are in process, much is still to be done, including to secure investments in the fishery sector at the country level. One of the principal management challenges for Black Sea fisheries remains the implementation of adaptive plans, combining scientific and local knowledge, capable of adjusting fishing capacity to realistic estimates of ecosystem productivity and encompassing adequate monitoring and control measures. This is complicated further by the fact that the vast majority of these fisheries are small-scale and data-poor, a constraint which undermines the performance of all-encompassing assessments of stock status. However, new methods for improving data collection, as well as assessing and managing data-poor fisheries, are emerging and should be applicable to the Black Sea region to build the capacity needed to reduce overfishing and improve understanding at country level of data-limited stocks. Such methods are to be implemented applying participatory approaches in view of co-management practices and integrating value chain perspectives in order to fully involve stakeholder groups, both men and women, and comprehend their needs and livelihoods. This entails building capacity of fishers and fish works to effectively support their participation in management and decision-making and also identifying other support and structures needed for more resilient livelihoods, e.g., social protection arrangements (see further below). The proposed project will support the capacity building needed to reduce overfishing and improve understanding at country level of data-limited stocks for improved fisheries governance, sustainable use and biodiversity conservation outcomes. Furthermore, it will aim to capitalize on ongoing national and regional efforts to 'build back better' following the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting the recovery of sustainable fishing activities and contributing to building capacity for sustainable fisheries management moving forward. Improvements and updates in the regulatory frameworks of the GEF eligible Black Sea countries are also needed in connection with the transposition of GFCM technical measures into national legislation and, in the case of Georgia and Ukraine, to accelerate the accession of these countries to the GFCM.

b.2 IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices:

It is recognized that better management of fisheries in the Black Sea is greatly challenged by a wide array of illegal activities leading to a widespread culture of non-compliance. Most recently, incidents have occurred along the marine borders of littoral States and the region has often witnessed tensions caused by conflicts among fishers. Although approximate estimates of the impacts of IUU fishing at global level exist, including by FAO, they are considered to be under-represented vis-à-vis the status of fisheries and not considering the various specificities in different regions. Also, analysis of trends is difficult due to existing uncertainties, and when it comes to a semi-enclosed basin like the Black Sea, ad hoc regional estimates should be made in the remit of robust scientific advice for management purposes. This would concern the high rate of unreported fishing which occurs in connection with the harvesting of main commercial species in the Black Sea. It is stressed that littoral States, in their capacity as flag States, coastal States, port States and market States, are expected to act in a coordinated fashion to deter illegal activities and fisheries crime. This will require a common approach to

monitoring, control, and surveillance that is both common among all countries of the region, but also takes into consideration the specificities of the SSF and recreational fisheries sectors. Through the proposed project, support will be provided to enhance efforts to quantify the extent and magnitude of IUU fishing. A methodology will be tested at the country level to this end. At the same time, as a quantification of IUU fishing should lead to renewed national commitment to eradicate IUU operations, the proposed project will strive to harmonize monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing vessels. In this regard, the proposed project will involve the private sector to increase investments in best practices such as catch documentation schemes, traceability systems, eco-labelling, gear sensors and ad hoc technologies, such as solar-power based transponders and drones. Also, actions to improve monitoring of the SSF sector in an appropriate way, in line with the principles of the RPOA-SSF and the SSF Guidelines, are in high demand. Moreover, a common approach for assessing the bycatch effect on non-targeted endangered species and/or in bad conservation status will be addressed, along with scientifically tested strategies and measures to adapt or ban the fishing gears most harmful to biodiversity, including on the seabed, and to reduce the impact of bycatch, discards and abandoned lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear on living marine resources.

b.3 Vulnerability of coastal communities:

The contribution of coastal fisheries to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the project countries is threatened by unsustainable fishing pressure and practices, wastage in the postharvest sector as well as socioeconomic vulnerabilities, leading to sub-optimal benefits, degradation of coastal habitats as well as poor working conditions and insecure livelihoods. Barriers in coastal fisheries also relate to limited capacity of institutions to effectively address the vulnerability of coastal communities through participatory approaches and including constraints that may be beyond the fisheries sector itself. There is a need for regulating fishing, promoting responsible practices and strengthening value chains as well as addressing new emerging issues such as climate change which amplifies these threats and complicates fisheries management and increases the vulnerability of coastal populations with degrading ecosystems. The vulnerability of coastal communities is also linked to the general lack of data and information to provide a sound basis for management and policy decisions, in particular with a focus on the specificities of coastal communities. To elevate coastal communities and the small-scale fishery sector on the policy agenda, recommendations should be supported by data and information, and this knowledge basis needs to be improved and applied, including socio-economic data. In addition to insufficient understanding among policy makers of the challenges faced in small-scale fisheries and coastal communities and opportunities for development, and as described under Barriers a.2 Markets not accounting for the predominant SSF and .a.3 Vulnerability of coastal and small-scale fishing communities, many residents from these communities do not seem to receive equitable benefits from their work and different livelihoods aspects (e.g. limited access to markets, health services, education and social protection programmes) also hamper their socio-economic security and well-being. There is a need to deal simultaneously with improving fisheries governance and management, including small-scale fisheries, and strengthening the seafood value chains in order to create environmental, economic and social benefits. This can only be accomplished by taking a value chain perspective, combining implementation of fisheries management plans and supporting postharvest activities. Indeed, inadequate postharvest infrastructure leads to quality deterioration, postharvest losses and poor revenues, exacerbating overfishing. Women play a critical role in the small-scale fisheries value chain, but because of their often unrecognized or undervalued fisheries-related activities, women continue to be best known for their roles processing/ marketing of fish and related products. However, this generalization can make projects and fisheries governance blind to women's other valuable inputs to the sector. They also often play important invisible roles at the household and community level, supporting fishing activities in direct and indirect ways that are not considered because ?this is what they do?. To be successful in valorizing the contribution of coastal communities, including vulnerable groups, an approach that synchronizes the implementation of both legal and operational measures is required. Furthermore, success will largely be dependent on the active participation of all stakeholders and consequently it is essential to strengthen stakeholder representation and engagement as well as to improve overall communication and cooperation for sharing experiences, lessons learned and best

practices in the region. To secure coastal communities and sustainable small-scale fisheries and realize their potential contribution to food security and poverty eradication, a holistic and inter-sectorial approach needs to be taken that takes the reality of small-scale fishing communities as its basis.

b.4 Climate change, biodiversity loss and marine pollution, including marine litter, and non-indigenous species:

It is recognized that anthropogenic-driven phenomena, such as climate change and the introduction of non-indigenous species, can have serious negative effects on the marine ecosystems and their living resources. This is particularly the case with the Black Sea, a basin that has sustained high levels of pollution from land-based sources. The development of a regional/Black Sea adaptation strategy to cope with potential effects of climate change and nonindigenous species on fisheries has yet to be planned. Such a strategy should be based on the results of a vulnerability evaluation of the potential ecological and socio-economic effects of climate change and of the introduction of non-indigenous species in Black Sea fisheries. Other indirect stressors that are known to be currently aggravating the situation could have dire consequences for fisheries conservation if not taken into account. In this connection, policy actions are required to meet the major environmental challenges which the Black Sea has been facing. However, environmental and health considerations are yet to be fully integrated into relevant regional policies and sectoral plans and programmes, including fisheries and aquaculture.

b. The baseline scenario and any associated baseline Programs

2.a Baseline scenario:

Since the late 1990's the littoral States have worked together thanks to past GEF interventions aimed at setting priorities related to national and transboundary environmental concerns (Table 1). Following the signature of the Bucharest convention in 1992 and the Odessa Declaration in 1993, and the formulation of the first Strategies Action Plan in 1996, GEF provided support to the region, first in 1993 with the project 'Black Sea Environmental Management', and in formulating the long-term Black Sea Strategic Action Plan (BS SAP) in 1997. In line with the provisions of the Odessa Declaration, the Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP) was launched, programme which involved a number of interventions by the GEF, including the development of the first Black Sea TDA, leading to the adoption of the 1996 BS SAP. GEF funding was sustained with the 1997 project 'Developing the implementation of the Black Sea Strategic Action Plan' with UNDP as the implementing agency and executed by UNOPs, to enable countries to complete National Black Sea Strategic Action Plans. Few of the targets were accomplished on time and an updated TDA was carried out in 1997 on the request of the Black Sea Commission with continued support by GEF and EC. Other GEF investments in the Black Sea, implemented by UNDP and executed by UNOPS, occurred in 1998, 2001 and 2002 relating to threats to biodiversity in the Black Sea and rehabilitation of Black Sea ecosystems. Careful consideration was given to the 1996 SAP in developing the 2007 BS TDA and the 2007 BS SAP Gap Analysis considering formulating the 2009 BS SAP, elaborated from consensus reached at a multinational level with the participation and commitment of the main social stakeholders and key institutions of the Black Sea countries. Arguably, the TDA as well as the SAP, despite calling for concerted actions to address fisheries related challenges, have not been able to prompt adequate responses in the region in this respect. The baseline scenario of the proposed project is therefore defined by high overexploitation of living marine resources, market constraints and vulnerable coastal communities, as well as ecosystem productivity and health that are affected by other anthropogenic drivers such as pollution, habitat degradation and climate change (section 1 refers). Only recently,

thanks to the efforts by the GFCM aimed at improving fisheries governance, the GEF eligible Black Sea countries have become increasingly aware of the problems afflicting their fishery sector in the context of an ecosystem-based management approach, yet they have not been in a position to jointly address them, arguably due to the absence of a clear regional political commitment. Having the mandate over all marine waters of the Black Sea, including brackish waters, the GFCM has been urging littoral States to express this political commitment via the adoption of two Ministerial Declarations (one in June 2018 for commercial stocks and one in September 2018 for SSF, 2.b) refers). This historical development has been paving the way to further progress in fisheries governance for the Black Sea region, as national efforts are being deployed to live up to the political commitments put forth in these recently adopted declarations.

Table 1: Summary of completed GEF investments in the Black Sea

Year	Amount (m USD)	Agencies (executing)	Title	Focus
1993	9.3	UNDP (UNOPS)	Black Sea (BS) Environmental Management	Strengthening the BS Commission and capacities of member states to prevent and reduce eutrophication of the Black Sea; formulation of 1996 SAP; identification of portfolio investment to implement SAP
1997	0.049	UNDP (UNOPS)	Black Sea Environmental Management	Establishment of the BS Environment Fund through consultative process with member countries
1998	0.693	UNDP & UNEP (UNOPS)	Black Sea Environmental Management	Addressing the issue of threats to biological diversity from alien species in BS
2001	4.0	UNDP (UNOPS)	Control of Eutrophication, Hazardous Substances & Related Measures for Rehabilitating the BS Ecosystem (Pt 1)	Primarily focused on eutrophication but proposed an agreement on fisheries management which was not advanced or ratified by member states.

2002	6.0	UNDP (UNOPS)	Control of Eutrophication, Hazardous Substances & Related Measures for Rehabilitating the BS Ecosystem (T 2)	Reinforced regional cooperation and actions to implement the BS SAP (1997) at regional and national scales; proposed an Convention on fisheries management which was not advanced or ratified by member states.; Formulation of BS SAP (2009)
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In 2018, the year of adoption of the two Ministerial Declarations, the total number of fishing vessels operating in the Black Sea was approximately 11,400 units. Since then, the trends in landings have been slightly decreasing. Annual landings of commercial fish species from the Black Sea, which exceeded 900,000 tons in the late 90's, keeps on displaying abrupt fluctuations, with landings in 2018 around approximately 387,800 tons. In addition to the overall state of main commercial living resources, one could argue that this initial progress being witnessed by the GFCM can be linked to the political commitment of littoral States. It is now evident the common interest they have in maintaining Black Sea fisheries sustainability and in ensuring their profitability, as the economic output of the fishery sector is considerable, producing a total estimated annual revenue of over USD 251 million. It is important to note, however that baseline data needs to be improved to fully capture the wider economic impact of this sector, including value created through the post-harvest (fish processing and other activities along the value chain), as well as vessel repair and other port industries dependent on commercial fishing. Whereas the aforementioned figure is based on data collected on value at first sale (direct revenue), it is estimated that the wider economic impact of the fishery sector in the Black Sea region, including the value of fisheries dependent industries, is at least 2.6 times the value at first sale [9], or approximately USD 653 million. By some estimates, this fisheries-dependent employment is expected to account for a considerable amount of all employment in the fisheries sector, underlining the important impact it has on livelihoods in coastal communities and also underlining the need to improve socio-economic and household data, particularly for the data-poor small-scale fishing sector [10]. To this end, the implementation of ecosystem-based conservation/management tools should be tested. As it has been happening in other marine regions thanks to GEF interventions, including the Mediterranean Sea, an effort to test these tools would be required in the Black Sea too.

The baseline scenario described above is embedded in the theory of change under section 3) which illustrates how this scenario relates to the alternative scenario pursued via the proposed project and is sufficiently robust to support the incremental reasoning of the expected GEF intervention, set to be the first ever targeting solely Black Sea fisheries. In this regard, the proposed project will leverage the outcomes of the associated baseline projects, as listed below, stimulating in turn transformational change.

2.b Associated baseline projects: [11]

GFCM related projects:

As the FAO since its creation has established various regional fisheries management organizations worldwide, the GFCM, being the organization mandated to manage Black Sea fisheries, enjoys a significant degree of functional and operational autonomy in the framework of the FAO. It is not funded through the FAO regular budget and, according to FAO financial rules, it is managed as a

project via a separate budget, autonomous from that of the FAO, currently totaling roughly EUR 8 million, two of which representing the operational costs of the Commission paid by the annual contributions of the 23 Member States. The rest of the budget comes from projects executed by the GFCM in connection with ad hoc financial contributions from countries and organizations. While being regional in scope, the GFCM focuses considerably on harmonizing national measures and policies in its Member States on fisheries via the management measures it adopts, including for the Black Sea basin. The GFCM also plays an important coordinating role to make sure that different interventions, as relevant to Black Sea fisheries both at national and regional level, can be conceived of as concerted actions. As already indicated, the GFCM has recently heralded the adoption of a ministerial declaration by Black Sea littoral States, the so-called 'Sofia Declaration' towards the sustainability of Black Sea fisheries [12], which clearly stated their political commitment to work together in the remit of the GFCM to reach different targets relating to the rational management of fisheries, the fight against IUU fishing, the conservation of their ecosystems and the building of their national capacity. The Sofia Declaration was supplemented by another declaration, also adopted by the competent Ministries overseeing fisheries, to promote sustainable SSF via a wide-ranging regional plan of action for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (RPOA-SSF) [13]. Together these two declarations can bring about a transformational change that a GEF intervention focusing on Black Sea fisheries would contribute to attain. Furthermore, since 2016 the GFCM established the BlackSea4Fish project to contribute to the sustainable management of Black Sea fisheries, by providing scientific and technical support to the work of the GFCM in the region, coordinating priority activities of the GFCM Subregional Group on Stock Assessment in the Black Sea (SGSABS) and the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS). The project involves Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine and the European Union, supporting them in fulfilling their objectives with regards to Black Sea fisheries, organizing activities in line with agreed work plans and in turn benefiting from their technical and, as appropriate, financial/in-kind contributions.

FAO related projects:

The FAO, including as part of the Blue Transformation Initiative pillar of its Strategic Framework, currently runs several projects in the Black Sea region aiming at integrating the role of fisheries and aquaculture in blue economy policies. These projects include one ongoing project in Georgia and one in the pipelines for Ukraine. Furthermore, several technical cooperation projects were carried out/are being carried out in Turkey. A noteworthy, but completed project in the Black Sea region was the Black Sea Fish project, funded by Turkey that was instrumental in revitalizing the role of the GFCM in the Black Sea.

Turkey sponsored projects:

As the main fishing actor in the Black Sea, Turkey, via its Minister for Agriculture, has carried out several projects in this region. These include the aforementioned BlackSeaFish project, as well as, among others, the projects 'Use of alternative marine resources for the evaluation of anchovy (2016-2017)', 'Determination of cultural characteristics of some mullet species (*Mugil cephalus* L. 1758 and *Liza aurata*, Risso 1810) in the Eastern Black Sea (2015-2017)', 'Establishment of gene bank database: Turbot (*Psetta maxima* L.) (2015-2017)', 'determination of the ecological quality status of coastal areas in Eastern Black Sea and species diversity of benthic invertebrates (2013-2016)' and 'Research on the impacts of land-based pollution on coastal and marine ecosystems in the Central and Eastern Black Sea (2012-ongoing)'. In addition, there are also several projects on Black Sea fisheries being conducted by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey

Bucharest Convention related projects:

Via its Permanent Secretariat, the Bucharest Convention has undertaken over the years several projects on the Black Sea as relating to the implementation of the convention as well as its Protocols. The Permanent Secretariat fosters cooperation with several organizations, including the GFCM thanks to a memorandum of understanding adopted in 2012, and actively promotes cooperation and coordination among the littoral States. The Permanent Secretariat has been very active in the context of the GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea making sure to report information to the littoral States on progress made on the management of fisheries through the GFCM. The European Commission supports financially projects related to marine and coastal environmental monitoring in the Black Sea executed by the Permanent Secretariat (e.g. CeNoBS project supporting Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) implementation in the Black Sea for achieving 'Good Environmental Status?').

Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC):

The BSEC has been recently supporting the European Commission in promoting blue economy in the Black Sea region. In this context, the BSEC is very active in the implementation of the aforementioned Black Sea common maritime agenda and in the past has executed projects relating, among others, to environmental protection (e.g. Market potential for Hydrogen production from Hydrogen Sulphide in Black Sea and industrial waters (2008); Improvement of the scientific background for assuring sustainable development in the Black Sea coastal zone (2007); Introducing Climate Change in the Environmental Strategy for the Protection in the Black Sea (CLIMBIZ), on-going project). BSEC too has been involved in the GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea.

The Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP):

The BSEP, encompassing Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Russian Federation and Ukraine, had three primary objectives: to strengthen and create regional capacities for managing the Black Sea ecosystem; to develop and implement an appropriate policy and legal framework for the assessment, control and prevention of pollution and the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity; and to facilitate the preparation of sound environmental investments. BSEP had a total budget of USD 32.6 million.

Control of Eutrophication, Hazardous Substances and Related Measures for Rehabilitating the Black Sea Ecosystem:

Phases 1 and 2 were carried out in Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Russian Federation and Ukraine. The long-term objective of the project was to assist the beneficiary countries to take measures to reduce nutrient levels and other hazardous substances to such levels necessary to permit Black Sea ecosystems to recover to similar conditions as those observed in the 1960s. The project was aimed to assist the coastal countries to meet the agreed first target and to set the subsequent target using the best available scientific information coupled with benefit/cost studies and political pragmatism. The project also was aimed to help to reduce fisheries pressure on sensitive habitats and contribute towards rational fisheries management. Notwithstanding, increasing pressures still have an impact on Black Sea marine ecosystems due to a variety of human activities which include unsustainable fishing practices, transport, intense maritime traffic, coastal urbanizations and unplanned development of coastal zones, agriculture and industry-oriented pollution, climate change and invasive species.

Developing the Implementation of the Black Sea Strategic Action Plan (BS-SAP) in Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Russian Federation and Ukraine:

This project was focused on three main objectives: (1) to strengthen and create regional capacities to manage the Black Sea ecosystem, (2) to develop an appropriate policy and legislative framework for the assessment, control and prevention of pollution and maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity, and (3) to facilitate the preparation of sound environmental investments.

The expected GEF intervention will allow the proposed project to take stock of and build upon lessons learnt so far and further the results of projects executed or ongoing in the Black Sea region as relevant to fisheries. The proposed project is also expected to rely on country support as well as that of relevant partner organizations. A more detailed mapping of associated baseline projects will be carried out during the PPG phase.

c. Proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project and the project's Theory of Change

3.a The proposed alternative scenario:

The problem that the proposed project seeks to address, as outlined under section 1), including its root causes and barriers, is the overexploitation of Black Sea fisheries and the related sub-optimization of benefits accruing to coastal communities and countries. The thrust of the proposed project is to overcome this problem in close coordination with the countries by reversing the trend in the loss of marine biodiversity, particularly as resulting from fisheries, and addressing the lack of capacity at the country level. To this end, the project will address barriers to change (the previous section 1.b refers); will apply EAF, participation, capacity development and value chain approaches and combine responsible fishing practices and social and economic development; and will achieve more sustainable fisheries with more equitably distributed benefits along the value chain and increased capacity of countries and stakeholders to sustainably manage fisheries. To reach these objectives, the project will rely on an integrated approach that embeds sustainable and productive fisheries in the context of blue economy via four components. The results expected in connection with the first three components of the proposed project will facilitate the replication of best practices and lessons learnt while ensuring coordination with other GEF interventions expected in the region under the same focal area (component 4). This will allow, in particular, to avoid fragmentation and ensure consistency in the implementation of GEF projects.

The transformational change to resilient, productive, and sustainable fisheries affected by various adverse impacts ? including the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis ? will bring about more focus on the development of value chains, controls, management plans and other tangible measures that have the potential to mobilize investments in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries and provide stakeholders to ?build back better?, enhancing their resilience in the face of future shocks. This calls for an execution of the project driven by the GFCM under the alternative scenario because any intervention not underpinning the existing governance framework, which took years to consolidate, would greatly hamper transformational change. As previously mentioned, the building of sufficient national capacity to facilitate ever-increasing autonomy at the national level has been undercut in the past by the lack of regional fisheries governance promoted by a leading organization which could steer littoral States in managing commercial stocks. Under the proposed alternative scenario, relying on the GFCM to execute the proposed project will make it possible to fully understand the economic potential of the Black Sea fishery sector and to dwell upon an improved knowledge of the social relevance of fisheries. This will unlock public and private investments as the proposed project enshrines the main elements of

FAO's Blue Transformation initiative, namely value addition, decent work and innovation, which aim to maximize economic and social benefits, and minimize environmental degradation across sectors related to fisheries and aquaculture. It is worth recalling that this initiative stems from the concept of blue economy as it is centered on the pillars of sustainable development: environmental, economic, and social. It is arguably more focused on sustainably developing fisheries and aquaculture and differs from a business-as-usual approach to these sectors because it prioritizes social and economic benefits rather than single-user interests. Moreover, activities expected under the proposed project will be fully and constantly coordinated with those under the germane GEF intervention to be implemented by the World Bank in the Black Sea, as relating in particular to national level blue economy policy reforms. In this regard, since this World Bank intervention will aim, inter alia, at mainstreaming marine cross-sectoral planning frameworks, all activities anticipated by the proposed project on fisheries and area-based management tools will contribute to advance the progressive integration of the fishery sector within a broader marine spatial planning outlook. Bearing in mind that similar synergies will be fostered in the Mediterranean Sea region as well, under a separate GFCM/MAP executed project, any lessons learnt in that context to enhance the contribution of the fishery sector to the blue economy, including via the piloting of NAP+, will inform relevant actions under this project. Similarly, coordination will be ensured also with the other germane GEF intervention to be implemented by UNDP in the Black Sea on the update of the existing TDA/SAP with a view to thoroughly account for the fishery sector as well, which was arguably overseen in the past. From the GEF perspective, the coordination in the implementation of the said interventions in the Black Sea can be regarded as a coherent framework that encourages investment in the management of marine living resources and fosters a strategy based on a blue economy approach, encompassing private and public partnerships while capturing the specificities of the fishery sector.

The logical framework of the proposed project is rooted in the Theory of Change diagram (see figure 9 below). Its design assumes that by addressing priority concerns on the management of commercial fisheries their overexploitation will decline thanks to systematic implementation of management measures. This Theory of Change prioritizes investments in the fishery sector where the GEF eligible Black Sea countries need a transformational change. The underlying rationale of the Theory of Change of the proposed project is that the coastal communities along the Black Sea shores will benefit from improved sustainable fisheries, more stable livelihoods, enhanced capacity, gender equality, an environment-fisheries mutually supportive relationship and enhanced adaptation to climatic change and variability.

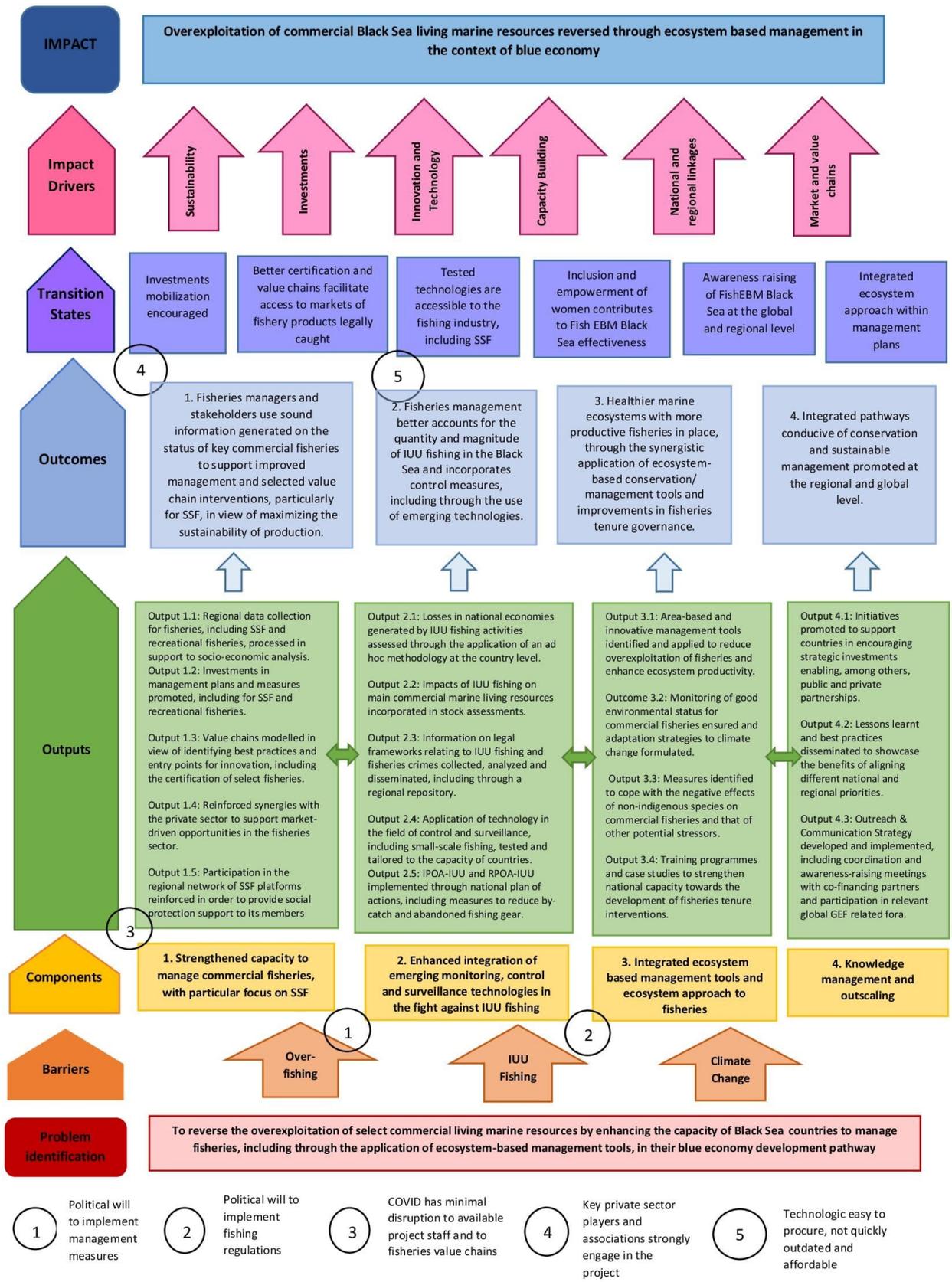


Figure 9 ? Theory of Change

3.b Brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project:

The proposed project builds on existing work carried out in the Black Sea and adds value to it by means of four components.

Component 1. Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF

The outcome of this component is to deliver robust and timely information on the status of key commercial fisheries supporting selected value chain interventions, particularly for SSF, in view of maximizing productivity and benefits generated while ensuring sustainability and reinforcing positive synergies with other economic activities in coastal areas. This component is expected to reverse the declining trend of key commercial fish stocks at the regional level through a series of interlinked activities starting from an enhanced regional data collection for fisheries in order to provide a solid basis to inform the scientific advice produced by the GFCM, including socio-economic considerations, towards the formulation and implementation of adaptive management plans (output 1.1). Notably, the information available for SSF and artisanal fisheries will be improved in relevant countries, socio-economic data will be collected along the value chain considering also more accurately capturing the contribution of women to the fisheries sector, fishery-independent information will be enhanced, and important information will be collected on the stock dynamics of select GFCM Black Sea priority species as well as on species of global environmental concern (output 1.1). This will be done while also increasing the capabilities of eligible countries and with the aim of including SSF and recreational fisheries information in the assessment of the status of priority stocks (output 1.1). The collected information will feed into the evaluation of alternative management measures, especially in data-limited situations, towards the formulation of adaptive management plans (output 1.2) in line with the priorities identified by GFCM scientific bodies and in particular with an eye to improving knowledge and advice on those species of relevance to coastal fisheries. The engagement of stakeholders in the process will be a key contribution of component 1 which, on one hand foresees the involvement of stakeholders in the determination of management priorities and on the other, seeks to empower stakeholders by providing detailed feedback on the scientific work performed at the basis of same management plans, including towards fostering enabling conditions towards co-management scenarios. Output 1.2. will also support research into innovative/more selective fishing gear applicable in the context of management plans, including assessing the feasibility (socio-economic aspects, investment potential, etc.) of such investments through the creation of a regional repository on bycatch mitigation measures, the implementation of targeted pilot studies and participatory studies. Considering adapting to climate change risks faced by most fisheries activities in the Black Sea, in particular SSF, and supporting the implementation of adaptive measures, this component will work towards analysing risks developing strategies based on disaster risk management (DRM) plans. Such adaptive measures may include re-adjustments in the insurance market, improved weather warning systems coupled with improved communication and dissemination platforms, strengthened measures for vessel safety or post-disaster recovery plans combined with political and economic plans for impact compensation. In addition, the adoption of DRM strategies entails direct technical actions enhancing socio-ecological resilience such as the mitigation of local-level, human-induced stressors (pollution, introduction of non-indigenous species, etc.), and rehabilitation of damaged coastal ecosystems (e.g. coral reefs) to improve resilience to climate change and maintain natural ecosystem services.

These outputs will ultimately enable the assessment of the socio-economic contribution of fisheries to the regional economy and to that of GEF eligible Black Sea countries as the component will focus for

the first time on integrating information on the approximately 39,393 tonnes of fish caught annually by SSF, upon which approximately 16,330 small-scale fishers in the region rely directly for their livelihoods, into an all-encompassing fisheries management framework. By supporting such regional fisheries management, including co-management arrangements, not only those working onboard small-scale fishing vessels will benefit directly, but significant benefits will also reach the wider coastal communities in the region, including those whose livelihoods rely on the small-scale fishing industry (estimated to be at least 2.5 times those employed directly onboard vessels). The component will also ensure that economic improvements go hand in hand with environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness. Enhanced knowledge on regional value chains will seek to identify new opportunities and markets at the regional level by, for example, removing barriers for small-scale fishers in the non-EU countries to access the EU market (e.g. promoting regional cooperatives for collective sales, ensuring compliance with sanitary and cold chain requirements, etc.), facilitating legal frameworks for the export/import of certain species or others. In this regard, outputs 1.3 and 1.4 will target, in consultation with local stakeholder groups, select value chains that concern GEF eligible Black Sea countries to maximize economic returns and social benefits, while minimizing detrimental effects on natural habitats and aquatic resources. Special attention will be paid to small and medium-sized businesses, because of their potential to deliver economic and social benefits, particularly those for women and youth. Efforts will be deployed to model local fisheries value chains, in consultation with local stakeholder groups, in view of identifying entry points for innovation and best-practices to be scaled-up. These best practices may include promoting direct sales, raising consumer awareness about local SSF products, and promoting enhanced market access by implementing certification schemes, improving traceability, and reinforcing the cold chain through improved onboard storage and catch preservation techniques. Efforts will also be deployed to strengthen SSF producer organizations to enhance their bargaining power vis-à-vis potential buyers and input suppliers and to reinforce social protection systems considering addressing the risks and vulnerabilities associated with SSF, including via access to microfinancing. Output 1.5 will tackle these efforts by conducting a complete mapping of stakeholder organizations at the local level, in view of reinforcing existing networks of SSF stakeholders. Overall, component 1 will be complemented by interventions at the national level in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries, with a view to address the main barriers identified under section 1) and its specific outputs will focus on building the capacity of relevant stakeholders at the national and regional levels to address these barriers.

Planned Activities under Component 1

Output 1.1: Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socioeconomic analysis and fisheries management (including gender-disaggregated data collection).

ACTIVITIES:

1.1.1 Enhanced information on SSF and artisanal fleets

Description: information on SSF and artisanal fleet activities (vessel registry, landings, biological sampling) collected in select countries where gaps have previously been identified

- Contribute to developing or updating fleet registers in relevant countries, including Georgia
- Baseline information on landings and biological information of SSF and artisanal fisheries in relevant countries collected
- Methodology to regularly sample relevant data in SSF prepared

1.1.2 Socio-economic data collection along the value chain

Description: data collection along the value chain to capture the contribution of non-vessel based fisheries employment, particularly the role of women, to the fishing sector (e.g. pre/post-harvest work, gleaners, etc.), including:

- Developing a methodology for addressing these data gaps in socio-economic data collection (considering lack of employment registries), in a way that is compatible with DCRF socio-economic data

- 1.1.3 Implementation of surveys at sea in relevant countries
Description: Implement standardised hydroacoustic and eggs and larvae surveys for small pelagics in the Black Sea, including capacity building and technical assistance
- 1.1.4 Study on stock dynamics for select Black Sea priority stocks
Description: Design and implement a research program on stock identification of turbot in the Black Sea
Description: Investigate the population dynamics of piked dogfish using innovative methodologies
- 1.1.5 Project on marine life-cycle of sturgeons
Description: Develop and implement a project to address the more critical issues related to the marine part of the life-cycle of sturgeons in the Black Sea

Output 1.2: Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including for SSF and recreational fisheries

ACTIVITIES:

- 1.2.1 Identify priority coastal species
Description: Identify a list of priority coastal species (including those of particular interest to fish workers and women fishers) for data collection (including from all fleets involved), assessment and identification of potential management measures/approaches (including co-management).
- 1.2.2 Management Strategy Evaluation framework for data poor contexts
Description: Develop a framework for the identification and evaluation of potential alternative management measures for GFCM Black Sea key fisheries in a data poor context, integrating socioeconomic aspects and SSF peculiarities, based on stakeholder consultations to guide the subsequent management strategy evaluation as well as towards consolidating an adaptation strategy to cope with the effects of climate change
- 1.2.3 Strategic guidance for SSF co-management
Description: Develop strategic guidance (regional / national level) for SSF co-management
Select case study work on co-management at country level (Georgia) via support to national consultants and stakeholder meetings
- 1.2.4 Research and investment in more selective gear
Description: Promote research and investments in more selective / updated gear (in the context of management plans), including assessing the feasibility (socio-economic aspects, investment potential, etc.) of such investments through the creation of a regional repository on bycatch mitigation measures, the implementation of targeted pilot studies and participatory studies

- Cetacean bycatch pilot study in relevant countries
- Regional repository on bycatch mitigation measures

Output 1.3: Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for innovation, including the certification of select fisheries

ACTIVITIES:

1.3.1 Select value chain interventions at the local level

Description: Identify and assess the feasibility of, and subsequently implement, select value chain interventions at the local level (particularly in connection with the objectives of Outputs 1.2 [management plans] and Output 1.4 [women in fisheries], as well as with the use of new market species ? e.g. previously discarded or non-indigenous species)

- Potential interventions identified (to be refined further in the implementation phase) based on consultations with SSF stakeholders include: the feasibility of a sardine ecolabel in Lebanon, direct selling/processing improvements with Tunisian SSF organizations, and others)

1.3.2 Framework for catch certification schemes in select fisheries

Description: Develop a framework for catch certification schemes and roll it out on select key fisheries in the Black Sea

Output 1.4: Reinforced synergies with the private sector to support market-driven opportunities in the fisheries sector

ACTIVITIES:

1.4.1 Stakeholder mapping

Description: Map relevant stakeholder groups, including SSF producer organisations, women?s organizations, and fish processing/marketing companies

- Framework applicable to all sectors (not just SSF) but first interventions to focus on SSF

1.4.2 Assessment of capacity development needs for stakeholder organizations

Description: Assess capacity development needs of selected SSF organisations (including a focus on women?s organizations) and provide support, accordingly, including through guidance and training workshops on key issues in line with identified needs

Output 1.5: Participation in the regional network of SSF platforms reinforced in order to provide social protection support to its members

ACTIVITIES:

1.5.1 Support SSF platforms in facilitating access to social protection

Description: Carry out awareness raising activities on social protection and how it links to fisheries management, including by producing a study on social protection for SSF in the Black Sea (following Med publication methodology and using FAO diagnostic tool).

Component 2. Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control, and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing.

The outcome of this component will deliver the assessment of the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea and the responsiveness of existing control measures by fostering the use of emerging technologies for more effective fisheries management. Under this component, the proposed project will draft national plans of action for the fight against IUU fishing and evaluate losses generated by IUU fishing activities in national economies in GEF eligible Black Sea countries (output 2.1 refers). This will be furthered by the scientific assessment and quantification of IUU fishing in GEF eligible countries with the aim of incorporating such information in the stock assessments run by the GFCM (output 2.2 refers). These activities will be complemented, under output 2.3 in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries, by the collection and analysis of information on existing studies on IUU related issues and fisheries crimes which will be made accessible through a user-friendly online repository, in view of identifying and filling the gaps in IUU fishing national legislation and providing technical assistance in this context. Having regard to the extent of IUU fishing, these outputs will not only focus on industrial fishing but also on SSF and recreational fishing, which require specific national legislation. The incidence of fisheries crime will be also considered, as the proposed project will shed light on the economic losses caused by fisheries crime along fisheries value chains, through partnerships with other organizations and entities. Output 2.4 will complement the scope of this component testing and applying monitoring, control and surveillance technologies, to be tailored to the capacity of countries with a view to curb IUU fishing. Solutions will be identified and tested to address different situations in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries, spanning from tags and gear sensors, to hybrid location transponders and drones. This will entail, among others, the development of human capacity at the national level since the reliance on technology to fight against IUU fishing must improve. A participatory approach will create an environment conducive of learning where fishers will be directly involved so as to reduce the risk of conflicts over fish stocks. Interventions at the national level are therefore foreseen. In this specific regard, the component will rely, among others, on the involvement of the private sector, most notably the industry concerned with developing technology for monitoring, control, and surveillance purposes. Under output 2.5 activities revolve around developing national action plans consistent with the IPOA-IUU and the RPOA-IUU. Activities will also address the negative consequences of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear in order to recommend appropriate measures by carrying out studies to identify illegal gears and test new gears in select local fishing communities.

Planned Activities under Component 2

Output 2.1: Losses in national economies generated by IUU fishing activities assessed through the application of an ad hoc methodology at the country level

ACTIVITIES:

- 2.1.1 Drafting national plans of action for the fight against IUU fishing;
- 2.1.2 Trainings on the assessment of IUU fishing for national authorities;
- 2.1.3 Expert analysis and quantification of losses in national economies, based on policy information at country level, generated by IUU fishing;
- 2.1.4 Establishment of expert working groups composed of national stakeholders in support to a national methodology for the regular assessment of IUU fishing;

Output 2.2: Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments

ACTIVITIES:

- 2.2.1 Collect and collate information on existing studies and reports on IUU related issues in the Black Sea and evaluate the current status of data holdings by GFCM on IUU-related issues
- 2.2.2 Develop and implement a regional quantitative survey encompassing IUU related issues at the national level in relevant countries
- 2.2.3 Create an IUU spatial risk assessment framework applicable to the whole Black Sea and obtain an independent estimate of fishing vessel activity to determine the magnitude of IUU fishing

Output 2.3: Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and fisheries crimes collected, analysed and disseminated, including through a regional repository

ACTIVITIES:

- 2.3.1 Retrieve, collect, analyse and disseminate national legislation related to fisheries management in the scope of an online Regional Repository (GFCM-Lex);
- 2.3.2 Analyse the areas of possible amendments of the national legislation with the national authorities;
- 2.3.3 Establish technical assistance for national authorities for drafting or/and amending the national legislation, in line with the GFCM Recommendations;
- 2.3.4 Organize trainings for national authorities on national legislation related to fisheries management, including the preparation of the awareness-raising materials;
- 2.3.5 Strengthen the cooperation with UNODC towards the understanding of fisheries crime against the background of national legislation;
- 2.3.6 Develop a legislative framework to insure the collection of the data on landings and from small-scale vessels.

Output 2.4: Application of technology in the field of control and surveillance, including small-scale fishing, tested and tailored to the capacity of countries

ACTIVITIES:

- 2.4.1 Streamline the identification and deployment of tracking devices (VMS, AIS, gear sensors etc.) in line with regional standards in place, while bearing in mind the specificities of respective national fleets and related priorities, including for SSF
- 2.4.2 Piloting SaaS services to establish or upgrade national FIS with new functionalities to integrate and represent location data from solar / battery devices
- 2.4.3 Facilitate the pilot of technology platforms to perform IUU risk analysis by leveraging digital processing of data in order to ease the planning of fisheries control activities
- 2.4.4 Organisation of national and sub-regional technical trainings on MCS and related technologies addressing key personnel of relevant fisheries control institutions
- 2.4.5 Support the exchange of control data among CPCs through their national control systems and FMCs in line with GFCM recommendations
- 2.4.6 Support knowledge sharing on best practices related to MCS measures in the context of targeted field missions at the country level.

Output 2.5: International Plan of action to fight IUU and Regional Plan of Action to fight IUU implemented through national plan of actions, including measures to reduce bycatch and abandoned fishing gear

ACTIVITIES:

- 2.5.1 Develop surveys to identify illegal gears used at the country level
 - 2.5.2 Facilitate the marking of fishing gears through national traceability systems for monitoring purposes
 - 2.5.3 Test new fishing gear in selected areas and encourage buy-back programmes to replace illegal gears with new substitutes in select local fishing communities
 - 2.5.4 Strengthen efforts to retrieve abandoned fishing gear by empowering local fishing communities through the provision of necessary equipment (e.g. shredders to dispose of such gears)
- Accelerate progress in the adoption of national plans of action for the fight against IUU fishing

Component 3. Integrated ecosystem-based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries

The outcome of this component will deliver healthier marine ecosystems with more productive fisheries in place, through the synergistic application of ecosystem-based conservation/management tools to improve tenure governance in fisheries. Building upon the ongoing partnership between the GFCM and the Permanent Secretariat of the Bucharest Convention, this component will facilitate the implementation of ecosystem-based management tools in the context of protection and sustainable use of living marine resources in the Black Sea. To this end, the identification of most appropriate area-based management tools will lead to their application, particularly in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries (output 3.1), including by using information on climate for the development of the integrated ecosystem-based management tools, with model-based projections that incorporate historical patterns of fisheries and climate variability. Furthermore, the proposed project will explore the application of area-based management tools developed under previous GEF IW projects, such as the World Bank CCRES toolkit, in addition to tools consolidating and enhancing early warning systems for small-scale fishers. Having regard to the previous work by the GFCM in supporting the Permanent Secretariat of the Bucharest Convention to set good environmental status for select commercial fisheries, output 3.2 will focus on the monitoring of said status piloting an ecosystem approach to fisheries management in the Black Sea, including in a multispecies context and relating to the development of adaptation strategies to climate change addressing the three pillars of sustainability (ecological, social and economic). By the same token, output 3.3., bearing in mind the environmental complexity of the Black Sea, will provide an opportunity to address emerging potential stressors that are hampering the productivity of fisheries including non-indigenous species and marine litter. Measures will be identified in cooperation with the GEF eligible Black Sea countries. The focus on area-based and ecosystem-based management tools, including those applied by the GFCM and the Permanent Secretariat of the Bucharest Convention, will be instrumental to strengthen the capacities of national planning authorities to use marine spaces. Investments towards implementing area-based and ecosystem-based management tools into broader user frameworks will also link with work to support national capacity to strengthen fisheries tenure, taking a human rights-based approach that is instrumental for facilitating relevant users and local communities' capacity to engage in governance processes and to prompt their willingness to voluntarily engage in conservation behaviours (output 3.4 refers).

Planned Activities under Component 3

Output 3.1: Area-based and innovative management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity

ACTIVITIES:

- 3.1.1 Framework for the identification of priority areas for the establishment of potential new FRAs
Description: Develop a framework for the identification of priority areas, including network of essential fish habitats, for the establishment of potential Fisheries Restricted Areas in the Black Sea
- 3.1.2 Surveys to assess the status of vulnerable benthic ecosystems protected or to be protected by FRAs
Description: Develop and implement innovative surveys to identify and describe vulnerable benthic ecosystems (i.e. VME) that might be protected by GFCM FRAs in relevant Countries

Output 3.2: Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries ensured and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated

ACTIVITIES:

- 3.2.1 Pilot the application EBFM in the Black Sea
Description: Testing FAO roadmap for EBFM identify and implement pilot studies in the Black Sea, addressing the three pillars of sustainability, ecological, social and economic
- Stakeholders meetings for key fisheries in eligible countries (identification of fleet segments and value chain elements required for the implementation of EBFM, identification of other ecosystem components that need to be addressed, identification of potential measures, qualitative appraisal)
 - Preparation of background technical documents on key fisheries identified
- 3.2.2 Investigate the application and development of a multispecies approach for the assessment of small pelagic species, including climate change drivers
Description: Work towards developing a multispecies approach for the assessment of small pelagic species in the Black Sea, including climate change drivers
- 3.2.3 Innovative methodologies to collect catch composition of select fisheries
Description: Develop and implement innovative methodologies to collect information on catch composition of select fisheries, e.g. via DNA barcoding

Output 3.3: Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and those of other potential stressors)

ACTIVITIES:

- 3.3.1 Non-indigenous species and their interaction with fisheries in the Black Sea
- Review and updated information on the non-indigenous species in the Black Sea with a focus on those interacting with fisheries, develop a framework for their management and feed information into Activity 3.2.2
- 3.3.2 Pilot studies on the interaction between marine litter and fisheries
- Develop and implement pilot studies to collect information on the interaction between marine litter and fisheries in relevant countries

Output 3.4: Training programmes and case studies to strengthen national capacity towards the development of fisheries tenure interventions (referring to gender-responsive training programmes and case studies)

ACTIVITIES:

3.4.1 Workshop on best practices in fisheries tenure in the Black Sea

Description: Tenure workshop in the Black Sea in coordination with FAO-NFI to share best practices in rights-based approaches to both fisheries resources and land-based resources necessary for fisheries activities.

Component 4. Knowledge management and outscaling

A three-tiered approach to knowledge management will be followed. First, the project will promote and support the establishment of national stakeholders platform in interested countries including public and private actors involved in the conservation and sustainable management of marine resources and ecosystems in view to develop national blue economy capacities and encourage participation in FishEBM-BS actions and joint investments (Output 4.1 refers). Then the project will identify transformational good practice whereby GEF eligible Black Sea countries built their capacity thanks to the execution of actions foreseen. Specific focus will be placed on bringing together at the national level co-financing partners, representatives of public and private partnerships and all actors that could mobilize investments in the fishery sector. In parallel, dialogue with the Implementing Agencies overseeing complementary GEF interventions under the IW focal area germane to the proposed project will enable dissemination of best practices under the proposed projects while underpinning the concerted approach pursued (Output 4.2 refers). The FAO, including via its Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariat Network comprising 50 Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMO) and other bodies, will inform the RFMO in particular on the benefits accrued by the GFCM through the proposed project. This would ultimately contribute to make other regional fishery bodies aware of their potential role in fostering a blue economy which is supportive of the fishery and environment sectors. Output 4.3 will deliver a communication and outreach strategy that will disseminate information globally. work under this Output will inform processes such as IWLEARN and the LME and the IW conferences, all keen on demonstrating how synergies between environment and fisheries can be capitalized upon. This will contribute to raise regional and global awareness on the proposed project and its accomplishments and drive transformational change, not only within the Black Sea region, but also beyond. Work under this component also intends to deliver enhanced coordination among the different GEF interventions for the Black Sea under the IW focal area (i.e. the proposed project, the WB and the UNDP expected projects). A joint approach to knowledge management and outscaling will maximize results expected by the GEF in combining the different expertise of the Implementing Agencies concerned, with the aim of yielding commonalities and aligning targets across these interventions.

Planned Activities under Component 4

Output 4.1: Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships

ACTIVITIES:

4.1.1 Establishment of national stakeholder platforms to encourage engagement and investment

Description: Promotion and support to the establishment of national stakeholders platform in interested countries including public and private actors involved in the conservation

and sustainable management of marine resources and ecosystems in view to develop national blue economy capacities and encourage participation in FishEBM-BS actions and joint investments.

Output 4.2: Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of aligning different national and regional priorities

ACTIVITIES:

4.2.1 Framework for the collection of information on project progress and achievements for use in communications

Description: Develop a framework to effectively collect information on the project progress, findings, achievements, experiences, good practices, success stories and lessons learned, including testimonies, audio-visual material and precise facts and figures.

4.2.2 Creation of communications content tailored to the various stakeholders in the region

Description: Identify the various stakeholders in the region and create content tailored to each of them.

4.2.3 Identify, design and rollout ad hoc knowledge exchanges and trainings to enhance the capacity of key regional stakeholders in relevant regional and global fora

Description: Identify, design and rollout ad hoc knowledge exchanges and trainings on selected topics to enhance the capacity of key regional stakeholders, addressing specific capacity building needs, including in relevant regional and global fora.

Output 4.3: Outreach & Communication Strategy developed and implemented, including coordination and awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners and participation in relevant global GEF related fora (including gender-responsive outreach and communications strategy developed)

ACTIVITIES:

4.3.1 Development and implementation of the FishEBM-BS Outreach & Communication Plan

Description:

- Develop a segmented database of key stakeholders in the region, identifying for each type of the specific interests and most efficient channels of communication.
- Establish a series of communication tools to ensure the dissemination of adequate content to relevant stakeholders, optimizing the use of existing tools.

4.3.2 Coordination and awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners and participation in relevant global GEF-related fora

Description:

- Engage with key stakeholders participating in IW:LEARN activities (including participation in the conferences and twinning, relevant trainings and workshops among others) and other GEF relevant initiatives and events.

- Establish and/or maintain partnerships with relevant actors within and outside the Black Sea region, strengthening the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) and positively influencing decision-making.

d. Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies

The proposed project adopts an ecosystem approach to fisheries to tackle the barriers to sustainable management of Black Sea fisheries (i.e. overfishing, IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices, vulnerability of coastal and small-scale fishing communities, climate change, biodiversity loss and marine pollution, including marine litter, and non-indigenous species) with a focus on promoting blue economy opportunities. It is fully aligned with the following GEF-7 Focal Areas and their objectives:

- IW Objective 1 ?Strengthening Blue Economy opportunities?

e. Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing

GEFTF funds will provide incremental value across a range of proposed interventions to reduce the overexploitation of fisheries and enable GEF eligible Black Sea countries to progress in strengthening regional fisheries governance. The incremental cost reasoning of the proposed project is simple in that it will expand the scope of baseline projects, some of which are earmarked as sources of co-financing, and assist GEF eligible Black Sea countries in their transition towards concerted management actions promoted by the Executing Agency. By focusing on sustainable and profitable fisheries, the proposed project will highlight the importance of the conservation and sustainable use concepts - at the biological, social, economic, and environmental levels - and boost the level of cooperation needed to create the conditions for strategic investments in the fishery sector, an area that has not been previously targeted by GEF interventions. The project may contribute to building back better in many countries since restoring stocks, reducing IUU fishing and improving ecosystems and their services will support job growth in marine sectors (e.g. fisheries, tourism and aquaculture) and along associated value chains. It is assumed that in the absence of such a GEF intervention the status quo would not be adequately challenged and that under the business-as-usual scenario the future development of interventions to revert fisheries overexploitation in the Black Sea will lack the holistic vision advocated by GFCM's measures and exacerbate the deterioration of environmental, economic, and social conditions in the fishery sector.

Table 2. Relative distribution (L Low, M Medium or H High) of co-financing among major sources of finance (RCG - Recipient Country Government; P/S private sector; CSO civil society organizations; OT Other). A detailed list of sources of co-financing is found at Part C.

OUTPUT	RGC	P/S	CSO	OT ? GFCM, Regional Bodies	OT- academic & research
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Component 1: Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF					
Output 1.1: Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socioeconomic analysis and fisheries management (including gender-disaggregated data collection).	H	L	L	H	M
Output 1.2: Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including for SSF and recreational fisheries	H	L	L	H	L
Output 1.3: Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for innovation, including the certification of select fisheries	M	M	L	M	L
Output 1.4: Reinforced synergies with the private sector to support market-driven opportunities in the fisheries sector	M	H	L	M	L
Output 1.5: Participation in the regional network of SSF platforms reinforced in order to provide social protection support to its members	M	L	H	H	H
Component 2: Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing					
Output 2.1: Losses in national economies generated by IUU fishing activities assessed through the application of an ad hoc methodology at the country level	M	M	M	M	M
Output 2.2: Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments	M	L	M	H	M
Output 2.3: Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and fisheries crimes collected, analysed and disseminated, including through a regional repository	L	M	M	M	M
Output 2.4: Application of technology in the field of control and surveillance, including small-scale fishing, tested and tailored to the capacity of countries	M	M	L	H	M
Output 2.5: International Plan of action to fight IUU and Regional Plan of Action to fight IUU implemented through national plan of actions, including measures to reduce bycatch and abandoned fishing gear	M	M	M	M	M

Component 3: Integrated ecosystem-based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries					
Output 3.1: Area-based and innovative management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity	L	M	M	M	M
	M	M	L	M	M
Output 3.2: Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries ensured and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated	M	M	L	H	M
Output 3.3: Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and those of other potential stressors (e.g. ocean noise pollution).	M	H	M	L	M
Output 3.4: Training programmes and case studies to strengthen national capacity towards the development of fisheries tenure interventions (referring to gender-responsive training programmes and case studies).	M	H	M	L	M
Component 4: Knowledge management and outscaling.					
Output 4.1: Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.	M	M	M	H	H
Output 4.2: Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of aligning different national and regional priorities.	M	L	M	M	M
Output 4.3: Outreach & Communication Strategy developed and implemented, including coordination and awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners and participation in relevant global GEF related fora (including gender-responsive outreach and communications strategy developed).	M	L	M	M	H
	M	M	M	L	M

Significant co-financing has been mobilized for the proposed project, the details of which, including sources of the co-financing, the scope and contribution to the achievement of the project objective are cursorily described in section 2.b above, as well as in Part I, Section C. During the implementation phase this co-financing level is expected to increase further (e.g. thanks, among others, to foreseen private sector contributions) and possibly encompass additional contributions stemming from the projects described in section 2.b above, among others.

Component 1. Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF

The GEF grant will deliver robust and timely information towards the determination of the status of key commercial fisheries and stocks as well as species of global conservation concern supporting

selected value chain interventions, including for SSF and artisanal fisheries, in view of maximizing productivity and benefits while ensuring sustainability, supporting the sector's recovery from the crisis prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting sector and coastal community resilience in the face of future shocks (climate change, etc.) and reinforcing positive synergies with other economic activities, including COVID-19 recovery efforts, in coastal areas. The SSF Guidelines and the Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (RPOA-SSF), developed to address challenges and inequalities faced by the small-scale fisheries sector, will be among the instruments guiding the successful implementation of this component following a holistic approach, including with a socio-economic perspective. The project will support increased implementation of both tools for enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods. This component is expected to reverse the declining trend of key commercial fish stocks at the regional level in order to ensure sustainable resources and secure dependent livelihoods and food security and contribute to the COVID recovery. Management plans will be introduced (output 1.2 refers) alongside possible socio-economic measures for the sector, in line with the priorities identified by the GFCM scientific bodies and based on data collected by countries which will be used to inform the formulation of scientific advice by the GFCM (output 1.1 refers). In line with the SSF Guidelines and the RPOA-SSF, the proposed management plans and measures will also be based on a participatory approach engaging stakeholders in the sector and will integrate fishers' ecological knowledge to better address the need for innovative value chains, adequate social services, the recognition of the role of women, among others. These outputs will not only result in a more accurate assessment of the status of key fisheries from a biological point of view but will also allow an evaluation of the socio-economic contribution of fisheries to the regional economy and, most notably, that of GEF eligible Black Sea countries as the component will focus in particular on the sector's COVID-19 recovery and its long-term sustainability, including of the approximately 39 393 tons of fish caught annually by SSF, upon which approximately 16 330 small-scale fishers in the region rely directly for their livelihoods. Furthermore, through support to the regional rational fisheries management, including the better integration of ecosystem-based management and enhancing engagement of stakeholders in data collection and decision-making processes (including co-management), not only those working onboard small-scale fishing vessels will benefit directly, but significant benefits will also reach the wider coastal communities in the region, including those whose livelihoods rely on the small-scale fishing industry (estimated to be at least 2.5 times those employed directly onboard vessels).

The component will also enhance the productivity and competitiveness of fisheries value chains by improving regional value chain knowledge in promotion of economies of scale and to ensure that economic improvements go hand in hand with environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness. Such improved regional knowledge on value chains will seek to identify new opportunities and markets at the regional level by, for example, removing barriers for small-scale fishers in the Black Sea to access other markets, facilitating legal frameworks for the export/import of certain species or others. In this regard, outputs 1.3 and 1.4 will target select value chain interventions, in consultation with concerned stakeholders in participating GEF eligible Black Sea countries to maximize economic returns and social benefits, while minimizing detrimental effects on natural habitats and aquatic resources. Special attention will be paid to small and medium-sized businesses, because of their potential to deliver economic and social benefits, particularly those for women and youth. Efforts will be made to analyse the selected fisheries value chains in view of assessing feasibility and identifying entry points for innovation and best-practices to be scaled-up. These best practices may include promoting direct sales, raising consumer awareness about local SSF products and promoting enhanced market access by implementing catch certification schemes, improving traceability and reinforcing the cold chain through improved onboard storage and catch preservation techniques. Efforts will also be made to strengthen SSF producer organizations in order to enhance their bargaining power vis-à-vis potential buyers and input suppliers and to reinforce social protection systems in view of addressing the risks and vulnerabilities associated with SSF. Output 1.5 will tackle these efforts and aim at reinforcing existing networks of SSF stakeholders. Component 1 will be complemented by interventions at the national level in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries, with a view to address the main barriers identified under section 1) and its specific outputs will focus in particular on building the capacity of relevant stakeholders at the national and regional levels to address these barriers.

Component 2. Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing

The proposed GEF project will deliver an assessment of the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea and the responsiveness of existing control measures by fostering the use of emerging technologies along with the capacity building for more effective fisheries management. Under this component the proposed project will draft national plans of action for the fight against IUU fishing and evaluate losses generated by IUU fishing activities in national economies of the GEF eligible Black Sea countries (output 2.1 refers). This will be furthered by the scientific assessment and quantification of IUU fishing in GEF eligible countries with the aim of incorporating such information in the stock assessments run by the GFCM (output 2.2 refers). These outputs will be complemented by the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on legal frameworks in connection with measures to fight against IUU fishing and fisheries crimes, with activities under output 2.3 targeting in particular the GEF eligible Black Sea countries. Having regard to the extent of IUU fishing, all outputs proposed will not only concern industrial fishing but also SSF and recreational fisheries, another sector where there is a need to strengthen national legislation and technical capacity of national authorities. The incidence of fisheries crime will be also considered and, through partnerships with other organizations and entities (UNODC), the proposed project will shed light on the economic losses caused by fisheries crime along fisheries value chains. Output 2.4 will complement the scope of this component by tailoring most appropriate control measures to the capacity of countries with a view to curb IUU fishing, including testing and applying various monitoring, control and surveillance technologies. Different solutions will be identified and tested for different situations in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries, spanning from tags and gear sensors to hybrid location transponders and drones. Application of new technologies in the field of control and surveillance, including small-scale fishing, will entail, among others, the development of human capacity at the national level since the reliance on technology to fight against IUU fishing has to improve. A participatory approach will create an environment conducive of learning where fishers will be directly involved so as to reduce the risk of conflicts over fish stocks. Interventions at the national level are therefore foreseen. In this regard, the component will rely, among others, on the involvement of the private sector, most notably the industry concerned with developing technology for monitoring, control and surveillance purposes. Output 2.5 will enable to grasp the negative consequences of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear which are also to be regarded as components of sound national plan of action to fight against IUU fishing, consistent with the IPOA-IUU and the RPOA-IUU.

Component 3. Integrated ecosystem based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries

The GEF grant will deliver healthier marine ecosystems with more productive fisheries in place, through the synergistic application of ecosystem-based conservation/ management tools to improve tenure governance in fisheries. This component will facilitate the implementation of ecosystem-based management tools in the context of protection and sustainable use of living marine resources of the Black Sea. To this end, the identification of most appropriate area-based management tools, including emerging tools such as OECMs, will lead to their application, particularly in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries (output 3.1). Output 3.2 will focus on the monitoring of good environmental status piloting an ecosystem approach to fisheries management in the Black Sea, including in a multispecies context and in relation to the development of adaptation strategies to climate change, addressing the three pillars of sustainability (ecological, social and economic). Output 3.3. will focus on non-indigenous species and, bearing in mind the environmental complexity of the Black Sea, this output will also provide an opportunity to address emerging potential stressors that are hampering the productivity of fisheries, such as marine litter. The focus on area-based and ecosystem-based management tools will be instrumental to strengthen the capacities of national planning authorities to use marine spaces. Investments towards implementing area-based management tools into broader user frameworks will be instrumental for relevant users, including fisheries, to have a better understanding

of the role and importance fisheries tenure on fisheries management ? and in particular the application of these tools ? and therefore improve the efficiency of the mechanisms supporting local communities? willingness to voluntarily engage in conservation behaviors (output 3.4 refers). In efforts to build back better from the COVID-19 Pandemic, these efforts could be linked to COVID Recovery programmes.

Component 4. Knowledge management and outscaling

The GEF grant will promote scaling-up of effective integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management at the regional and global level. Specific focus will be placed on active coordination at the national level involving co-financing partners and relevant initiatives, public and private partnerships and mobilized investments (output 4.1 refers). With a view in particular to advance public-private partnerships, the proposed project will raise awareness in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries on the need to bring about a favorable administrative and legal framework, such as national laws, which would encourage greater investments in the fishery sector from the private sector. The FAO, including via its Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariat Network, comprising roughly 50 of such bodies, will make specific efforts to inform on the benefits accrued by the GFCM through the proposed project. This would ultimately contribute to make other regional fishery bodies aware of the importance of fostering a mutually-supportive fisheries-marine environment relationship (output 4.2 refers). The expected outcomes outlined under the previous components will then be underpinned by a communication and outreach strategy that, consistent with GEF policies and standards, will empower global dissemination efforts to inform processes such as the LME and the IW conferences, both keen on demonstrating how synergies between environment and fisheries can be capitalized upon, including in economic terms (output 4.3 refers). This will contribute to raise regional and global awareness on the proposed project and its accomplishments, ensuring coordination with existing and relevant initiatives ongoing in the region and beyond as well as consistency with IWLEARN. The proposed project could hence become the driver of transformational change not only within the Black Sea region in connection with the objective of the proposed project, but also beyond the region by setting a precedent that could be replicated elsewhere via separate interventions towards an environment-fisheries mutually supportive relationship.

f. Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)

The proposed project is expected to generate global environmental benefits (GEB) first and foremost by moving to more sustainable exploitation patterns the priority species of commercial Black Sea stocks identified under Core Indicator 8. Other relevant Core Indicators are expected to be targeted (i.e. Core Indicator 11). Interventions will be prioritized relative to the potential of national capacity to strengthen fisheries management via mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. The proposed project, which is grounded in the SSF Guidelines, will also represent an important contribution to sustain food systems and ecosystem services for the local communities in the Black Sea region which rely on the steady supply of fishery products. Interventions will be prioritized relative to the potential of national capacity to strengthen fisheries management via mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. The proposed project will also represent an important contribution to sustain food systems and ecosystem services for the local communities in the Black Sea region which rely on the steady supply of fishery products. The following table illustrates to which SDG14 targets the proposed project contributes primarily:

Table 3: Contribution to SDG 14 targets

SDG14	How the proposed project will contribute
14.2: By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans	The proposed project will increase the proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches, with particular regard to the ecosystem approach to fisheries
14.4: By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics	The proposed project will increase the proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels in connection with the list of priority species included under Core Indicator 8
5: By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information	The proposed project, thanks in particular to recourse to area-based management tools, such as fishing restricted areas, and emerging concepts such as OECMs, will contribute to increase the coverage of protected marine areas
14.b: Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets	The proposed project will assist countries in progressing towards the application of the legal/policy framework in place (the RPOA-SSF) recognizing and protecting access rights for SSF
14.c: Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want	The proposed project will accelerate progress by countries in participating to and implementing relevant ocean-related instruments that implement international law for the purpose of conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources

g. Innovativeness, sustainability, potential for scaling up and capacity development

The proposed project is expected to promote **innovation** in fisheries management, sustainability of results and the potential to scale up project results regionally. Innovations will come from integrating fisheries into a multi-sectoral blue economy framework, in particular, through leveraging coordination with other relevant GEF interventions expected to be implemented within the region, including those under the World Bank supporting regional and national level reforms. Innovative new technology and market-based instruments will also be harnessed, in collaboration with relevant private sector firms, to introduce new incentives and control mechanisms for sustainable fisheries management. Furthermore, the proposed project will focus on putting in place enabling conditions to facilitate investment, including by the private sector. Central to promoting investment is a well-functioning institutional framework. To this end, the proposed project will seek to build capacity at the national level, strengthening scientific and technical know-how, facilitating proper database management and the use of modern collection and analysis tools, and engaging fisheries stakeholders themselves in governance/in the development of projects for investment to the maximum extent possible. Such enabling conditions will ensure continuity of results beyond the project's implementation and will lay

the groundwork for further private sector investment in sustainable fisheries activities. In particular the proposed project is foreseen to innovate through:

- Facilitating the introduction of certification of fisheries;
- Introducing new business models, including for fisheries value chain;
- Testing and tailoring emerging technology in the field of control and monitoring;
- Promoting recourse to microfinancing;
- Assisting countries in fisheries governance reforms via, among others, management plan
- Empowering the role of women in the fishery sector at all levels.

In addition, a number of innovative tools currently developed by the GFCM, such as the SSF mapping tool of various past and ongoing projects addressing SSF in the Black Sea and the GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework for the analysis of biological, social, and economic data, will be used throughout the proposed project.

Sustainability of the proposed project outcomes will be achieved via:

- capacity building of a wide range of actors and institutions, including national authorities and SSF associations;
- developing strategies towards securing funding in support of small-scale fishers;
- the enabled engagement of scientific institutes involved in collecting data via surveys and research campaigns;
- the design and implementation of a multi-stakeholders tailored knowledge management and communication strategy.

The proposed project will set **conditions for large-scale change** through:

- integrated governance (multi-stakeholder platforms, management plans, marine spatial planning) that will allow large-scale environmental benefits, particularly in connection with fisheries;
- strengthened capacity of national authorities to generate multiple benefits and prompt investments through good governance practices which could be replicated in the region and beyond;
- synergies between public and private sectors.

Summary of changes in alignment with the project design with the original PIF

The PPG phase enabled the team developing the project document to uncover the challenges countries are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic and to give insights into the challenges they will face post-pandemic. The partners indicated that COVID has shifted a) resources in the GEF countries and while government partners in country think they can deliver much of what was originally planned they feel that: a) the current list of indicators will reflect the impact of the investment; b) the availability of consultants to be contracted may be effected, as the pandemic and subsequent influx of assistance is challenging the retention of highly qualified and experienced staff; c) value chains have altered as some have become more domesticated or more regional, and how long-term these changes are is uncertain; and d) this change in value chains and throughout many of the fisheries has changed the role of women some whom have dropped out of the workforce as markets and processing facilities closed down ? how this will change over the life of the project is unknown. Nevertheless, most the current list

of indicators will strengthen national reporting and contribute to long-term sustainable management of GFCM fisheries. Further changes between the PIF and PPG stages are as follows:

Co-finance:

The co-finance amounts differ from those proposed at the PIF stage, as additional partner organizations expressed interest in providing co-finance support to the project. During the PPG stage, a total of USD 31,350,393 co-financing letters were received, as opposed to the originally foreseen USD 25,000,000. This results is linked to the wide consultation made during the project development phase as well as to the massive engagement supported by GFCM over the past months.

Matrix showing changes between PIF and CEO End stage specific to outcomes, outputs and indicators:

	PIF	PRODOC CEO End Stage
Output 1.1	Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socioeconomic analysis.	Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socioeconomic analysis and fisheries management (including gender-disaggregated data collection).
Output 3.3	Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and those of other potential stressors (e.g. ocean noise pollution).	Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and those of other potential stressors
Output 4.1	Initiatives promoted, including jointly in the context of other GEF projects under the IW focal area as relating to the Black Sea, to support countries in Encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.	Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.
Output 4.2	Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of coordination in the implementation of complementary GEF projects in the Black Sea (by FAO, World Bank and UNDP).	Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of aligning different national and regional priorities.

Output 4.3	Outreach & Communication Strategy developed and implemented, including coordination and awareness raising meetings with co-financing partners and other relevant GEF Agencies, and participation in relevant global GEF related fora.	Outreach & Communication Strategy developed and implemented, including coordination and awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners and participation in relevant global GEF related fora (including gender-responsive outreach and communications strategy developed)
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1b. Project Map and Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.

46°33' - 40°56' N and 27°27' - 41°42' E



1c. Child Project?

If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.

n/a

2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

Stakeholder engagement plan

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been designed to ensure effective engagement between various stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the FishEBM BS project. This engagement was started during project identification and design and will continue throughout project implementation. The SEP is closely linked to monitoring and evaluation of the project as well as knowledge management and communication and is hence also reflected in these sections of the project document.

Definitions

Consultation: Consultation involves information exchanges among the government representatives, the Implementing Agency (FAO), the project executing agency (GFCM), and other stakeholders including organisations representing fishers and fish workers. Although decision making authority rests with Executing Agency, its government partners and the Implementing Agency, periodic consultations throughout the project cycle help managers make informed choices about project activities. More important, it provides opportunities for fishers, fish workers, communities and other stakeholders to contribute to project design, implementation, and evaluation.

Public Involvement: Public involvement consists of three related, and often overlapping, processes: information dissemination, consultation, and stakeholder participation. Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, or institutions which have an interest or "stake" in the outcome of a GEF-financed project or are potentially affected by it. Stakeholders include the Executing and Implementing Agencies, recipient country governments; other institutions/organisations/groups directly involved in carrying out project activities; project beneficiaries; groups of people who may be affected by project activities; and other groups in the civil society which may have an interest in the project.

Stakeholder participation: Stakeholder participation is when stakeholders collaboratively engage in the identification of project concepts and objectives, selection of sites, design and implementation of activities, and monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes. Developing strategies for incorporating stakeholder participation throughout the project cycle is particularly necessary in projects which have impacts on the incomes and livelihoods of local groups, especially disadvantaged populations in and around project sites (e.g., indigenous peoples, women, poor households).

Policy framework for stakeholder engagement

FAO is committed to the human rights-based approach (HRBA), which is recognized as a principle that informs the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects. In its work on the right to food, FAO has established the PANTHER framework, which is a HRBA to the right to adequate food, food security and nutrition that should guide decision-making and implementation processes. The approach is based on seven principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Transparency, Human dignity, Empowerment and Rule of law.

In the fisheries arena, the 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries urges States to "facilitate consultation and the effective participation of industry, fish workers, environmental and other interested organizations in decision-making with respect to the development of laws and policies related to fisheries management, development, international lending and aid." (Paragraph 6.13, FAO, 1995 [14]). Stakeholder participation, and in particular that of fishers, fish workers and their communities "including indigenous peoples, where present" is also an important guiding principles of the Voluntary Guidelines to Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication ([the SSF Guidelines](#), FAO, 2015 [15]), which stipulate that active, free, effective, meaningful and informed participation should be ensured in the whole decision-making process related to fishery resources and areas where small-scale fisheries operate (Guiding principle No 6, FAO, 2015 [16]).

The [GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea](#) also refers to participatory decision-making, in particular in the context of the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea ([RPOA-SSF](#)). The objectives and principles of the ministerial declaration endorsing the RPOA-SSF in 2018 included a call for encouraging "the visibility and participation of small-scale fisheries representatives in the national and local decision-making and advisory processes when addressing fishery and other relevant policies, such as environment, transport, tourism and infrastructure" (paragraph 35, GFCM, 2018 [17]).

Identification of stakeholders for engagement

In order to ensure inclusive participation, consultations were held during the project identification and design phases and will continue during project implementation. This **ensured** that throughout the PPG phase, all stakeholders including NGOs and CSOs were engaged in relevant meetings including virtual ones, as well as bilateral meetings with associations/groups. The high number of secured co-financing letters from NGOs and CSOs demonstrates the successful engagement of these and other groups.

The list in Table 1 includes the identified general categories of stakeholder groups that are associated with the project in different ways:

- Persons and organizations/social groups affected directly or indirectly by the outcomes of the Project implementation,
- Persons and organizations/social groups that participate in the project directly or indirectly,
- Persons and organizations/social groups who are able to influence and decide the outcomes and the manner of the project implementation or make decisions based on the outputs of the project

This ensured that throughout the PPG phase, all stakeholders including NGOs and CSOs were engaged in relevant meetings including virtual ones, as well as bilateral meetings with associations/groups. The high number of secured co-financing letters from NGOs and CSOs demonstrates the successful engagement of these and other groups.

Table 1: Stakeholder groups associated with the project

Stakeholders affected, directly or indirectly, by the outcomes of the project	Stakeholders that participate in project implementation	Stakeholders able to influence and decide on project implementation or use project outcomes for decision making
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fishers, fish workers and their household members and communities 2. Fisher and fish worker organisations 3. Fishing, trading and export companies and other private sector entities 4. Fish consumers 5. Fisheries and environment administrations 6. Research institutes 7. Inter-governmental organizations 8. NGOs/CSOs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project staff 2. GFCM 3. FAO 4. Government counterparts 5. NGOs 6. Fisher and fish worker organizations 7. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project Steering Committee members 2. Fisheries and environment administrations and researchers 3. Inter-governmental organisations 4. Fisher and fish worker organisations

In addition, provide a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

Within the stakeholder groups identified in Table 1, vulnerable groups are nested and will need to be given special attention. These would include poorer, marginalized and food insecure population groups. These will be identified at the project site level at the beginning of project implementation. The involvement and contributions of women in the fisheries sector is often invisible. Women play an important role in the small-scale fisheries sector, in particular in the post-harvest sector in many countries but also as fishers, both on boats ? although rarer ? but also as gleaners and seafood collectors. Women also play important roles in accessory activities and more generally in support in fishing households and communities but these roles are often not recognized and women may not have the same opportunities regarding access to resources and services. This **ensured** that throughout the PPG phase, all stakeholders including NGOs and CSOs were engaged in relevant meetings including virtual ones, as well as bilateral meetings with associations/groups. The high number of secured co-financing letters from NGOs and CSOs demonstrates the successful engagement of these and other groups.

Stakeholder interest analysis and engagement activities

The project strives to collect and analyse stakeholder expectations and concerns as well as to take appropriate responsive measures throughout the project life. Stakeholder engagement is also part of the

overall project strategy and many project activities directly require participation, e.g. fisheries management plans will be designed in close collaboration with fisher and fish worker organizations (e.g. participatory and co-management) and capacity building according to identified needs will be offered to national authorities.

During project identification and design, a mapping of stakeholders' perceived and expressed interests in the different parts of the project was conducted. This mapping is provided in Table 2 together with examples of how stakeholder engagement will take place in project implementation. A full description of consultations carried out with stakeholders during project preparation, in line with the GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement, is provided in Annex I2.

Table 2: Mapping of stakeholders interest in the project and examples of stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholder group	Areas of project of particular interest	Outputs	Means and frequency of engagement
Fishers, fish workers and their household members and communities, fisher organizations	Data collection; value chain; management plans; co-management; social protection; non-indigenous species; sustainable management; role of women; fishing technology	Output 1.1 Output 1.2 Output 1.3 Output 1.4 Output 1.5 Output 2.4 Output 2.5 Output 3.1 Output 3.3	Consultation meetings - providing information, training courses, project decisions, training workshops, exchange of documentation, data collection templates and procedures

Fishing, trading and export companies and other private sector entities	Value chain; sustainable management, public-private partnerships	Output 1.3 Output 1.4	Exchange of documentation, project website, brochures
Fish consumers	Value chain Certification		Project website, brochures
Fisheries and environment administrations	Management and regulatory tools (e.g. area-based management); public-private partnerships; legal frameworks; MCS and fighting IUU; dissemination of best practices	Output 1.2 Output 1.4 Output 2.3 Output 2.4 Output 3.1 Output 3.3	Meetings, exchange of minutes, progress reporting, project decisions, official letters
Research institutes	Data collection and monitoring; stock assessment; IUU assessment; area-based management; modelling climate change; selectivity and fishing technology; dissemination of best practices	Output 1.1 Output 1.3 Output 2.1 Output 2.2 Output 3.1 Output 3.2 Output 3.3	Exchange of correspondence, meetings, training courses, design supervision, data collection templates and procedures

Inter-governmental organizations	Sharing of lessons learned, best practices; blue economy		
NGOs	Engaging local actors; co-management; value chain; stakeholder capacity building; blue economy; dissemination of best practices	Output 1.2 Output 1.3 Output 1.5	Consultation meetings ? Providing information, exchange of documentation

Making information available

The project will endeavour to make information available to the public, as part of its knowledge management approach, to allow stakeholders to get to know and understand both the environmental and social risks and impacts associated with the project, as well as opportunities provided by the project. This will enable them to utilise the data, good practices and knowledge generated by the project data to make informed decisions on fisheries and environment related issues.

On an ongoing basis, the project will continue consultation and information sharing regarding project performance, including both achievements and challenges. Disclosure will be done to all stakeholders through project briefs, annual reports, specific media products or other communication channels, as appropriate. The project will also provide an overview of the stakeholder engagement process and how affected parties can participate and provide feedback through meetings or via other avenues;

The project will ensure transparency in the preparation, conduct, reporting and evaluation of its activities. This includes full disclosure of all non-confidential information, and consultation with major groups and representatives of local communities. The disclosure of information shall be ensured through posting on websites and dissemination of findings through knowledge products and events. Project reports will be broadly and freely shared, and findings and lessons learned made available.

Monitoring and reporting

Monitoring is an integral component of project management as it tracks and assesses progress towards achieving planned project results. It is an essential management tool which provides an opportunity to know whether results are being achieved as planned, what corrective action are needed to ensure delivery of the intended results and how they are making positive development contributions. For this SEP, the parameters below are suggested to be monitored to help ensuring that the plan is being implemented as intended.

The PMU will follow all the stakeholder engagement activities including monitoring and reporting responsibilities on stakeholder engagement through the annual project implementation reports (PIRs). In the annual PIRs, the PMU will report on the following:

Table 3: SEP monitoring and reporting responsibilities

	Parameter	Monitoring and reporting responsibility	Reporting mechanism
1	Number of different stakeholder groups that have been involved in project implementation	PMU	PIR
2	Number of stakeholder engagement activities carried out	PMU	PIR
3	Number of grievances received and responded to/resolved	PMU	PIR

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier; Yes

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body;

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain)

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

3.1 Alignment with FAO and GEF gender policies

The project is fully aligned to and supports FAO and GEF policies on gender equality and mainstreaming. Understanding gender equality as a defining factor of sustainability, FAO recognises the importance of gender mainstreaming in each project phase to ensure the sustainability of the project, support equitable growth, and increase its impact. FAO's gender policy is guided by the following objectives:

- Women participate equally with men as decision-makers in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes
- Women and men have equal access to and control over decent employment and income, land and other productive resources
- Women and men have equal access to goods and services for agricultural development, and to markets

- Women's work burden is reduced by 20 percent through improved technologies, services and infrastructure, and
- The share of total agricultural aid committed to projects related to women and gender equality is increased to 30 percent
- While recognising gender equality as a cross-cutting priority to achieve sustainability benefits, GEF's approach to gender takes on a gender-responsive 'do good' approach, beyond gender awareness. This is based on the following principles:
- Efforts to mainstream gender and promote gender equality and female empowerment are done in accordance with the decisions on gender under the MEAs that the GEF serves, and in recognition of related international and national commitments to gender equality and human rights.
- GEF-Financed Activities address and do not exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities.
- Stakeholder engagement and analyses are conducted in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner, so that the rights of women and men and the different knowledge, needs, roles and interests of women and men are recognized and addressed.
- GEF-Financed Activities are conducted, designed, and implemented in an inclusive manner so that women's participation and voice are, regardless of background, age, race, ethnicity or religion, reflected in decision-making, and that consultations with women's organizations, including Indigenous women and local women's groups, are supported at all scales.
- A gender-responsive approach is applied throughout the identification, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF.
- Opportunities to address gender gaps and support the empowerment of women are seized in order to help achieve global environmental benefits.

In fisheries, women's roles and contributions to the sector are more significant than often assumed. These roles include gleaning and near-shore fishing, as well as post-harvest activities. FAO (SOFIA 2020) estimated that in 2018, overall, women accounted for 14 percent of all people directly engaged in the fisheries and aquaculture primary sector, representing 19% in aquaculture and 12% in capture fisheries. When both the primary and secondary sectors of aquaculture and fisheries are considered the role of women is even more significant. Generally, however, the different roles, needs and priorities of women are ignored in policy and projects' design and implementation, making their contributions invisible and impeding their possibilities.

During the PPG phase, a comprehensive gender analysis was undertaken and is attached as Annex to this section (to be developed into a full-fledged publication in the course of the implementation phase). This comprehensive gender analysis made a range of recommendations on mainstreaming gender in the ongoing project. The findings indicated that women face many disadvantages in terms of access to alternative livelihood opportunities, credit, trainings, mobility, and decision-making power, and the lack of gender-disaggregated data on gender roles and women's contributions to the fishery sector makes their work generally invisible and so easily disregarded in policy and programmes design and implementation. The gender analysis identified the following key recommendations to mainstream gender in the project:

- Implement a data collection and analysis system that includes women's contributions in the fishery, extending the current marine harvesting statistics to the onshore fishing and post-harvest sector, as well as the informal and unpaid sector when possible. The lack of gender-disaggregated data is the norm in the project region, which limits the potential and efficiency of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment interventions.
- Support female fishers and fish workers through value-chain upgrading strategies that improve their livelihoods and take into account their specific needs and priorities, as women face more constraints than men in accessing credit and other production inputs, training opportunities, and alternative income-generating activities.

- Design and implement management interventions, such as area-based management schemes, with the active participation of both women and men, so their different roles, needs and priorities are taken into account.
- Make any project intervention gender-sensitive and identify its potential impacts and benefits for both women and men, through a gender and equality lens.
- Ensure women's representation and active participation in project working groups, trainings, and other activities. This requires taking into account the time and mobility burdens of women, as well as the need to create a female-friendly atmosphere that ensures their participation, for example by including female facilitators and leaders.
- Engage with women's organisations to be active project stakeholders, as they have the knowledge on women's roles, constraints and priorities and can also encourage other women to participate in project activities and meetings.

3.2 Gender Action Plan

A draft Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the project has been prepared and integrated into proposed activities. This GAP will be developed fully during inception work planning period and based on country needs and consultations with implementing partners. Based on this GAP, gender inclusive outcomes, outputs and activities, budgets and revised indicators for the project have been included (Annex A1 refers), including an updated project baseline. Gender focal points and/or champions in each country will be identified and consulted throughout the GAP elaboration process. In particular, the following tentative targets relating to gender equality have been integrated into the project design through the activities to be carried out and the outcomes to be achieved:

Component 1: Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF

Outcome 1: Fisheries managers and stakeholders use sound information generated on the status of key commercial fisheries to support improved management and selected value chain interventions, particularly for SSF, in view of maximizing the sustainability of production.

- Socio-economic fisheries data collection include gender-disaggregated data, as well as data on coastal and marine harvest sectors and post-harvest sector. Additionally, data on informal and unpaid contributions by women and men is also included.
- Both women and men have access to stock status information and use this information for fisheries management and value-chain improvements.
- Priority species for which the quality of stock assessments have improved include also those species of special interest for women, for example gleaning or important for processing. The local and traditional knowledge used to improve these stock assessments considers both women and men's experiences.
- The participatory development of co-management plans in the fishery counts on the active involvement and participation of both women and men.
- Improved understanding of value-chains and good practices identified, as well as gender-sensitive value-chain upgrading strategies that reflect the different needs and priorities of women and men.
- Female and male value-chain actors are supported to improve their market access, through e.g. the implementation of catch certification schemes, business skills training, and improved access to credit and other inputs. In order to do so, the engagement of women in women's organisations is supported.
- SSF organisations, and especially women's groups, receive support to participate in decision-making processes and establish partnerships.

- Women and men benefit equally from social protection initiatives, while special consideration is given to the nature of women's work (part-time, informal, unpaid) that may traditionally limit their participation in these schemes.

Component 2: Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing.

Outcome 2. Fisheries management better accounts for the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea and incorporates control measures, including through the use of emerging technologies.

- The measures put in place to reduce by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear take into account their different impact on female and male fishers and fish workers, due to their different roles in the fishery and their unequal access to resources (credit, inputs).
- The collection of information on IUU fishing and fisheries crimes and its analysis is done through a gender and equality lens that assess the role of gender in this matter.
- Women and men have equal knowledge of and access to the technological systems and solutions for control and surveillance that are applied at country level. The lower access of women to knowledge and technology is improved by, for example, providing training when appropriate.

Component 3: Integrated ecosystem-based management tools and ecosystem approach to biodiversity protection and sustainable fisheries.

Outcome 3: Healthier marine ecosystems with more productive fisheries in place, through the synergistic application of ecosystem-based conservation/ management tools and improvements in fisheries tenure governance.

- Area-based management tools consider the different roles and needs of both women and men.
- Formulated strategies for climate change adaptation respond to the different needs and priorities of female and male fishers and fish workers, and affected communities.
- Women and men participate actively in training programmes to develop capacity towards the development of fisheries tenure interventions.

Component 4: Knowledge management and outscaling.

Outcome 4. Integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management promoted at the regional and global level.

- Women and men are involved in the communication of best practices and lessons learned of the project.
- Women and men participate actively in awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners.
- Women and men have equal access to the knowledge disseminated through the outreach and communication strategy.
- Success stories and best practices for women in fisheries are disseminated in view of raising awareness of their role in the sector.

Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment?

Yes

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women Yes

Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Elaborate on the private sector's engagement in the project, if any.

Similarly to the case of other stakeholders, private sector actors have been thus far involved in select working groups and workshops organized by the GFCM opened to all participants. The engagement with the private sector is a fundamental element of this project and will be a continuous throughout the life of the project. The Executing Agency has engaged and will continue to engage the private sector in line with the 'FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector' which was adopted by the FAO to provide for the first-time ever, an operational framework for managing relations with the private sector in a proactive and efficient manner in line with national development priorities of each country. This FAO strategy will facilitate the involvement of some private sector actors to play a role in the implementation of the proposed project, particularly under components 1 and 2. In this respect, private sector involvement in this project is twofold. Fishing associations or cooperatives at regional and national scale that represent fishers and fishing companies will continue to provide a conduit between the project and fishing operators where behavior change is needed to ensure the sustainability and profitability of fisheries. These associations are the most cost-effective way to reach individual fishers and fishing companies who can, in turn, provide feedback on proposed project activities. Often, they have a long history of servicing the fishery sector and therefore could be a key element in providing sustainability of some of the project activities or outcomes. In addition and subsequently, the private sector will be directly involved in the execution of select activities. This would be the case, for instance, of service providers of monitoring, control and surveillance technology.

The project will also stimulate the involvement of other actors from the private sectors which are concerned by the mandates of the GFCM, such as aquaculture investors, certification and traceability companies, financial institutions and other market outlets involved in the harvesting, processing and trade of living marine resources. Their involvement will have to be in line with the above FAO Strategy and with any other relevant policies adopted by the Implementing Agencies as relating to relationships with the private sector. As need be, the GEF eligible Black Sea countries may have to be consulted on private sector engagement as the project evolves.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):

Risk management is a structured, methodical approach to identifying and managing risks for the achievement of project objectives. The risk management plan will allow stakeholders to manage risks by specifying and monitoring mitigation actions throughout implementation. Part A of this section focuses on external risks to the project and Part B on the identified environmental and social risks from the project.

Risks to the project

In the Black Sea region, the primary risks to the smooth execution of the proposed project are political stability, in that some of the countries have been experiencing structural reforms of late years, and major pollution incidents, either from land-based sources or from ships, including oil and gas related incidents. Climate risk screening is embedded in the proposed project, as its outcomes are directly linked to adaptation of fishery resources to climate change impacts. All risks summarized at the identification phase in the table below, including potential political and environmental threats, are related to complexities stemming from implementing project management in the Black Sea region and draw on the combined knowledge of this region by the Implementing and Executing Agencies.

Risk description	Type	Mitigating measure
Different/divergent stakeholder interests may prevent efficient consensual implementation (lack of environment-fisheries dialogue, different understanding and definition of the importance of the problems and priorities, difficulties in promoting a concerted approach, etc.)	Operational	The risk is only in part under the proposed project control. However, during the PPG phase the identification of appropriate counterparts in national agencies will be perfected. Subsequently, implementation arrangements prior to the proposed project inception will be defined and, should it be necessary, GFCM will play a supplementary role to overcome the risk.
Instability in some countries undermines their active participation in the proposed project activities	Political	The risk is not under the proposed project control. One of the key measures to address the risk is postponing/stopping all activities in the countries concerned if the security situation does not enable sound execution. Continuous dialogue with country focal points and the national stakeholders will be promoted with a view to ensure that national responsibilities are properly assessed and addressed. Where possible, alternative options will be pursued (e.g. capacity building activities in neighboring countries).

<p>Tensions among fishers over the access to and management of the living marine resources</p>	<p>Social</p>	<p>The risk is only in part under the proposed project control. Latent conflicts other use of living marine resources, including between neighboring countries, among fishers, in coastal communities and with other sectors are exacerbated by the over-exploitation of these resources and the different uses of marine spaces. To mitigate these conflicts, the proposed project will invest in involving all relevant stakeholders in the development of management measures and ultimately reduce the opportunities for conflicts.</p>
<p>Bureaucratic obstacles in the implementation of certain activities</p>	<p>Operational</p>	<p>The risk is only in part under the proposed project control. Being the first time that synergies and coordination between different national authorities (i.e. Ministries of Agriculture/Fisheries and Ministries of Environment) will have to be jointly ensured by the GFCM, the extent of such coordination might at times be limited or hampered by issues of administrative nature. The GFCM will avoid as much as possible the raising of issues of administrative nature between the different national agencies (e.g. contracting of consultants, procurement procedures, travels, etc.) by liaising with the Implementing Agencies in advance as well as with the national administrations with a view to find appropriate solutions and/or agree on derogations from certain practices and internal regulations.</p>
<p>Limited national capacity for the proposed project effective implementation in some countries persist</p>	<p>Operational</p>	<p>The risk is only partly under the project control. However, this is the cornerstone of the intervention logic under all components therefore the proposed project will invest considerable resources in capacity building of national authorities. The proposed project implementation will involve a wide range of partners that can support the GFCM in ensuring the achievement and sustainability of the project outcomes.</p>

<p>Low participation by stakeholders in specific activities</p>	<p>Social</p>	<p>The risk is under the project control. The proposed project aims to raise awareness and emphasize the multiple benefits of stakeholders participation. In particular, a focus will be placed on the economic benefits to be derived from the sustainability and profitability of fisheries.</p>
<p>Climate-induced phenomena and variations</p>	<p>Climate</p>	<p>The risk is only partly under the project control. The mitigation of impacts of climate on fisheries will require adaptation strategy and the monitoring of non-indigenous species which will in turn empower countries to mitigate negative consequences. Furthermore, the project will maximize the outcomes of scientific work already ongoing in fisheries and adopt approaches that are being considered by the FAO to facilitate a transition towards climate change adaptation. Carrying out of a more solid climate risk assessment was not necessary, as the climate risk of the project is determined as low.</p>
<p>Outbreak of diseases in the region and beyond (Covid-19)</p>	<p>Social/ Operational</p>	<p>The risk is only partly under the project control. The recent outbreak of Covid-19 has been already affecting the work of international organizations, including both the Implementing and GFCM. Travel restrictions have been in place and of late days meetings have been cancelled due to the spreading out of the virus. Should the situation continue, or should similar situations take place, the risk will be mitigated by trying to carry out relevant activities via alternative working methods (e.g. video-conferences, telecommuting, recourse to national human resources in the countries, etc.). Any mitigation measure will have to be discussed with and cleared by the respective Implementing Agencies.</p>

Fisheries tenure	Legal / Social	The risk is under the project control. Insecure and unclear tenure can undermine incentives for management and ultimately the supply for supported fisheries value chains. The proposed project will work with all relevant stakeholders ? local, national, governmental, non-governmental ? to identify working management strategies, thus advancing knowledge on tenure and user rights in fisheries.
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Given the unique situation faced by COVID the following provides a more detailed risk assessment as well as potential for turning these risks into opportunities in the Black Sea Region.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Black Sea region and its fisheries sector

COVID-19 has impacted on the life of many Black Sea countries, including Georgia, Turkey and Ukraine. According to the John Hopkins University of Medicine statistics Georgia had 752,855 cases and 10,435 deaths, Turkey had 8.2 million cases and 72,127 deaths and Ukraine had 3.2 million cases and 76,657 deaths (information accessed on 08 November 2021). However, the limited international travel to some of these countries has provided some shielding from larger COVID infection spikes, while others have been significantly affected. Apart from the direct consequences on people's health, the disease has heavily impacted the region's economy and the GDP in the Black Sea region is expect to contract significantly (-4 to -6%), which is more than the global average as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic increasing the already high vulnerability to climate change and other shocks that affect the region. The developing country status of the participating countries constrain the capacity of local authorities and international agencies to deal with pandemics, making them especially vulnerable to the economic and social impacts of the Coronavirus. As with many crises, the most vulnerable groups, such as coastal communities and informal workers, have suffered the greatest hardship, with decreased incomes and employment, increased poverty and food insecurity.

To assist in monitoring and addressing impacts and identifying mitigation measures for the fisheries sector, the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department established a COVID-19 Task Team to coordinate Departmental initiatives in response to the pandemic and provide coordinated support to measures and interventions addressing the impact of COVID-19 on fisheries and aquaculture (see <https://www.fao.org/fishery/covid19/en>), including direct guidance to countries and partners. According to an FAO publication *Food systems and COVID-19 in the Mediterranean and Black Sea: A preliminary analysis of the impacts of COVID 19* (GFCM 2020 <https://www.fao.org/3/ca9090en/CA9090EN.pdf>), the pandemic has significantly affected the operation of both the industrial and small-scale sectors of the fishing industry in the Black Sea region. Apart from the direct effects on fishers health, indirect impacts on

fisheries include changing consumer demands, market access or logistical problems related to transportation and border restrictions, which have a damaging effect on fishers and fish farmers' livelihoods, as well as on food security and nutrition for populations relying heavily on fish for animal protein and essential micronutrients.

COVID-19 risks to project delivery and measures to mitigate them

The early design of the proposed project (PIF stage) included risk mitigation measures to minimize the risks related to the COVID-19 global pandemic in the area of community health, and further steps were elaborated during the PPG phase based on an updated FAO Covid strategy. The project's detailed design (PPG phase) includes active steps to mitigate COVID-19 risks, including training on pandemic-related guidance for project staff and stakeholders during the inception phase, and the expansion of standard monitoring of project operations to ensure that they are in conformity with FAO policies with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic. A preliminary risk analysis and identification of outline mitigation measures is shown in the table below.

	Risk associated with COVID-19	Mitigation measures
Short-term (project lifetime)	Re-instatement of COVID-19 containment measures with no, restrictions on or cancellation of travel and personal meetings, impacting project activities such as training events (including during the PPG phase)	The project's COVID-19 mitigation strategies and measures (e.g., for managing travel, workshops etc.) will be align with GEF, FAO and participating country Government policies, procedures and guidelines on operating during the pandemic, and lessons learned through execution of other projects in the Black Sea region during 2020-2021 period. Regular COVID19-related risk assessments will be undertaken to inform project implementation. The project will employ an adaptive management approach where work plans are frequently reviewed and revised to take into account changing circumstances as needed, with increased use of technology and support for adoption of mitigation measures where high human presence is required. For instance, site selection will be partly determined (prioritised) by the presence of local staff/resource persons/ fishing community liaisons who can participate in virtual meetings with the fisheries authorities and other stakeholders (to reduce travel and risk of spreading virus, which will also help maintain local community buy-in and support dissemination of result). Capacity building support will be offered to these individuals as required. The GFCM and national FAO Country Offices will closely monitor the Covid situation and risks, with regular discussions held with project partners. The Project Manager will report on compliance to the Project Steering Committee and take any necessary steps to protect the health of staff, consultants/ contractors, and beneficiaries required by the situation.

	<p>Changes in national Government executing body priorities during COVID-19 response, e.g. shifts in resources with less Government focus on environment during the COVID crisis and consequently reduced and changing government partner capacity as human resources are mobilized elsewhere. Similarly, change in capacity of other executing entities and the effectiveness of the overall project implementation arrangement</p>	<p>The project will not overly rely on individual staff, but on institutions and organizations (Government and other partners), and spreading capacity development within individual countries so that as many individuals are involved and trained as possible. The project will also strengthen institutional coordination both at the national (through national fisheries agencies) and regional level (through GFCM). This will help address some of the potential loss and reallocation of partner staff due to COVID. Institutional coordination on appropriate COVID measures will be key to ensuring project staff and beneficiaries have limited risk of contracting COVID.</p>
	<p>Reduced availability of co-financing availability (co-financing from both the private sector and governments, as well as international donor partners e.g. EU)</p>	<p>Government co-financing is largely in-kind so less affected by competition for new cash funding which is expected to be significant in both the immediate and longer terms due to the impact of the costs of the COVID-19 pandemic on the public budgets of the target countries. In addition, other co-financing sources not dependent on public sector funding will also be identified during the PPG and implementation. The contribution from the private sector fisheries is expected to be substantial.</p>

	Limited capacity and experience for remote work and online interactions	The project will encourage remote working/meetings as required (Zoom, Skype, email-type platforms), the operation of which will be informed by lessons learned through successful execution of other projects in the Black Sea region during 2020-2021 period. There will be a shift to online training courses supported by increased engagement of learners and encouragement of enrolment through using advanced learning technologies (FAO has experience in this area). Equipment and training of key individuals involved with the project will be provided (assessed at the PPG stage) to ensure there are no barriers to engaging online. All countries were able to work and engage remotely and successfully during the PPG phase over the last 18 months.
	Changes in project implementation timelines and delays/difficulty in procuring technical equipment or personnel	A budgeted contingency plan will be developed to cover the first two years of the project in case COVID-19 does not permit the implementation of activities as initially proposed. In addition, during the PPG phase consideration will be given to programming of field activities during the second half of the project (when risk of COVID is expected to be less following vaccination programmes).
	Stakeholder engagement reduced due to restrictions on their mobility	The project's stakeholder engagement strategy and plan, developed during the PPG phase, specifically considers the risk associated with COVID-19 on the target communities, their ability to engage with the Black Sea project, and mitigation measures (these will depend on the final choice of pilot sites and their associated communities). Special attention will be paid to the more marginalized groups such as women and local communities. As mentioned above, targeted capacity (equipment and training) will be provided to enable local communities to properly engage with the project and can continue to be included in the event of future COVID-19 restrictions/lockdowns.
Long-term (post project)	Increased national debt/fiscal crises due to costs of responses to the COVID-19 pandemic impacting sustainability of project results where Government funding needed	The project will produce a Sustainability Plan in its final year which will consider the financial needs to sustain any project results. However, the need for continued financing to ensure the sustainability of project results (and therefore the need for continued Government financing) is built into the design of the project through (see Sustainability section for text) and will be minimised.
	Future risk of similar crises	It is expected that FAO will review its ESS screening framework in the next years to reflect any changing situation with regard to COVID-19 and also to integrate assessment of risk from future pandemics. As part of the process, consideration will be given to differences between LDCs and other recipient countries in their capacity to deal with COVID-19 with a differential risk assessment applied according to country status.

Opportunities associated with COVID-19

As pointed out in GEF guidance document 'Project Design and Review Considerations in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis and the Mitigation of Future Pandemics' (27 August 2020), the COVID-19 crisis offers an opportunity to showcase and promote initiatives with significant potential to generate Global Environmental Benefits while at the same time increasing the resilience of ecological and socio-economic systems. Indeed, a recent study undertaken on behalf of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, has proposed a set of priority opportunities to support such blue recovery, including 'invest in coastal and marine ecosystem restoration and protection?', to which the project will contribute.

The project will exploit opportunities to contribute to the rebuilding of more resilient, sustainable and equitable post-COVID societies specifically through improved sustainable fisheries management and the adoption of responsible fishing practices (especially through Components 1 and 3), along with enhancing livelihoods (such as through better utilization of bycatch and discards in value chains), empowering communities and providing other social and environmental benefits based on supporting 'blue economy' initiatives (especially through Component 3). Together these will not only support the COVID-related recovery process (supporting opportunities to 'build back better?') but improve the long-term resilience of communities to future shocks. Specific short-term and longer-term opportunities are identified below.

Short-term opportunities associated with COVID-19

- ? Project-related, short-term employment opportunities (especially Components 1 and 3);
- ? Improved capacity of all stakeholders (especially beneficial for local community participants) to use virtual/online frameworks for communication, data gathering, analysis and management, and engaging with relevant authorities in decision-making (across project but particularly Components 1, 2 and 3), which will contribute to government and project staff safety and decrease the need for travel thus decreasing the carbon footprint of the project;
- ? Reduced dependence on personnel for MCS activities through technology development and digitisation of fisheries, including bycatch and discards, monitoring and reporting (Component 2), with more efficient MCS systems in national fisheries administrations functioning and reduced human exposure to COVID-19;
- ? Improved resilience and transparency in supply chains and reduced risk of exposure to COVID19 (Component 1);
- ? The project offers the opportunity to promote sustainable fisheries mainstreaming across both public and private (industrial and SSF) fishery industry sectors helping to improve fish stocks and counter destruction of marine and coastal habitats, on which many communities rely;
- ? Incorporation of COVID-19 mitigation measures messaging into training and capacity building activities supported under the project (across project, integrated into all communications enabling greater spread of health messaging);
- ? Indicators to measure/monitor COVID-19 situation/response in project target areas may be useful for local health authorities (e.g. for planning).

Long-term opportunities associated with COVID-19

- ? Strengthening of bycatch and discards management approaches and technologies (under Component 1) and compliance measures (under Component 2) supported by increased capacity will lead to more sustainable fisheries, productivity improvements, and increased benefits to communities such as improved livelihood opportunities and food security, contributing to socio-economic resilience to future shocks such as pandemics and climate change;
- ? Socio-economic benefits to project target communities, such as support for the SSF sector and associated jobs and local economic development (particularly following Component 1), will also help build greater resilience to climate change. Benefits are likely to be particularly valuable to marginal and underprivileged communities such as women and girls in the project's target sites, and given these are coastal these are climate vulnerable communities;
- ? Increased effectiveness and cost-efficiency in managing bycatch and discards (particularly following delivery of Component 1 and 2) as well as addressing IUU fishing and reducing economic losses and improving the performance of legal operators (particularly following Component 2);
- ? More efficient capture technology (less bycatch and discards) will also help reduce the carbon footprint of fishing vessels due to lower fuel use (more bycatch = more fuel wasted) and contributes to more climate resilient fisheries infrastructure;
- ? Increased access to fisheries and alternative livelihood data/knowledge by fisher communities as well as the capacity to use ITC technology and systems will help support feedback loops, the collation and dissemination of data, early warning mechanisms and identification of potential risks, contributing build to greater resilience of SSF communities to future shocks as such capacity is transferable e.g. many skills can be applied to other environment, development and health-related initiatives (use across project especially Components 1 and 2) as well as nature based solutions (Component 3);
- ? Involvement of communities in project (especially Components 1 and 3) will allow increased awareness of COVID-19 and greater likelihood of better access to available mitigation and adaptation measures in response to future COVID-19 threats (and other pandemics) and general public health benefits;
- ? Contribution to recovery of marine and coastal ecosystems due to reduction of threats (overfishing and plastic pollution from ALDFG) and more sustainable fisheries which is required for 'blue growth' in the Black Sea region (Component 1);
- ? Successful engagement with the private sector will allow opportunities for accelerating new sustainable 'blue growth' based businesses approach in incorporating 'green recovery' activities into projects and programs in the fisheries industry.

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

6.a Institutional arrangements for project implementation.

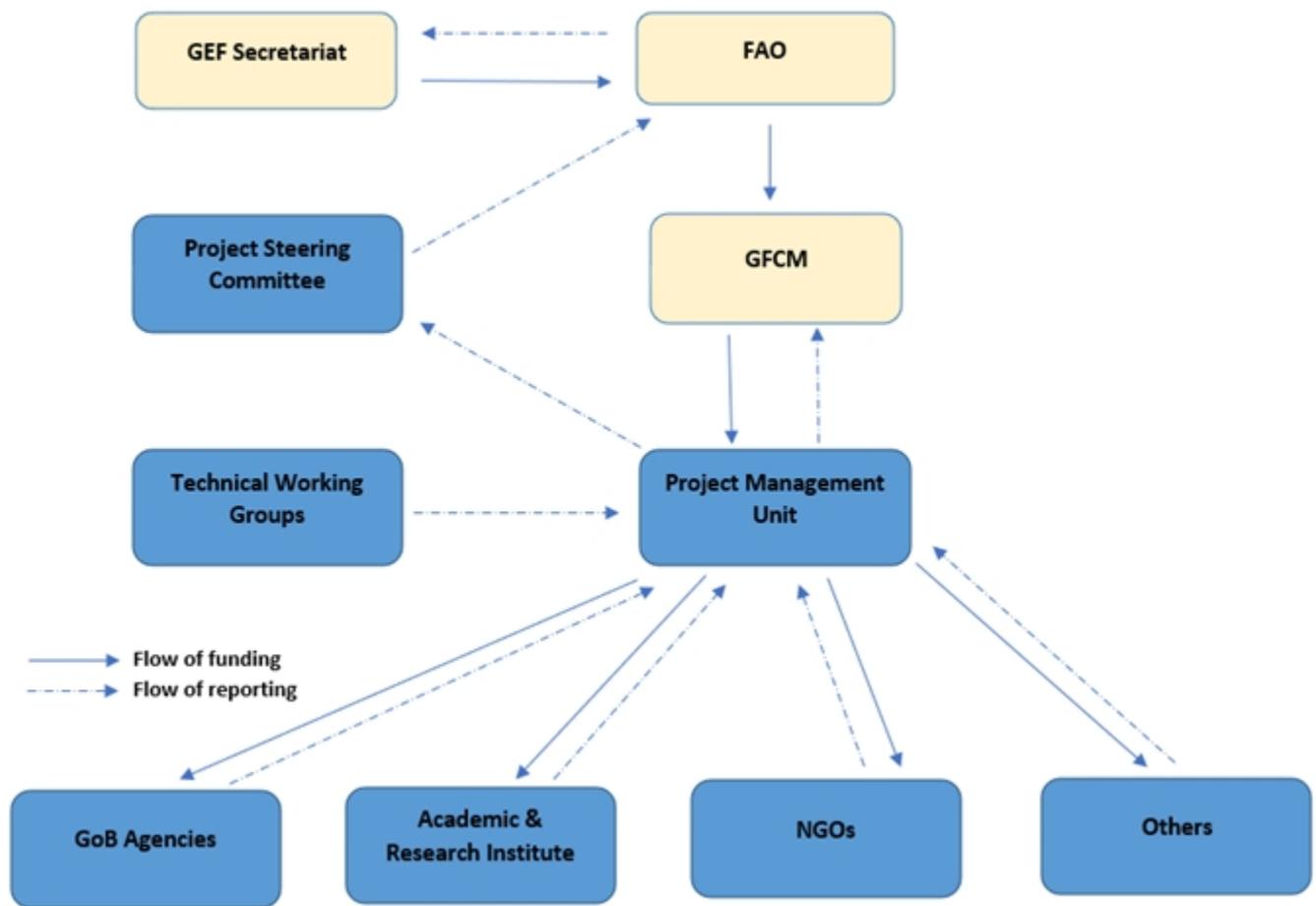
The proposed project will be implemented by FAO, which possesses a comparative advantage in light of its constant support to countries, thanks to its experience in food systems and restoration of ecosystem services. The FAO will play a coordination and liaison role with the Executing Agency and the GEF Secretariat. The FAO will also be responsible for all enquiries regarding the proposed project implementation progress and the project-level reporting, mid-term evaluation and terminal evaluation and, final project completion and the achievement of higher level of project's impacts on the global environment. The FAO relies on the role of regional fishery bodies to advance progress in the implementation of its fisheries related policies among groups of neighbouring countries, the proposed project, in full compliance with what established by the PIF, will be executed by the GFCM.

The GFCM, as the Executing Agency, will be in charge of coordinating the execution of the activities under the proposed project and ensuring coordination with initiatives funded by other donors in the Black Sea as well as other expected GEF-funded initiatives under the same focal area. The GFCM will manage the proposed project funds and will be supervised by the FAO to make sure that all fiduciary standards are being met. GFCM's role in project execution will be costed within the PMC. In its capacity as Executing Agency, the GFCM will also be responsible for the regular monitoring of the proposed project results, and the reporting of such results (through progress reports, technical and financial reports, Project Implementation Reports for instance) to the Implementing Agency, as need be and according to a calendar that would be adopted during the inception phase. Evaluations, however, will be conducted by the Evaluation Office of FAO, as an independent entity.

A Project Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by the countries in a rotational way, and comprising one national focal point from each country, the Implementing Agency, the Executing Agency, and possibly the GEF Secretariat in an ex-officio capacity, will act as an advisory and decision-making mechanism to maximize synergies and ensure the successful design and implementation of the proposed project. The main role of the PSC will be to review and approve the annual project's work plans and budgets, provide a coordination forum and a monitoring platform during the implementation phase of the proposed project. It will also provide an overall, high-level, coordination of the technical alignment and synergy between the proposed project components. Furthermore, following confirmation of the endorsement of the germane GEF interventions in the Black Sea, the World Bank and UNDP, would be given an observer position in the PSC. Other partners, such as international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector, will be involved as necessary in an observer position. The PSC will meet virtually every four months, if possible, to track progress and provide opportunities for cross-fertilization; it will meet face-to-face once a year, if required and possibly in a different project site. From the early stage of the proposed project implementation, particular attention will be placed on all possible opportunities to promote coordination. In this regard and bearing in mind in particular the fact that the Implementing Agency is planning a germane GEF intervention for the Mediterranean Sea, the PSC will be regularly informed by the Executing Agency on the status of this intervention, which shares a similar thrust, rationale and objective compared to those of the proposed project. This potential cross fertilization between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea GEF interventions will enable the PSC to uptake lessons learnt and build synergies.

The GFCM will act as the lead executing agency having the overall executing and technical responsibility for the project, with FAO providing oversight as GEF Agency as described below. The GFCM will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all FAO rules and procedures. GFCM is responsible and accountable to FAO for the timely execution of the agreed project results, operational oversight of implementation activities, timely reporting, and for effective use of GEF resources for the intended purposes and in line with FAO and GEF policy requirements.

The project organization structure is as follows:



A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established by GFCM. The main functions of the PMU, following the guidance of the Project Steering Committee, are to ensure overall efficient management, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the project through the effective implementation of the annual work plans and budgets.

It is anticipated that the PMU will be composed of a Project Manager (PM) and M&E Expert ? as well as relevant technical staff/experts of the Executing Agency backstopping the technical activities to be implemented ? who will work full-time for the project lifetime to oversee daily implementation, management, administration, and technical supervision of the project, on behalf of GFCM and within the framework delineated by the PSC. Furthermore, the PMU will serve both of the GEF Mediterranean (FishEBM-Med) and Black Sea (FishEBM-BS) projects, with a view to promote efficient use of GEF resources. PM and M&E Expert will be responsible, among others, for:

- i) Coordination with relevant initiatives;
- ii) Ensuring a high level of collaboration among participating institutions and organizations at the national and local levels;
- iii) Coordination and close monitoring of the implementation of project activities;
- iv) Tracking the project?s progress and ensuring timely delivery of inputs and outputs;

- v) Providing technical support and assessing the outputs of the project national consultants hired with GEF funds, as well as the products generated in the implementation of the project;
- vi) Monitoring financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports;
- vii) Ensuring timely preparation and submission of requests for funds, financial and progress reports to FAO as per reporting requirements;
- viii) Maintaining documentation and evidence that describes the proper and prudent use of project resources, including making available this supporting documentation to FAO and designated auditors when requested;
- ix) Implementing and managing the project's monitoring and communications plans;
- x) Organizing project workshops and meetings, including brainstorming retreats with the PMU established under the World Bank and UNDP projects in the Black Sea, to monitor progress and preparing the Annual Budget and Work Plan;
- xi) Submitting the six-monthly Project Progress Reports (PPRs) with the the work plan and budget to the PSC and FAO;
- xii) Preparing the the Project Implementation Review (PIR) in close coordination with the FAO;
- xiii) Supporting the organization of the mid-term and final evaluations in close coordination with the FAO Budget Holder and the FAO Independent Office of Evaluation (OED);
- xiv) Informing the PSC and FAO of any delays and difficulties as they arise during the implementation to ensure timely corrective measure and support.

The FAO, as the GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the Project, will provide project cycle management and support services as established in the GEF Policy. As the GEF IA, FAO holds overall accountability and responsibility to the GEF for delivery of the results. In the IA role, FAO will utilize the GEF fees to deploy three different actors within the organization to support the project (see Annex K for details):

- ? The Budget Holder, which is usually the most decentralized FAO office, will provide oversight of day-to-day project execution;
- ? The Lead Technical Officer(s), drawn from across FAO will provide oversight/support to the projects technical work in coordination with government representatives participating in the Project Steering Committee;
- ? The Funding Liaison Officer(s) within FAO will monitor and support the project cycle to ensure that the project is being carried out and reporting done in accordance with agreed standards and requirements.

FAO responsibilities, as GEF Implementing Agency, will include:

- ? Administrate funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO;
- ? Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers, Operational Partners Agreement(s) and other rules and procedures of FAO;
- ? Provide technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned;
- ? Conduct at least one supervision mission per year; and
- ? Reporting to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, the Mid Term Review, the Terminal Evaluation and the Project Closure Report on project progress;
- ? Financial reporting to the GEF Trustee.

6.b Coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

As indicated above, two additional GEF interventions in the Black Sea have received endorsement at the PIF stage. These are, respectively, the GEF intervention implemented by the World Bank and tackling blue economy in the Black Sea (endorsed in June 2020) and the GEF intervention implemented by UNDP and tackling the TDA/SAP in the Black Sea (endorsed in December 2020). Together, these two GEF interventions and the one implemented by the FAO provide a fully-encompassing framework to tackle all the main challenges being experienced at the regional level by leveraging on the technical expertise of the different GEF Agencies involved and the Executing Agencies they will involve. Coordination at the level of the three initiatives will be ensured through the respective steering committees of the projects in addition to constant exchange of information and dialogue, including in the context of brainstorming retreats for the three GEF Implementing Agencies and the relevant Executing Agencies. Finally, invitations will be sent to workshops and meetings, as relevant to promote synergies and foster commonalities across the three GEF interventions.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions from below:

NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

The proposed project will adhere to the priorities set forth by the countries in their national strategies and action plans for the implementation of the provisions of relevant conventions (i.e. Bucharest Convention and related adopted protocols, GFCM Agreement and its binding recommendations, SDG14, CBD and Aichi Targets 4 and 6, Stockholm, Basel and Minamata Conventions, UNFSA, PSMA, SSF Guidelines). In addition, the proposed project is fully consistent with relevant international and regional instruments, including but not limited to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and others pertaining to prevention, mitigation and responses to pollution (e.g. MARPOL), spills, dumping at sea from ships, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible

Fisheries, the FAO Compliance Agreement and the FAO Port State Measures. The proposed project will also enhance national compliance with relevant global and regional agreements and action programmes in which the littoral States participate. Ultimately, the proposed project aims at bringing about in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries better alignment of existing national strategies with regional commitments in place and select international calls for action, including in view of the development of post-2020 strategies. This is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 - Alignment of national strategies with relevant regional/international frameworks

<i>National Strategies relating to fisheries and aquaculture</i>	<i>Regional commitments national strategies are to be aligned with</i>	<i>International calls national strategies are to be aligned with</i>
<p>Georgia</p> <p>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Georgia 2014 ?</p> <p>2020 (adopted via an ordinance of the Government of Georgia)</p>	<p>2004 Declaration of the Ministerial Conference for the Sustainable Development of Fisheries in the Mediterranean;</p>	<p>United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14;</p> <p>CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets 6 and 11;</p>
<p>Turkey</p> <p>100th Year Turkey Plan ? Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023) Ministry of Agriculture Strategy 2015 ? 2019 (adopted via Decision No. 1225 on 18 July 2019 by the Grand National Assembly)</p>	<p>2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration;</p> <p>2018 Ministerial Declaration on a Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Small-Scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;</p>	<p>2030 United Nations for the Sustainable Development;</p> <p>United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030);</p>
<p>Ukraine</p> <p>Strategy for development of the Fisheries sector of Ukraine (currently pending adoption before the national Parliament)</p>	<p>GFCM mid-term strategy towards the sustainability of fisheries (2017-2020);</p> <p>2018 GFCM Strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture.</p> <p>GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea</p>	<p>FAO Strategic Framework and Blue Transformation Priority Programme Area;</p> <p>Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework.</p>

8. Knowledge Management

Elaborate the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, including a budget, key deliverables and a timeline, and explain how it will contribute to the project's overall impact.

Knowledge management and effective communication will be a cross-cutting priority under all of the project's Outputs and Outcomes. Internally, the Knowledge Management Approach will focus on information sharing, regular dialogue at all levels and the dissemination of documents, data and results. Externally, it will focus on the dissemination of information to a wide array of partners (governments, civil society, etc.) and to beneficiaries, using for each type of stakeholder the most effective channel of communication. Supervision and monitoring missions will be organized during the proposed project implementation. Any information collected will feed into activities for knowledge management, identify and share good practices, identify problems and constraints, and promote the continuous improvement of the proposed project and its contribution to the implementation of national and regional objectives on the sustainability and profitability of fisheries and environmental protection.

8.1 Promotion of initiatives to support countries in encouraging strategic investment

The project will promote and support the establishment of national stakeholders platform in interested countries, including public and private actors involved in the conservation and sustainable management of marine resources and ecosystems in view to develop national blue economy capacities and encourage participation in FishEBM-BS actions and joint investments.

8.2 Dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices

To ensure the dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices, the project progress, findings, achievements, experiences, good practices, success stories and lessons learned will be collected and disseminated in various formats tailor made for each category of stakeholders in the region. Furthermore, ad hoc knowledge exchanges and trainings will be developed on selected topics to enhance the capacity building of key regional stakeholders in relevant regional and global fora.

8.3 Outreach & communication

A strong outreach and communication strategy will be developed to raise regional and global awareness on the proposed project and its accomplishments. A variety of communication materials will be generated in multiple languages to ensure that all the relevant stakeholders in the region are informed and engaged in the activities of the project with the final objective of positioning the FishEBM BS as a driver of transformational change within the Black Sea region and beyond. The impacts of the communication strategy and its materials will be closely monitored in order to adapt them regularly and maximize the impact in each country.

Furthermore the project will prioritize due participation in the actions identified under the [IW:LEARN](#) Supporting Portfolio Coordination Within and Beyond the International Waters Focal Area, such as regional training workshops, twinning activities, and cross sharing of data and good practices. To this end, 1% of the IW grant will secure participation in learning activities, including global and regional events and the production and dissemination of experience notes. These will be further shared through the IW:LEARN, eventually benefitting an audience that goes beyond the project partners.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

Project oversight will be carried out by FAO as the GEF Implementing Agency, with the support and inputs from the Executing Agency and the Project Steering Committee (PSC).

Oversight will ensure that: (i) project outputs are produced in accordance with the project results framework and leading to the achievement of project outcomes; (ii) project outcomes are leading to the achievement of the project objective; (iii) risks are continuously identified and monitored and appropriate mitigation strategies are applied; and (iv) agreed project global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits are being delivered.

Regular Monitoring is a task of Project Management Unit (PMU), with support of the Executing Agency and the FAO; FAO will be responsible for the Mid-term review and the Final Evaluation.

9.1 Indicators and information sources

Specific indicators and targets have been established in the Results Framework (see Annex A1) to monitor project progress towards its outcomes and objectives. The framework's indicators and means of verification will be applied to monitor both project performance and impact. The main sources of information to support the M&E will be (see 9.3 Reporting for further details):

- ? Inception Report
- ? Project progress reports (PPRs)
- ? Project Implementation Reviews (PIR), including co-financing reports
- ? Results-based annual work plan and budget
- ? Independent Mid-term Review (MTR)
- ? Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)
- ? Terminal Report
- ? Back to office reports of site visits and missions
- ? Relevant workshop and meeting reports
- ? Technical studies and reports

9.2. Project supervision

FAO will provide oversight of GEF-financed activities, outputs and outcomes, establishing a project task force consisting of the Budget Holder, the project Lead Technical Officer, Funding Liaison Officer and Technical Officer(s) from the Implementing and Executing Agencies. Oversight will be primarily delivered through the annual project implementation review, project evaluations, the meeting of the Project Steering Committee and supervisory missions and audits.

As a GEF Agency, FAO provides overall supervision and technical guidance, and will undertake supervision missions to project sites to provide technical backstopping, and they are also part of assurance activities including field visits to the project sites in a timely manner for monitoring the completion by the Operational Partners in accordance with the work plan, budgets, and progress towards producing the

project outputs, particularly in cases where gaps or shortcomings are identified so to agree upon corrective actions and risk mitigation measures.

9.3 Reporting

Project monitoring will be carried out by the Project Management Unit (PMU). Project performance will be monitored using the project results framework, including indicators (baseline and targets) and annual work plans and budgets. At inception the results framework will be reviewed to finalize identification of: i) outputs ii) indicators; and iii) missing baseline information and targets. A detailed M&E plan, which builds on the results framework and defines specific requirements for each indicator (data collection methods, frequency, responsibilities for data collection and analysis, etc.) will also be developed during project inception by the M&E Expert.

Specific reports that will be prepared under the PMU and under the M&E programme are outlined in Table 1 below and described in the paragraphs that follow. The preparation of the consolidated report for submission to FAO is a task of the PMU.

Table 1: Monitoring and evaluation framework

M&E Activity	Responsible parties	Timeframe	Budget (USD)
Inception workshop	Project Management Unit (PMU) or Project Manager	After GEF CEO Endorsement (project formulation phase)	No cost ? held in conjunction with GFCM annual session
Project M&E Expert/Specialist	Full-time expert as part of the PMU	Several consultancy contract starting one month after EOD	USD 100,000
Project Inception Report	Project Manager and PMU	Three months after the project inception workshop	Project staff time
Project progress reports (PPRs)	Project Manager and M&E Expert	Every six months	M&E Expert honorarium (see above)
Project Implementation Reviews (PIR), including co-financing reports	BH, LTO and PMU (including M&E expert)	Annually in July. Covering the period from July (previous year) to June (current year)	Project staff time and M&E Expert honorarium (see above)
Results-based Annual Work Plan and Budget	PMU in consultation with the FAO Project Task Force	Annually in July. Covering the period from July (previous year) to June (current year)	Project staff time and M&E Expert honorarium (see above)

Independent Mid-term Review (MTR)	The BH will be responsible for the decentralized independent MTR	In the 1st quarter of the third year of the project (2024)	USD 60,000
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)	FAO Office of Evaluation (OED)	To be launched within six months prior to the actual completion date (NTE date)	USD 65,000
Terminal Report	BH, LTO and PMU in consultation with project FLO	Finalized and submitted during project operational closure	USD 6,550
Steering committees and learning mission/site visits	PM, PMU and M&E Expert	Yearly, including field missions	USD 30,000
Total M&E budget			USD 261,550

Project Inception Workshop and Report

It is recommended that the PMU organizes an inception workshop and prepares a draft project inception report in consultation with FAO (LTO, BH) and other project partners. Elements of this report should be discussed during the Project Inception Workshop and the report subsequently finalized through follow up planning and start-up actions with the executing partners and countries.

The report will include a narrative on the institutional roles and responsibilities and coordinating action of project partners, progress to date on project establishment and start-up activities and an update of any changed external conditions that may affect project implementation. It will also include a detailed first year Work Plan and Budget, and a detailed project monitoring plan. The draft inception report will be prepared within three months after the inception workshop and circulated to the PSC members once finalized. This report will be cleared by the FAO (BH, LTO and the FAO GEF Coordination Unit) prior to the first PSC meeting.

Results-based Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP/B)

The draft of the first year work plan and budget will be prepared by the PMU in consultation with FAO and key project stakeholders. After FAO initial clearance, the PMU will submit the first draft to the FAO for review, comments and operational clearance by BH and technical clearance by LTO. The cleared final draft will be submitted to the PSC for review and approval before it is put into implementation. Once finalized the annual work plan and budget is to be uploaded on the FAO FPMIS by the BH. The work plan and budget must be linked to the project's Results Framework indicators so that the project's work is contributing to the achievement of the indicators. The work plan and budget should include detailed activities to be implemented to achieve the project outputs as well as the output divided into monthly timeframes and targets and milestone dates with indicators to be achieved during the year. A detailed overall project budget for the activities to be implemented during the year should also include all monitoring and supervision activities required during the year.

Project Progress Reports (PPR)

PPRs will be prepared by the PMU based on the systematic monitoring of output and outcome indicators identified in the project's Results Framework (Annex A1). The purpose of the PPR is to report the achievements or results made and also to identify constraints, problems or bottlenecks that impede timely implementation and to take appropriate remedial action in a timely manner. They will also report on projects risks and implementation of the risk mitigation plan. The PMU should follow the reporting schedule and submit PPR to the Budget Holder who has the responsibility will to coordinate with the PTF members and the FAO finance unit to review the project progress and the relevant expenditures. The PMU would explain and provide additional information to address inquires and comments raised from FAO. Once the PPR is operationally and technically cleared by FAO, the PPR will be submitted to FAO-GEF Unit for endorsement and to be uploaded to the FPMIS by FLO accordingly

Annual Project Implementation Review (PIR)

The PMU is to coordinate the inputs among the project execution partners and prepare the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) using GEF PIR format, which should be submitted to LTO before end of July for review and technical clearance in consultation with the BH and the other PTF members. The LTO will submit the final version to FAO-GEF Unit. Annual PIR covers the period July (the previous year) through June (current year) and is to be submitted to the FAO GEF Coordination Unit Funding Liaison Officer (FLO) for review and approval. The FAO GEF Coordination Unit will submit the PIR to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Evaluation Office as part of the Annual Monitoring Review report of the FAO-GEF portfolio. PIRs will be uploaded on the FPMIS by the FAO GEF Coordination Unit.

Key milestones for the PIR process:

- ? Early August: the LTO submits the draft PIR (after consultations with BH, project team) to the GEF Coordination Unit (faogef@fao.org, copying respective GEF Unit officer) for initial review
- ? Mid-August: FAO GEF Coordination Unit responsible officers review main elements of PIR and discuss with LTO as required
- ? Late August: the FAO GEF Coordination Unit prepares and finalizes the FAO Summary Tables and sends to the GEF Secretariat by the date communicated each year by the GEF Secretariat through the FAO GEF Coordination Unit
- ? September/October: PIR is finalized. PIR carefully and thoroughly reviewed by the FAO GEF Coordination Unit and discussed with the LTO for final review and clearance
- ? Mid November: (date to be confirmed by the GEF): the FAO GEF Coordination Unit submits the final PIR report - cleared by the LTO and approved by the FAO GEF Coordination Unit - to the GEF Secretariat and the GEF Independent Evaluation Office

Co-financing Reports

The PMU will be responsible for collecting the required information and reporting on co-financing as indicated in the Project Document/CEO Request. The PMU will compile the information received from the executing partners and transmit it in a timely manner to the LTO and BH. The report, which covers the period 1 July through 30 June, is to be submitted on or before 31 July and will be incorporated into the annual PIR. The format and tables to report on co-financing can be found in the PIR.

Technical Reports

Technical reports are prepared by national, international consultants or the project contracted service providers as part of project outputs and to document and share project outcomes and lessons learned. The drafts of any technical reports must be submitted to the respective operational partner and LTO for clearance. The LTO will be responsible for ensuring appropriate technical review and clearance of said report. The LTO will upload the final cleared reports onto the FPMIS. Copies of the technical reports will be distributed to project partners and reported to the Project Steering Committee as appropriate. Technical reports that are to be published will be submitted to FAO for review and clearance in accordance with FAO rules and regulations on publications.

Terminal Report

Within two months before the end date of the project the PMU will submit to the BH and LTO a draft Terminal Report. The main purpose of the Terminal Report is to report to project results and also to give advice at ministerial or senior government level on the policy decisions required for the follow-up of the project, and to provide the donor with information on how the funds were utilized. The Terminal Report is accordingly a concise account of the main products, results, conclusions and recommendations of the project, without unnecessary background, narrative or technical details. The target readership consists of persons who are not necessarily technical specialists but who need to understand the policy implications of technical findings and needs for insuring sustainability of project results.

9.4 Evaluation provisions

An independent mid-term review will be undertaken at the mid-point of project implementation and its plan for MTR should be endorsed by the PSC. The review will determine progress being made towards achievement of objectives, outcomes, and outputs, and will identify corrective actions if necessary. The MTR will be decentralized and under the overall responsibility of the BH, who may call upon OED for guidance and support. The MTR will, inter alia:

- ? Review the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation
- ? Analyze effectiveness of implementation and partnership arrangements
- ? Identify issues requiring decisions and remedial actions
- ? Identify lessons learned about project design, implementation and management
- ? Highlight technical achievements and lessons learned
- ? Propose any mid-course corrections and/or adjustments to the implementation strategy as necessary

As per the FAO policy on evaluation, the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) will conduct a final evaluation of the project, to be launched within six months prior to the actual completion date (NTE date). It will aim at identifying project outcomes, their sustainability and actual or potential impacts. It will also have the purpose of indicating future actions needed to assure continuity of the process developed through the project. FAO Office of Evaluation will conduct the evaluation in consultation with project stakeholders and the donor, and share with them the evaluation report, which is a public document.

10. Benefits

Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, as appropriate. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?

The project will build support from national administrations, research institutes, private sector and stakeholders themselves for fisheries and ecosystem management efforts and fisheries-based livelihoods initiatives that will generate a number of socio-economic benefits at the regional, national and local levels. These include but are not limited to:

- Improved fisheries management, promoting long-term sustainability of the fisheries resources and thus supporting the economic sustainability of the fishing activity and the jobs which depend on the fishing industry.
- Enhanced value chain interventions supporting improved rents to those who rely directly on fisheries for their livelihoods
- Promotion of social protection work initiatives, helping to remove incentives for pernicious behaviour (e.g. short term thinking, lack of compliance with management efforts) and reinforcing fishers abilities to respond to shocks while planning for the future and promoting stewardship of fisheries resources.
- Enhanced compliance with fisheries management and a reduction in IUU fishing
- Better synergies between fisheries and other Blue Economy sectors, such as tourism.

The above will result in more and better jobs, economic growth, and social development (especially where the fruits of economic development are fairly shared). Underpinning all of the above is greater investment in and protection of the natural capital of ocean ecosystems. This investment in marine natural capital, in turn, will generate a number of global environmental benefits, including biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and climate change adaptation (e.g., strengthening the resilience of community marine fisheries).

Notes and references

[1] See [Guidance Note on Gender Mainstreaming](#) in project identification and formulation;

[2] Existing agreements in place among the Black Sea littoral States to set maritime boundaries are available at: <https://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/europe.htm>;

[3] While sturgeon is arguably the most important anadromous species of the Black Sea, the list also includes Black Sea salmon (*Salmo trutta labrax*), Pontic shad (*Alosa immaculata*), Danube shad (*Alosa pontica*) and some other Clupeid species which enter the Danube river for spawning (e.g. *Alosa maeotica*, *Alosa nordmanni* and *Clupeonella delicatula*). The only catadromous species in the Danube River is eel (*Anguilla anguilla*);

[4] FAO. 2020. The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2020. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb2429en>;

[5] Data are estimates based on current knowledge of the situation by the GFCM;

[6] Available data are aggregated at national level and do not reflect fish products originating only in the Black Sea;

[7] These investments could include, among others, improving vessel monitoring and control systems, modernization of vessel design, improvement of gear selectivity, identification of fish landing sites enabled with cold chain facilities;

[8] It is important to note, however, that the use of landing weight is not the only ? nor the best ? indication of the exploitation status, and instead, indicators such as fishing mortality (F) and biomass should also be considered. As for overexploited stocks adequate management measures may cause landings to decrease in the short term, in order for biomass and landings to recover in the medium to long term;

[9] Dyck, A. & Sumaila, U. R. 2010. Economic impact of ocean fish populations in the global fishery. *Journal of bioeconomics*, 12(3), pp. 227-243. Doi: 10.1007/S10818-010- 9088-3;

[10] Similarly, according to latest statistics and data by GFCM, jobs in the fisheries sector have been increasing. Statistics are not, however, available for employment in the pre- and post-harvest sectors, nor are they available for gleaning activity and other in-kind labor (such as support from family members);

[11] All figures provided in EUR are to be converted in USD based on a 0,90 rate;

[12] More info on the Sofia Declaration is available here:
<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/blackseaconference2018/sofiadeclaration>;

[13] More info on the RPOA-SSF is available here: <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/activities/fisheries/small-scale-fisheries/rpoa-ssf>;

[14] FAO, Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, pages 6-7,
<http://www.fao.org/3/v9878e/V9878E.pdf>;

[15] FAO, Voluntary Guidelines to Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), <http://www.fao.org/3/i4356en/I4356EN.pdf>;

[16] FAO, SSF Guidelines, pages 8-10, <http://www.fao.org/3/i4356en/I4356EN.pdf>;

[17] GFCM, Regional Plan of Action for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (RPOA-SSF), page 3, <https://gfcm.sharepoint.com/Midterm-strategy/RPOA-SSF>;

[18] Please refer to GEF Gender Equality Guidelines, Guide to mainstreaming gender in FAO's project cycle, GEF Gender Guidelines.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Low			

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Elaborate on the types and risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and impacts (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and any measures undertaken as well as planned management measures to address these risks during implementation.

Environmental and Social Risk Classification: low risk ? moderate risk high risk

In line with FAO's Environmental and Social Safeguards, the project has been screened against Environmental and Social risks and rated as low risk (see certification in annex). No FAO safeguards were triggered. The Agency will make sure that all mitigation measures vis-?-vis any potential adverse impact is duly considered in the CEO-endorsement package.

Looking at the conducted climate risk screening, the countries of interest (not the project itself) and systems targeted by the project are categorized as moderate risk. During the screening, the past/future climatic trends for the project's location, including the physical properties of the sea water important for fish production and fish growth have been looked at. **In this context, the proposed project activities are likely to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts.**

Climate change impacts in the black sea are numerous. They include the likely warming of surface waters, changes in vertical thermohaline structure, sea level rise and increased frequency of extreme weather events, especially extreme precipitation events and meteorological projections show an increase in sea surface temperature.

The climate change can have serious negative effects on the marine ecosystems and their living resources. The water warming impacts biodiversity and physiology of fish species, affects migration and schooling behaviour, availability of appropriate food sources, the processes of fattening and reproduction, modulating the fish stock dynamics and productivity. Shortening of anchovy fishing season is likely to occur along the Turkish coast, due to changes in anchovy migration and schooling behaviour. Change in overwintering grounds is very likely, affecting anchovy fisheries in Turkey and Ukraine. Forecasts show that climate change will impact certain species and the interspecies relationships are still highly uncertain.

Turkey, Ukraine and Georgia are respectively ranked 21, 39 and 84 out of 181 countries in the ND-GAIN vulnerability index (ND-GAIN, 2017). The analysis of country level vulnerability, focused on food security implications of climatic disturbances on marine fisheries, shows moderate level of sensitivity in Turkey and Georgia, and low levels in Ukraine. At regional scale, the lower fisheries dependence, allow the vulnerability to be ranked as generally low, except in south-eastern region, characterized with moderate level of vulnerability. On a regional scale, the effects of climate change vary, due to different vulnerabilities, potential and resources for response, national plans and policies.

Priority adaptation measures involve harmonizing the timing of fishing bans, fishing quotas, and joint monitoring of fish stocks. The potential vulnerability of the SSF sector to the effects of climate change needs to be carefully considered, because of its socio-economic importance and vulnerability.

Taking into consideration that the adaptive capacity and vulnerability to climate change varies between the Black Sea countries, it is important that fisheries integrate risk analyses and the development of strategies based on disaster risk management (DRM) plans, including direct technical actions to enhance the resilience of socio-ecological systems such as the mitigation of local-level, human-induced stressors (pollution, introduction of non-indigenous species, etc.), and rehabilitation of damaged coastal ecosystems. Special attention should be paid to the usage of climate information in the development of the integrated ecosystem-based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries and the creation of a network of monitoring hydrometeorological events.

Table 4 - Preliminary Risk Assessment

Social & Environmental Risks and Impacts	Mitigation measures	Implementation Responsibility	Cost	Timeline
ESS 1: Natural Resource Management				
Tensions among fishers over the access to and management of the living marine resources	The risk is only in part under the control of the proposed project. Latent conflicts over use of living marine resources, including between neighboring countries, among fishers, in coastal communities and with other sectors are exacerbated by the over-exploitation of these resources and the different uses of marine spaces. To mitigate these conflicts, the proposed project will invest in involving all relevant stakeholders in the development of management measures and ultimately reduce the opportunities for conflicts.			<i>Ongoing</i>

Fisheries tenure	The risk is under the project control. Insecure and unclear tenure can undermine incentives for management and ultimately the supply for supported fisheries value chains. The proposed project will work with all relevant stakeholders ? local, national, governmental, non-governmental ? to identify working management strategies, thus advancing knowledge on tenure and user rights in fisheries.			<i>Ongoing</i>
ESS 2: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Natural Habitats				
ESS 3: Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture				
ESS 4: Animal - Livestock and Aquatic - Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture				
ESS 5: Pest And Pesticide Management				
ESS 6: Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement				

ESS 7: Decent Work				
ESS 8: Gender Equality				
ESS 9: Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage				

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
FAO ES Risk Identification ? Screening Checklist-FishEBM BS	CEO Endorsement ESS	
FishEBM BS_Risk_Certification_Black Sea Fisheries	CEO Endorsement ESS	

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
<p>Project Objective: To reverse the overexploitation of select commercial living marine resources by enhancing the capacity of Black Sea countries to manage fisheries, including through the application of ecosystem-based management tools</p>	<p>1) Landings from fisheries under sustainable management</p> <p>2) Number of countries having complete data on fisheries-dependent employment, disaggregated by gender, along the value chain</p> <p>3) Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment</p>	<p>1) 30,000 tonnes of landings from fisheries under sustainable management</p> <p>2) 2 x countries with fisheries-dependent employment data (not gender disaggregated and only vessel-based employment)</p> <p>3) 10,000 direct beneficiaries</p>	<p>1) 70,000 tonnes of landings from fisheries under sustainable management</p> <p>2) 2 x countries with gender disaggregated fisheries-dependent employment data (only vessel-based employment)</p> <p>3) 17,000 direct beneficiaries</p>	<p>1) 326,860 tonnes of landings from fisheries under sustainable management</p> <p>2) 3 x countries with gender disaggregated fisheries-dependent employment data (along the full value chain)</p> <p>4) 23,000 direct beneficiaries (13,000 Female ? 10,000 Male)</p>	<p>Government statistics</p> <p>RFB reports</p> <p>Project reports</p> <p>Project reports</p> <p>Gender review</p> <p>Mintues and reports of traiings, worksh ops, etc.</p>	<p>Sustained political support from countries throughout the project</p> <p>Adaptive management plans are implemented efficiently and are capable to address changes internal or external to the fishery</p>	<p>Government agencies</p> <p>International/regional Executing Agency and Implementing Agency</p>
<p>Component 1: Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF.</p>							

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
<p>Outcome 1 Fisheries managers and stakeholders use sound information generated on the status of key commercial fisheries to support improved management and selected value chain interventions, particularly for SSF, in view of maximizing production sustainability</p>	<p>1) Number of countries where data collection campaigns/surveys have been carried out to collect biological and gender-disaggregated socio-economic data</p> <p>2) Number of GFCM Black Sea key fisheries for which alternative management measures have been identified and evaluated, integrating socio-economic aspects and stakeholder evaluation</p>	<p>1) 0 x countries where data collection campaigns/surveys have been carried out to collect biological and gender-disaggregated socio-economic data</p> <p>2) 0 x GFCM Black Sea key species for which alternative management measures have been identified and evaluated, integrating socio-economic aspects and stakeholder evaluation</p>	<p>1) 1 x countries where data collection campaigns/surveys have been carried out to collect biological and gender-disaggregated socio-economic data</p> <p>2) 0 x GFCM Black Sea key species for which alternative management measures have been identified and evaluated, integrating socio-economic aspects and stakeholder evaluation</p>	<p>1) 3 x countries where data collection campaigns/surveys have been carried out to collect biological and gender-disaggregated socio-economic data</p> <p>2) 3 x GFCM Black Sea key fisheries for which alternative management measures have been identified and evaluated, integrating socio-economic aspects and stakeholder evaluation</p>	<p>Project progress reports Project evaluations Project training reports National policies Management Plans Project reviews Reports of meetings, workshops and trainings Technical elements for management</p>	<p>Engagement of relevant fisheries managers and female and male stakeholders is sustained throughout the project</p> <p>Relevant fisheries managers and female and male stakeholders are properly/timely informed about the availability of sound information generated though</p>	<p>Government agencies International/regional Executing Agencies and Implementing Agency Partners</p>

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
	<p>3) Number of fisheries value chains addressed via studies, interventions, trainings or certification using gender-sensitive approaches that value the contribution of women along the value chain</p> <p>4) Number of stakeholder organizations? including women?s organizations? having received capacity development support</p> <p>5) Number of countries where initiatives promoted to improve social protection access for women and men small-scale fishers and fish workers</p>	<p>3) 0 x fisheries value chains addressed via studies, interventions or certification using gender-sensitive approaches that value the contribution of women along the value chain</p> <p>4) 0 x stakeholder organizations? including women?s organizations? having received capacity development support</p> <p>5) 0 x countries where initiatives promoted to improve social protection access for women and men small-scale fishers and fish workers</p>	<p>3) 1 x fisheries value chains addressed via studies, interventions or certification using gender-sensitive approaches that value the contribution of women along the value chain</p> <p>4) 1 x stakeholder organizations? including women?s organizations? having received capacity development support</p> <p>5) 0 x countries where initiatives promoted to improve social protection access for women and men small-scale fishers and fish workers</p>	<p>3) 3 x fisheries value chains addressed via studies, interventions, trainings or certification using gender-sensitive approaches that value the contribution of women along the value chain</p> <p>4) 3 x stakeholder organizations? including women?s organizations? having received capacity development support</p> <p>5) 2 x countries where initiatives promoted to improve social protection access for women and men small-scale fishers and fish workers</p>		<p>the project</p> <p>Data are provided by countries as required</p>	

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
<p>Output 1.1: Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socioeconomic analysis and fisheries management (including gender-disaggregated data collection).</p> <p>? 3 X countries where information enhanced on SSF fleet activities ? 2 x field surveys and research activities to improve knowledge on stock status and dynamics</p> <p>Output 1.2: Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including for SSF and recreational fisheries</p> <p>? 1 x technical elements for management ? 2 x stakeholder consultations held, including to advance towards co-management arrangements</p> <p>Output 1.3: Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for innovation, including the certification of select fisheries</p> <p>? 7 x fisheries value chain addressed using gender sensitive approaches</p> <p>Output 1.4: Reinforced synergies with the private sector to support market-driven opportunities in the fisheries sector.</p> <p>? 15 x stakeholder groups mapped, including SSF producer organizations, women's organizations and fish processing/marketing companies</p> <p>Output 1.5: Participation in the regional network of SSF platforms reinforced in order to provide social protection support to its members</p>							
<p>Component 2: Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing</p>							
<p>Outcome 2. Fisheries management better accounts for the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea and incorporates control measures, including through the use of</p>	<p>1) Number of countries for which an assessment is available 2) Number of fisheries for which an IUU quantification is available 3) Number of legislation-related documents in repository/database</p>	<p>1) 0 countries for which an assessment is available 2) 0 fisheries for which an IUU quantification is available 3) 0 x legislation-related documents in repository/database</p>	<p>1) 1 x for which an assessment is available 2) 0 fisheries for which an IUU quantification is available 3) 10 x legislation-related documents in repository/database</p>	<p>1) 2 x for which an assessment is available 2) 1 fishery for which an IUU quantification is available 3) 20 x legislation-related documents in repository/database</p>	<p>Project progress reports Project evaluations Project training reports National policies/regulations Stock Assessment reports Regional</p>	<p>Relevant fisheries managers and female and male stakeholders are properly/timely informed about the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea</p>	<p>Government agencies Implementation partners</p>

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
emerging technologies.	<p>4) Number of MCS system launched or solutions applied at country level following tests and trails</p> <p>5) Number of measures in place to mitigate the impacts of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear.</p>	<p>4) 0 x MCS systems launched or solutions applied at country level</p> <p>5) 0 x measures in place to mitigate impacts of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear</p>	<p>4) 2 x MCS systems launched or solutions applied at country level</p> <p>5) 2 x measures in place to mitigate impacts of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear</p>	<p>4) 3 x MCS systems launched or solutions applied at country level</p> <p>5) 3 x measures in place to mitigate impacts of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear</p>	<p>strategies</p> <p>Project reviews</p>	<p>Relevant fisheries managers and female and male stakeholders accept incorporating control measures, including with emerging technologies.</p>	

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
<p>Output 2.1: Losses in national economies generated by IUU fishing activities assessed through the application of an ad hoc methodology at the country level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 3 x countries drafted a national plan of action for the fight against IUU fishing drafted; ? 3 x trainings provided on the assessment of IUU fishing for national authorities, ? 2 countries for which an assessment is available <p>Output 2.2: Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 1 fishery for which an IUU quantification is available ? 1x regional document on the status of data related to IUU fishing; ? 1x a regional quantitative survey developed and implemented encompassing IUU related issues at national level; ? 1x IUU spatial risk assessment framework created to estimate the magnitude of IUU fishing vessel activity. <p>Output 2.3: Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and fisheries crimes collected, analysed and disseminated, including through a regional repository</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 15x national legislation related to fisheries management collected and disseminated through GFCM-Lex; ? 8x areas of possible amendment of national legislation identified and analyzed with the national authorities; ? 8x trainings delivered to national authorities for the drafting/amendment of national legislation in line with the GFCM recommendations. <p>Output 2.4: Application of technology in the field of control and surveillance, including small-scale fishing, tested and tailored to the capacity of countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 2x tracking devices (VMS, AIS, gear sensors etc.) identified and deployed in line with regional standards specificities of national fleets and related priorities, including for SSF; ? 1x IUU risk analysis performed through the pilot of technology platforms in order to ease the planning of fisheries control activities; ? 8x national and sub-regional technical trainings organized on MCS and related technologies. <p>Output 2.5: International Plan of action to fight IUU and Regional Plan of Action to fight IUU implemented through national plan of actions, including measures to reduce bycatch and abandoned fishing gear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 3x surveys to identify illegal gears used at the country level developed; ? 4x new fishing gear tested in selected areas to replace illegal gears with new fishing gears in select local fishing communities; ? 15x local fishing communities provided with necessary equipment to retrieve abandoned gears. 							
<p>Component 3: Integrated ecosystem-based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries.</p>							

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
Outcome 3. Healthier marine ecosystems with more productive fisheries in place through the synergistic application of ecosystem-based conservation/management tools and improvements in fisheries tenure governance.	1) Number of essential fish habitats and vulnerable ecosystems identified for protection by area-based management tools	1) 0 x essential fish habitats and vulnerable ecosystems identified for protection by area-based management tools	1) 1 x essential fish habitats and vulnerable ecosystems identified for protection by area-based management tools	1) 2 x essential fish habitats and vulnerable ecosystems identified for protection by area-based management tools	Area-based management plans Monitoring plans Environment reports Adaptation strategies Project progress reports Project evaluations	Relevant fishery governance mechanisms are willing to use productive fisheries ecosystem-based conservation/management tools throughout the project	Government agencies Implementation partners Regional fisheries and environment agencies
	2) Number of new fisheries for which an EBFM process was applied and resulted in proposed management measures	2) 0 new fisheries for which an EBFM process was applied and resulted in proposed management measures	2) 0 new fisheries for which an EBFM process was applied and resulted in proposed management measures	2) 1 new fisheries for which an EBFM process was applied and resulted in proposed management measures			
	3) Number of measures identified to cope with the impacts of stressors on commercial fisheries	3) 0 x measures identified to cope with the impacts of stressors on commercial fisheries	3) 1 x measures identified to cope with the impacts of stressors on commercial fisheries	3) 2 x measures identified to cope with the impacts of stressors on commercial fisheries			
	4) Number of countries with an equal representation of men and women participating in regional training programmes and/or case studies on fisheries tenure	4) 0 x countries participating in regional training programmes and/or case studies on fisheries tenure	4) 0 x countries participating in regional training programmes and/or case studies on fisheries tenure	4) 3 x countries participating in regional training programmes and/or case studies on fisheries tenure			

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
<p>Output 3.1: Area-based and innovative management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 12 x essential fish habitats and vulnerable ecosystems identified for protection by area-based management tools ? 2 x pilot studies to trial innovative gear to 'fish for litter' in view of leveraging fisheries to enhance ecosystem health ? 1 x survey carried out to evaluate the noise emitted by bottom trawlers and its propagation on the sea bottom ? 1 x innovations tested to improve gear selectivity to reduce overexploitation and support enhanced ecosystems ? 1 x regional repository of bycatch mitigation measures <p>Output 3.2: Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries ensured and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 1 x pilot study for the application EBFM in the Black Sea ? 1 x multispecies approach developed for the assessment of small pelagic species in the Black Sea, including climate change drivers ? 1 x innovative methodology trialed to collect information on catch composition of select fisheries <p>Output 3.3: Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and those of other potential stressors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 4 x measures developed and disseminated to mitigate the negative impacts of non-indigenous species and other potential stressors on biodiversity and marine ecosystems ? 1 x Guidelines document for the reduction of discharge of solid wastes from fishing boats drafted <p>Output 3.4: Training programmes and case studies to strengthen national capacity towards the development of fisheries tenure interventions (referring to gender-responsive training programmes and case studies).</p>							
Component 4: Knowledge management and outscaling.							
Outcome 4. Integrated pathways conducive of conservation and	1) Number of major stakeholders involved in project activities in each country	1) 0 x major stakeholders involved in project activities in each country	1) 5 x major stakeholders involved in project activities in each country	1) 5 x major stakeholders involved in project activities in each country	Project progress reports Project evaluations Project	Project's partners cooperate in identifying and sharing	Government agencies Implementation partners

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
sustainable management promoted at the regional and global level.	2) Number of awareness raising communication pieces presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the GFCM-MAP approach.	2) 0 x awareness raising communication pieces presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the GFCM-MAP approach.	2) 6 x awareness raising communication pieces presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the GFCM-MAP approach.	2) 12 x awareness raising communication pieces presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the GFCM-MAP approach.	training reports National and regional meeting reports Project reports. Strategies	lessons learned and successful policies and practices on conservation and sustainable fishery management. Growing international attention to conservation and sustainable fishery management and political stability in the Black Sea Basin	
	3) Number of outreach and communication strategies developed and under implementation	3) 0 x outreach and communication strategy developed and under implementation	3) 1 x outreach and communication strategy developed and under implementation	3) 1 x outreach and communication strategy developed and under implementation			
	4) Number of meetings attended at the regional and global level as relevant to coordinate and raise awareness among co-financing partners and to participate in GEF relevant initiatives	4) 0 x meetings attended at the regional and global level as relevant to coordinate and raise awareness among co-financing partners and to participate in GEF relevant initiatives	4) 5 x meetings attended at the regional and global level as relevant to coordinate and raise awareness among co-financing partners and to participate in GEF relevant initiatives	4) 10 x meetings attended at the regional and global level as relevant to coordinate and raise awareness among co-financing partners and to participate in GEF relevant initiatives			

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term milestone	Final Target	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
<p>Output 4.1: Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 3 x countries where national FishEBM Med/Post 2020 SAPBIO gender inclusive stakeholder platforms established and/or engaged in the project activities ? 4 x public and private blue economy actors involved in each national platform, 25% of which represents woman associations or are represented by women <p>Output 4.2: Lessons learned and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of aligning different national and regional priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 24 x awareness raising gender sensitive communication pieces presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the GFCM-MAP approach <p>Output 4.3: Outreach & Communication Strategy developed and implemented, including coordination and awareness-raising meetings with co-financing partners and participation in relevant global GEF related fora (including gender-responsive outreach and communications strategy developed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 1 x gender sensitive outreach & communication and knowledge management action plan developed and implemented ? 50 x gender sensitive information and communication items available through the FishEBM Med knowledge sharing platform ? 15 x meetings attended at the regional and global level as relevant to the attainment of GEF objectives 							

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
STAP's overall assessment: Minor issues to be considered during the project design		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>A significant point of caution is limited progress despite long-standing recognition of the key issues, including GEF involvement from the 1990s. Ambitions are good, but achieving these requires critical examination of the reasons why past efforts have not succeeded and the learning processes required to adapt. Building a solid, shared understanding of the barriers to change is essential to subsequently cultivate interest and demand for any new lessons / insights generated.</p>	<p>While the GEF has invested in addressing pollution issues in the Black Sea, this project is the first investment by GEF into fisheries. Pollution issues are being addressed in two other Black Sea project under GEF8 ? UNDP and the World Bank. This project will coordinate closely with the other two projects to ensure synergies and will share new lessons and insights generated from taking a fisheries focus for the Black Sea. This will generate an ad hoc understanding of barriers to sustainable fisheries in the Black Sea with a targeted focus on this sector.</p>	<p>Part II Section 6b (page 48) describes the coordination between the three agencies.</p>

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Descriptions of innovations are generic, which makes it difficult to identify truly innovative elements at this stage. Passing reference is made to political instability and major pollution incidents, but mitigation regarding political context only addresses security risks, not the difficulties of influencing change when governments have varying levels of commitment and divergent incentives. No mitigation measures are listed for pollution.</p>	<p>Innovation is provided in the form of increased and coordinated cooperation between and within governments and research institutes in the region specifically for the fisheries sector, which a GEF funded project ? for the first time - will significantly contribute to enhancing and accelerating by fully delegating execution of activities to the competent RFMOs. Descriptions are linked to some notable examples of such innovations and include concerted and standardized regional surveys-at-sea as well as capacity building actions foreseeing the exchange of scientific expertise among beneficiary countries on specific issues such as age-reading and stock assessment methodology.</p> <p>Mitigation measures for the political instability related risks have been better considered during the PPG phase so as to reformulate the wording. As for pollution incidents, since there is another GEF-funded initiative in the BS (the one implemented by UNDP which also addressed this matter in previously funded GEF interventions for the Black Sea), the mitigation measure revolves around closely coordinating with this project which should provide relevant steering in the context of fisheries.</p>	<p>Part II Section 1b (3) (page 24) and (5) (page 29) for Component 1 describes the overall innovation of the project while Componenta 1 and 3 in the Results Framework (Annex 1A) provides a description of innovative actions proposed for the project.</p> <p>The Risk Table has been edited to reflect the mitigation measure for political instability (page 42)</p> <p>The question of pollution issues ? this is addressed above</p>
<p>Part 1: Project Information</p>		
<p>Project components: A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project?s objectives?</p>		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Extensive development and high pollution in the basin, plus recent volatility in commercial fish catches, underline difficulty of restoring the fishery.</p>	<p>The GFCM is aware of the difficulties restoring the fisheries of the Black Sea, however, countries have been consistent in their commitment to improve the sustainability of fisheries. While to a great extent they lack the knowledge for best practices, and have not yet meaningfully engaged the private sector to shift to new best practices, this project can overcome this hurdle by involving a wide array of stakeholders to facilitate effective dialogue with a specific focus on market mechanisms that would accelerate the uptake of better fisheries management at national and regional scales.</p>	<p>The results of these discussions in the PPG phase are reflected in Part II Section 1b (3) (page 24) and (5) (page 29, and the Results Framework (Annex 1A) for Components 1 and 3; the pollution aspects are noted above</p>
<p>Serious attention is needed to the shortcomings of past investments in the fishery.</p>	<p>In the past, technical and scientific cooperation among Black Sea countries was limited and far from straightforward. The GFCM has started acting towards facilitating scientific and technical exchanges through coordinated actions and capacity-building activities. The results of these initial efforts are striking and the GEF project will serve as a catalyst for enhanced cooperation and the creation of a level playing field among Black Sea countries. Via the involvement of the private sector and by creating a better understanding of the market potential of a sustainable fisheries sector in the beneficiary countries, this project will stimulate investments which, in the past, have been very limited (both private and public).</p>	<p>Part II Section 1b (3) (page 24) and (5) (page 30) for Components 2 and 4, and Section (4) note the greater engagement of the private sector in investing in IUU as well as in communication and outreach activities for overall investment in the sector.</p>

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
Part II: Project Justification		
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects		
<p>Significant point of caution is limited progress despite long-standing recognition of the key issues: "Since the late 1990s the littoral States have worked together thanks to past GEF interventions aimed at setting priorities related to national and transboundary environmental concerns?". Arguably, the TDA as well as the SAP, despite calling for concerted actions to address fisheries related challenges, have not been able to prompt adequate responses in the region in this respect.</p> <p>Additional quantification of baseline [benefits] is required with reference to key dimensions of anticipated change</p>	<p>While the SAP has called for concerted action, often the SAP was formulated without the participation of the fisheries sector and hence limited commitment on their part. Despite COVID restrictions, during the PPG phase, the project has engaged the fisheries sector (private and public) to gain their commitment to the project as indicated in the co-finance generated to date. This fed information into the formulation of a stakeholder engagement plan where additional quantification of benefits is accounted for.</p>	<p>The PPG discussions are reflected in Part II Section 2 (page 35) and Annex I2.</p>
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project		
<p>Theory of Change diagram is provided. Would benefit from more explicit linkages made between "outcomes, transitional states, and impact drivers?". In what respect for example is "sustainability" a driver of reversing exploitation of marine resources, and how does that relate to the management interventions envisioned?</p>	<p>This has been taken into account in the reformulation of the information in the proposed alternative scenario.</p>	<p>New Theory of Change provided in Part II Section 1b (3) and illustrated in Figure 9.</p>
<p>More attention to assumptions is required, even if these are preliminary and will be queried during PPG stage as noted.</p>	<p>This has been possible during the PPG phase.</p>	<p>The assumptions identified in the PPG phase have been added to the Theory of Change (Figure 9)</p>

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Ambitions are good but achieving these requires critical examination of the reasons why past efforts have not succeeded and learning processes required to adapt. ?A participatory approach will create an environment conducive of learning where fishers will be directly involved so as to reduce the risk of conflicts over fish stocks?</p>	<p>During the PPG phase, consultations were conducted remotely in each beneficiary country and those consultations included the desire to share information between neighboring countries. Unfortunately due to COVID, a regional workshop was not possible, however, it is envisaged that the inception workshop planned as soon as possible after project endorsement which will include a session on what actions this project can support to do a critical examination of past efforts. The Knowledge Management plan includes provisions for yearly project management reviews to monitor progress, but more importantly to share lessons and insights generated in each country and not necessarily just within this project, but broadly across all previous relevant projects. This information will also be instrumental to the critical examination while fostering a participatory approach.</p>	<p>The changes based on PPG discussions are reflected in Part II Section 1b (3) (page 24) and (5) (page 29) for Component 4, and Part II Section 8 (page 50) and the Result Framework</p>
<p>5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing</p>		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Difficult to judge likelihood of success; the approach recognizes considerable risk. The reasoning entails an aspect of linking existing efforts and system disruption: ?in the absence of such a GEF intervention the status quo would not be adequately challenged and that under the business as usual scenario??</p>	<p>In the absence of such a GEF intervention the support to fisheries agencies to transition to best practices and to work with the private sector to commit to improved fisheries sustainability, including through a range of measures from improved compliance to market incentives, would not be possible, especially during recovery from COVID. Therefore the status quo would not be adequately challenged under the business as usual scenario. This is the rationale of the wording in the PIF which is better elaborated and phrased in the final project document taking into account the STAP comment.</p>	<p>In preparing the Project Document, Part II 1b, Section (5) (Incremental Reasoning (page 38) and through PPG phase discussions with countries, this section has been expanded to better describe activities and possible outcomes from the GEF interventions.</p>
<p>6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCE/SCCF)</p>		
<p>Indicators, or methodologies will require further specification</p>	<p>During the PPG phase, in consultation with countries and partners, the methodologies were further elaborated and the indicators rationalized in line with available resources (human and financial) and taking into consideration the impact COVID is having on the capacity of countries.</p>	<p>Annex 1A edited to reflect further specification</p>
<p>7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up</p>		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Descriptions of innovations are generic, which makes it difficult to identify truly innovative elements at this stage.</p>	<p>The main descriptions of innovations are provided in component 1 - which describes the proposed value chains work which includes building on further exploring the feasibility and market potential of certification, along with traceability, especially in light of COVID impacts to value chains. This should indeed provide opportunities to experiment ? and in component 2, which will set the ground to demonstrate how emerging technologies can be used in the fight against IUU and to enhance the scope of MCS operations, including for SSF fleets.</p>	<p>Issue of innovation is addressed above.</p>
<p>Transformational change is required, given longstanding political and institutional barriers.</p>	<p>Significant groundwork has been laid in recent years by the GFCM to initiate a transformational change linked to enhanced cooperation and technical and scientific coordination. This has been heralded by the adoption of the 2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration under the auspices of the GFCM which has acted as the building block towards addressing the shortcomings posed by the longstanding political and institutional barriers to Black Sea fisheries in the past. The initial surge has presently reached a point of maturity that requires additional investment to build on previous work and accelerate the ongoing transformational change.</p>	<p>Part II, Sections 1b (3) (page 24) and (5) (page 29) for Components 1, 2, 3 and 4, and the Results Framework (Annex 1a) reflect these new developments</p>
<p>2. Stakeholders</p>		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
Stakeholder roles are described in broad categories, with useful reference to relevant outputs (table 3), but additional specification of examples of key actors would be helpful. This includes key civil society organizations and private sector actors.	The stakeholder engagement plan provides more detailed information as co-financing letters have been obtained during the PPG phase from several stakeholders.	Part II Section 1b (3) (page 24) and (5) (page 29) for Component 4, and Part II Section 8 (page 50) and the Result Framework describe stakeholder roles and engagement in further detail.
3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment		
Appropriate mention is made of gendered roles in fisheries value chains. Gender mainstreaming is, however, discussed in mainly abstract terms, which makes it difficult to assess the distinctiveness of the proposed approach.	A Gender Analysis and Action Plan was prepared during the PPG phase and methodologies were identified for mainstreaming a gender-sensitive approach in fisheries work	A Gender Action Plan has been prepared for the project and is summarized in Part II Section 3.2 (page 39)
5. Risks		
Passing reference is made to political instability and major pollution incidents, but mitigation regarding political context only addresses security risks, not the difficulties of influencing change when governments have varying levels of commitment and divergent incentives. No mitigation measures are listed for pollution.	Mitigation measures for the political instability related risks have been better considered during the PPG phase so as to reformulate the wording. As for pollution incidents, since there is another GEF-funded initiative in the BS (the one implemented by UNDP which also addressed this matter in previously funded GEF interventions for the Black Sea), the mitigation measure revolves around closely coordinating with this project which should provide relevant steering in the context of fisheries.	Risk table has been edited to reflect finding during the PPG phase (page 42) Pollution concerns were responded to above.
Climate risks have not been assessed specifically; this is noted as part of plans for PPG stage.	The PPG phase provided an opportunity to look more closely at climate change and this has now been incorporated in relevant sections of the final document.	Changes to incorporate climate change added to Risk Table (page 42)
6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Difficult to assess learning from prior projects; explicit identification of lessons is needed.</p>	<p>The significant improvement in the results obtained from the technical and scientific point of view that have stemmed from the increasing efforts towards ensuring enhanced cooperation and coordination provide a tangible example of lessons learned from previous project. Thus initially imperceptible improvements became more and more evident with the progressive intensification of coordinated activities and consistent participation in Black Sea initiatives by beneficiary countries. This project will rely on partnerships, with particular regard to the partnerships to be promoted with the World Bank and UNDP as the implementing agencies of the other two GEF-funded projects in the Black Sea, so that lessons learned by these agencies can be captured and lead to best practices to coordination. During the PPG phase, efforts have been made to coordinate with these two agencies and this has promoted a positive attitude and willingness to actively cooperate during the implementation phase. Even at the level of the executing arrangements, the presence of representatives from these agencies is foreseen.</p>	<p>Part II Sections 6a and b (page 60) describes the planned efforts to improve coordination between agencies based on lessons learned that emerged during the PPG phase.</p>
<p>8. Knowledge management. Outline "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, and how it will contribute to the project's overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant</p>		

STAP comment	Initial agency response	Response at submission
<p>Knowledge management activities are integrated into the design, but there is minimal indication of the approach envisioned. In particular, given the depth of prior experience and apparently durable barriers to change, the KM approach needs to enable authentic spaces for probing what has not worked and what can be done differently. Building a solid, shared understanding of these barriers to change is essential to subsequently cultivate interest and demand for any new lessons / insights generated. A preliminary indication of KM metrics would be helpful.</p>	<p>As already indicated, taking into account the STAP comment the Knowledge Management plan has made provisions for yearly project management reviews with all member countries to monitor progress but more importantly to share lessons and insights generated in each country and not necessarily just within this project but broadly across all relevant projects nationally and regionally. In particular, the lessons learned from the successful experience of the GFCM's BlackSea4Fish technical cooperation project will be enhanced and extended to other work in the context of this GEF project.</p>	<p>Part II Section 6 (page 50), Knowledge Management, was edited to reflect the discussions during the PPG phase with a focus on sharing lessons learned.</p>

Countries Comments:

The following requirements are taken into account during the design of the final project proposal:

<u>Comment</u>	<u>Response</u>
<p>Germany: The proposal identifies overfishing as one of the main barriers for sustainability in the Black Sea. The overall project objective is to reverse the overexploitation of select commercial living marine resources by enhancing the capacity of Black Sea countries to manage fisheries, including through the application of ecosystem-based management tools. Germany would like to seek clarification on which of the four components are contributing to the overall goal of reducing overexploitation and to which degree. For example, component 1 (strengthening the fisheries sector) would not appear to reduce exploitation.</p>	<p>Components 1, 2 and 3 have outputs that will contribute to the goal of reducing overexploitation: Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 will improve the data and therefore the assessments, especially for fishing sectors that are not well surveyed so far; Component 2 which is focused on reducing IUU will reduce exploitation in one area of stock assessment where estimates are highly variable; Output 3.3 will improve our understanding of the non-indigenous species and better account for their impact on other fisheries which can be better incorporated in targeted species assessment for improved management decisions to reduce overexploitation.</p>

Germany: Related to this, core indicator 8 proposes 'overexploited tonnes' as the metric to assess that overexploited fisheries move to more sustainable levels. Overexploitation has decreased in the Black Sea in the last years, but remains a widespread concern, as it is highlighted in the proposal itself. As there seem to be stock assessments available for priority species, F/FMSY, B/BMSY or other common reference points would appear to be a more meaningful metric than landings. Germany requests to either adapt the core indicator 8 or to include an explanation why landings instead of reference points from stock assessments have to be used and how the project will improve such assessments in the future.

Unfortunately, core indicator 8 is a GEF corporate indicator and there is no scope to modify it in any way. Nevertheless, where stock assessment information is available for fisheries included in the project, other measures of stock abundance such as F/FMSY, B/BMSY or other common reference points will be included in progress reporting in addition to indicator 8. Outputs 1.1 and 1.2, all outputs for Component 2, and Output 3.3 will contribute to improving the data and ultimately the assessments.

**ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG).
(Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:**

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: USD 150,000				
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i>			
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent to date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>	<i>Balance</i>
International consultants	81,000	68,109	47,975	(35,084)
Travel	55,000	-	-	55,000
Workshops	11,500	-	33,794	(22,294)
Expendable Procurement sub-total	2,500	122	-	2,378
Total	150,000	68,231	81,769	0

ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

Please attach the geographical location of the project area, if possible.

46°33' - 40°56' N and 27°27' - 41°42' E



ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Fisheries and Ecosystem Based Management for the Black Sea - (FishEBM BS)
GEF Project ID: 10558
Project budget (2022-2025)

FAO COST CATEGORIES	COMPONENT 1 - STRENGTHENED CAPACITY TO MANAGE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON SSF	COMPONENT 2 - ENHANCED INTEGRATION OF EMERGING MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST IUU FISHING	COMPONENT 3 - INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT TOOLS AND ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES	COMPONENT 4 - KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND OUTSCALING	SUB-TOTAL COMP. 1-4	M&E	PMC	TOTAL GEF	GFCM	TOTAL GEF
	TOTAL Outcome 1	TOTAL Outcome 2	TOTAL Outcome 3	TOTAL Outcome 4						
5011 Salaries professionals										
1) Project Technical Manager (P-3 or equivalent)	78,552	53,500	42,800	32,100	206,952		107,256	314,208	314,208	314,208
2) Finance/Administrative Officer (P-2 or equivalent)	46,148	37,432	37,557	0	121,137		130,839	251,976	251,976	251,976
5011 Sub-total salaries professionals	124,700	90,932	80,357	32,100	328,089	0	238,095	566,184	566,184	566,184
5013 Consultants										
3) MSE Specialist (M&E)	0	0	0	0	0	100,000		100,000	100,000	100,000
4) Technical programme specialist(s)	33,000	22,000	22,000	0	77,000			77,000	77,000	77,000
5) Technical operations specialist	54,000	36,000	36,000	0	126,000			126,000	126,000	126,000
6) SSF experts including methodology backstopping for data collection and stakeholder	158,000	0	0	0	158,000			158,000	158,000	158,000
7) International consultants Black Sea surveys-at-sea and research programmes	160,000	0	0	0	160,000			160,000	160,000	160,000
8) Experts on MSE case studies for data poor contexts	50,000	0	0	0	50,000			50,000	50,000	50,000
9) Expert on selectivity and bycatch mitigation measures	40,000	0	0	0	40,000			40,000	40,000	40,000
10) International consultants on Legislation, including GFCM/Lex Coordinator	0	105,000	0	0	105,000			105,000	105,000	105,000
11) Senior consultant IUUMCS	0	90,000	0	0	90,000			90,000	90,000	90,000
12) IUU experts (data/information analysis), including testing of fishing gear	0	50,000	0	0	50,000			50,000	50,000	50,000
13) Expert(s) on EBFM approaches (including for FRAs identification/establishment, marine litter	0	0	140,000	0	140,000			140,000	140,000	140,000
14) Experts on multispecies monitoring and catch composition	0	0	70,000	0	70,000			70,000	70,000	70,000
15) GEF CoM&E coordinator	0	0	0	116,200	116,200			116,200	116,200	116,200
16) CoM&E experts (including writers, editors, graphic-web product design and video-makers)	8,500	0	0	49,235	57,735			57,735	57,735	57,735
Sub-total International Consultants	503,500	303,000	268,000	165,435	1,239,935	100,000	0	1,339,935	1,339,935	1,339,935
17) SSF national consultants (including field work, SSF co-management, value chain, stakeholder engagement)	274,388	0	0	0	274,388			274,388	274,388	274,388
18) National consultants on population dynamics and stock identification	80,000	0	0	0	80,000			80,000	80,000	80,000
19) National consultants MSE	50,000	0	0	0	50,000			50,000	50,000	50,000
20) National consultants IUU/Legislation	0	80,000	0	0	80,000			80,000	80,000	80,000
21) National consultants for EBFM pilot in the Black Sea	0	0	40,000	0	40,000			40,000	40,000	40,000
22) National consultants on multispecies monitoring and catch composition	0	0	50,000	0	50,000			50,000	50,000	50,000
Sub-total national Consultants	404,388	80,000	90,000	0	574,388	0	0	574,388	574,388	574,388
5013 Sub-total Consultants	907,888	383,000	358,000	165,435	1,814,323	100,000	0	1,914,323	1,914,323	1,914,323
5014 Contracts										
Independent Mid-term Review (MTR)(M&E)	0	0	0	0	0	60,000		60,000	60,000	60,000
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE)(M&E)	0	0	0	0	0	65,000		65,000	65,000	65,000
Black Sea research programmes on population dynamics, stock identification and life cycles	400,000	0	0	0	400,000			400,000	400,000	400,000
LoA(s) for selectivity pilot study in the Black Sea	80,000	0	0	0	80,000			80,000	80,000	80,000
LoA(s) for catch certification schemes	25,000	0	0	0	25,000			25,000	25,000	25,000
LoA for IUU assessment and risk analysis tools, including development of online platform	0	331,356	0	0	331,356			331,356	331,356	331,356
Contract for VMSI-VMS, ERS devices and related services	0	200,000	0	0	200,000			200,000	200,000	200,000
LoA for design of online system for fishing gears	0	30,000	0	0	30,000			30,000	30,000	30,000
LoA for innovative methodologies for data collection on catch composition of select fisheries	0	0	40,000	0	40,000			40,000	40,000	40,000
5014 Sub-total Contracts	505,000	561,356	40,000	0	1,106,356	125,000	0	1,231,356	1,231,356	1,231,356
5021 Travel										
Annual Steering Committee meetings, including field missions (M&E)	0	0	0	37,500	37,500	30,000		67,500	67,500	67,500
Travel to attend stakeholder trainings on data use and gender-sensitive approaches	20,000	0	0	0	20,000			20,000	20,000	20,000
Travel to attend workshop on SSF co-management	10,000	0	0	0	10,000			10,000	10,000	10,000
SSF field missions	10,000	0	0	0	10,000			10,000	10,000	10,000
Travel to attend workshops with national authorities (IUU and national legislations)	0	160,000	0	0	160,000			160,000	160,000	160,000
Travel to attend UNODC coordination workshop on fisheries crime	0	20,000	0	0	20,000			20,000	20,000	20,000
Travel to attend field missions on MCS and related technologies (national and sub-regional level, including training and FMC visits)	0	30,000	0	0	30,000			30,000	30,000	30,000
EBFM Black Sea pilot stakeholders meetings	0	0	70,000	0	70,000			70,000	70,000	70,000
Travel to attend workshop on Black Sea fisheries tenure	0	0	15,000	0	15,000			15,000	15,000	15,000
Travel to attend knowledge exchange workshops	0	0	0	18,000	18,000			18,000	18,000	18,000
5021 Sub-total Travel	40,000	210,000	85,000	55,500	390,500	30,000	0	420,500	420,500	420,500
5023 Training										
Black Sea surveys-at-sea	250,000	0	0	0	250,000			250,000	250,000	250,000
Surveys on vulnerable benthic ecosystems protected or to be protected by FRAs (including for	0	0	180,000	0	180,000			180,000	180,000	180,000
5023 Sub-total Training	250,000	0	180,000	0	430,000	0	0	430,000	430,000	430,000
5024 Expendable procurement										
Procurement for value chain interventions at the local level	70,000	0	0	0	70,000			70,000	70,000	70,000
Awareness-raising materials for training with national authorities on national legislations	0	10,000	0	0	10,000			10,000	10,000	10,000
Awareness material on the marking of fishing gears	0	10,000	0	0	10,000			10,000	10,000	10,000
Procurement of communication products	0	0	0	27,087	27,087			27,087	27,087	27,087
5024 Sub-total expendable procurement	70,000	20,000	0	27,087	117,087	0	0	117,087	117,087	117,087
5025 Non-expendable procurement										
Equipment for Black Sea surveys-at-sea and research programmes	100,000	0	0	0	100,000			100,000	100,000	100,000
Contract for VMSI-VMS, ERS devices and related services (equipment)	0	55,000	0	0	55,000			55,000	55,000	55,000
Procurement of testing legal fishing gears and related equipment	0	115,000	0	0	115,000			115,000	115,000	115,000
5025 Sub-total non-expendable procurement	100,000	170,000	0	0	270,000	0	0	270,000	270,000	270,000
5027 Technical Support Services										
Terminal Report (M&E)	0	0	0	0	0	6,550		6,550	6,550	6,550
5027 Sub-total Technical Support Services (TSS for Terminal Report only)	0	0	0	0	0	6,550	0	6,550	6,550	6,550
5028 General Operating Expenses (GOE)										
Lab consumables for pilot studies on interactions between marine litter and fisheries	0	0	30,000	0	30,000			30,000	30,000	30,000
5028 Sub-total General Operating Expenses (GOE)	0	0	30,000	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	30,000
5050 - GOE - Internal Common Services										
Translation of communication products	0	0	0	14,000	14,000			14,000	14,000	14,000
5050 Sub-total GOE - Internal Common Services	0	0	0	14,000	14,000	0	0	14,000	14,000	14,000
TOTAL	1,997,588	1,435,288	773,357	294,122	4,500,355	261,550	238,095	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
Subtotal Component 1 - SSF	1,997,588									
Subtotal Component 2 - IUUMCS	1,435,288									
Subtotal Component 3 - EBM tool and ecosystem approach	773,357									
Subtotal Component 4 - Knowledge Management and outscaling	555,672									
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) budget										
Project subtotal	4,761,905									
Project Management Cost (PMC at 5%)								238,095		
Total GEF financing								5,000,000		

Kindly note that the total of Component 4 includes \$261,550 allocated for M&E

ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

Instructions. Please submit an finalized termsheet in this section. The NGI Program Call for Proposals provided a template in Annex A of the Call for Proposals that can be used by the Agency. Agencies can use their own termsheets but must add sections on Currency Risk, Co-financing Ratio and Financial Additivity as defined in the template provided in Annex A of the Call for proposals. Termsheets submitted at CEO endorsement stage should include final terms and conditions of the financing.

n/a

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

Instructions. Please submit a reflows table as provided in Annex B of the NGI Program Call for Proposals and the Trustee excel sheet for reflows (as provided by the Secretariat or the Trustee) in the Document Section of the CEO endorsement. The Agency is required to quantify any expected financial return/gains/interests earned on non-grant instruments that will be transferred to the GEF Trust Fund as noted in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy. Partner Agencies will be required to comply with the reflows procedures established in their respective Financial Procedures Agreement with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

n/a

ANNEX H: (For NGI only) Agency Capacity to generate reflows

Instructions. The GEF Agency submitting the CEO endorsement request is required to respond to any questions raised as part of the PIF review process that required clarifications on the Agency Capacity to manage reflows. This Annex seeks to demonstrate Agencies' capacity and eligibility to administer NGI resources as established in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy, GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, June 9, 2017 (Annex 5).

n/a