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

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10558

Project Type
FSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
- ☐CBIT
- ☐NGI

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

Countries
Regional, Georgia, Turkey, Ukraine

Agency(ies)
FAO

Other Executing Partner(s)	Executing Partner Type

Other Executing Partner(s)
General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

Executing Partner Type
Others

GEF Focal Area
International Waters

Taxonomy
Influencing models, Type of Engagement, Private Sector, Stakeholders, Communications, Gender results areas, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Acquaculture, Food Security, Land Degradation, Focal Areas, International Waters, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Beneficiaries, Capacity Development, Climate Change, Enabling Activities, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Climate Change Adaptation, Livelihoods, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Large Marine Ecosystems, Learning, Coastal, Fisheries, Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Species, Invasive Alien Species, Threatened Species, Mainstreaming, Demonstrate innovative approache, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Consultation, Participation, Awareness Raising, Education, Behavior change, Local Communities, SMEs, Large corporations, Women groups, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Access and control over natural resources, Participation and leadership, Access to benefits and services, Knowledge Generation, Innovation

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation
Climate Change Mitigation 0

Climate Change Adaptation
Climate Change Adaptation 1

Duration
48 In Months

Agency Fee($)
475,000

Submission Date
3/23/2020

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
IW-1-2	GET	5,000,000	25,000,000
	Total Project Cost ($)	**5,000,000**	**25,000,000**

B. Indicative 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	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 1: Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF.	Technical Assistance	**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. *Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]* *OUTPUT 1.1: number of countries where regular data collection campaigns/surveys have been carried out to collect biological and socio-economic data* *(Baseline: 0* *Potential target: 3)* *OUTPUT 1.2: percentage of priority species for which the quality of stock assessments has improved* *(Baseline: 0* *Potential target: 70%) and number of management plans/measures adopted* *(Baseline: 0* *Potential Target: 4)* *OUTPUT 1.3: number of value chains studies carried out*	**Output 1.1:** Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socio-economic analysis. **Output 1.2:** Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including for SSF and recreational fisheries. **Output 1.3:** Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for	GET	2,242,857	11,374,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 2: Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing.	Technical Assistance	**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. *Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]* *OUTPUT 2.1: number of countries where a methodology for the assessment of IUU fishing has been applied (Baseline: 0* *Potential target: 3)* *OUTPUT 2.2: percentage of integration of IUU estimates in stock assessments of main commercial species* *(Baseline: 0* *Potential target: 70%)* *OUTPUT 2.3:* *number of national legislation retrieved and made available on a regional repository/database* *(Baseline: 0* *Potential target: 20)* *OUTPUT 2.4:*	**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. **Output 2.2:** Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments. **Output 2.3:** Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and	GET	1,528,571	7,916,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 3: Integrated ecosystem based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries	Technical Assistance	**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. *Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]* *OUTPUT 3.1:* *number of new area-based management tools in place* *(Baseline: 0* *Proposed target: 5)* *OUTPUT 3.2:* *percentage of integration number of GES for commercial fisheries into monitoring plans in place* *(Baseline: 0* *Proposed target: 70%) and number of adaptation strategies to climate change formulated* *(Baseline: 0* *Proposed target: 2)* *OUTPUT 3.3:*	**Output 3.1:** Area-based management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity. **Output 3.2:** Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries ensured and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated. **Output 3.3:** Measures identified to cope with the negative effects	GET	714,287	3,558,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
Component 4: Knowledge management and outscaling	Technical Assistance	**Outcome 4:** Integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management promoted at the regional and global level. *Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include:* ***[1]*** *OUTPUT 4.1:* *Number of experience notes and publications to support investments* *(Baseline: 0* *Proposed target:* *4)* *OUTPUT 4.2:* *Number of* *awareness raising communication tools presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the proposed project* *(Baseline: 0* *Proposed target: 10)* *OUTPUT 4.3:* *Number of outreach and communication strategy*	**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. **Output 4.2:** Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of coordination in the implementation	GET	276,190	1,972,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
				Sub Total ($)	**4,761,905**	**24,820,000**
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
				GET	238,095	180,000
				Sub Total($)	**238,095**	**180,000**
				Total Project Cost($)	**5,000,000**	**25,000,000**

C. Indicative 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($)
GEF Agency	GFCM	Grant	Investment mobilized	7,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	Investment mobilized	3,000,000
Donor Agency	EU	Grant	Investment mobilized	4,000,000
Government	Georgia	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,700,000
Government	Turkey	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	5,400,000
Government	Ukraine	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	2,700,000
Government	Georgia	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	300,000
Government	Turkey	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	600,000
Government	Ukraine	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	300,000
			Total Project Cost($)	**25,000,000**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

-The GFCM mobilized investment consists of ongoing GFCM executed projects that focus on harmonizing national measures and policies in its Member States on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. -The FAO currently runs several projects in the Black Sea region aiming at integrating the role of fisheries and aquaculture in blue economy policies, under its Blue Growth Initiative. Relevant (i.e. when covering the same time frame and geography) projects have been mobilized as co-financing. -The EU contribution includes projects in participating countries, financed through DG-MARE and DG-NEAR, that respectively stimulate blue economy, support sustainable fisheries and/or environment and climate action. -Georgia’s mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection in support to priorities relevant to the components in the proposed project. -Turkey’s mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to priorities relevant to the components in the proposed project. -Ukraine’s mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to priorities relevant to the components in the proposed project.

D. Indicative 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($)
FAO	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	5,000,000	475,000	5,475,000
				Total GEF Resources($)	**5,000,000**	**475,000**	**5,475,000**

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required

☐

PPG Amount ($)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

14,250

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

Core Indicators

Indicator 7 Number of shared water ecosystems (fresh or marine) 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			
Count	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Indicator 7.1 Level of Transboundary Diagonostic 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 Select SWE	3				

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 Select SWE	3				

Indicator 7.3 Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministeral 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 Select SWE	1				

Indicator 7.4 Level of engagement in IWLEARN throgh 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 Select SWE	1				

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			

Fishery Details

Engraulis encrasicolus: 240,000 MT Squalus acanthias: 160 MT Trachurus spp: 34,000 MT Mullus Barbatus: 1,300 MT Sprattus sprattus: 39,000 MT Merlangius merlangus: 11,000 MT Scophthaimus maximus 1,400 MT The methodology applied to provide the expected level at the PIF stage takes into account the total landings for each species listed under Annex B multiplied by the percentage of stock assessed that are considered in overexploitation by the GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea (where also, among others, JRC scientists participate). This results in turn in an estimate of “overexploited tonnes” by priority species identified. Out of this “overexploited tonnes” amount, it is assumed that the proposed project will be addressing roughly 80% at the PIF stage which adds up to the total in Table F.

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

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

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)

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.[1] Also, beyond a certain depth, the Black Sea is anoxic, one of the peculiar characteristics of this basin.

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 (see figure 1 below). Other commercial fisheries, such as sturgeon, are considered to be even more threatened by human impacts as they are anandromous species linked to the Danube river ecosystem.[2] 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 accellerating the impacts of climate change and the outbreak of non-indigenous species. This was already diagnosed roughly 25 years ago by the Black Sea 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.

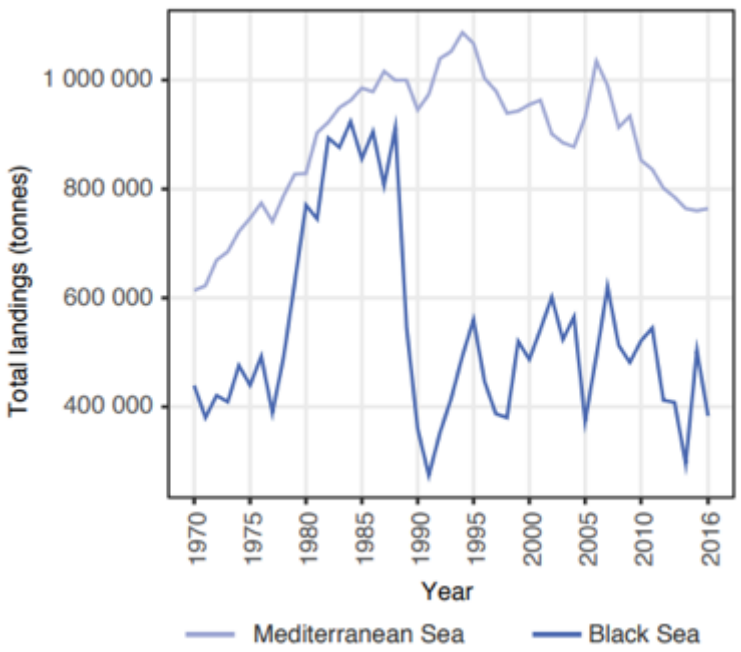


Figure 1 – Trends in landings in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, by year, 1970-2016

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 several thousands of people, 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 and Ukraine – see figure 2 below).

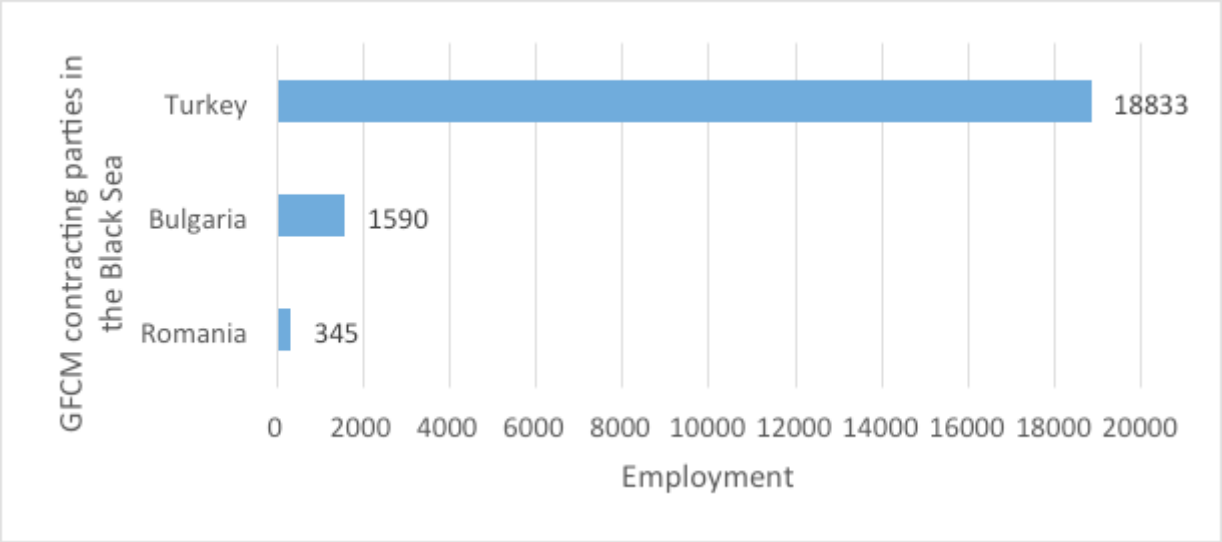


Figure 2 – Total employment onboard fishing vessels in the Black Sea[3]

Currently, more than 90% of Black Sea fisheries are considered to be 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 74% of employment in fisheries in the Black Sea, but only account for 49% 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, despite SSF being generally considered to be more selective and to have a lower environmental impact (see figure 5 below).[4] This lower remuneration points to a 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-à-vis the markets, as well as limited access to financial instruments in order to further invest in their activity. On the other hand, these vulnerabilities point to opportunities where simple 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, in light of available information on their value, the littoral States will likely accrue significant benefits.

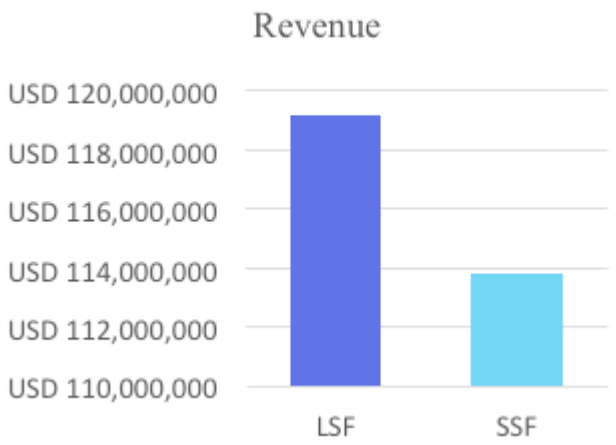


Figure 3 – Total revenue from large- and small-scale fisheries in the Black Sea[5]

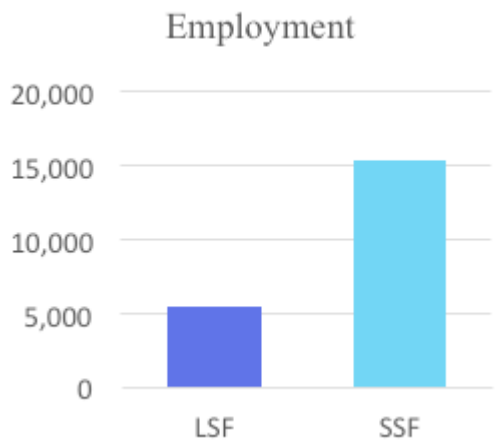


Figure 4 – Total employment in large- and small-scale fisheries in the Black Sea4

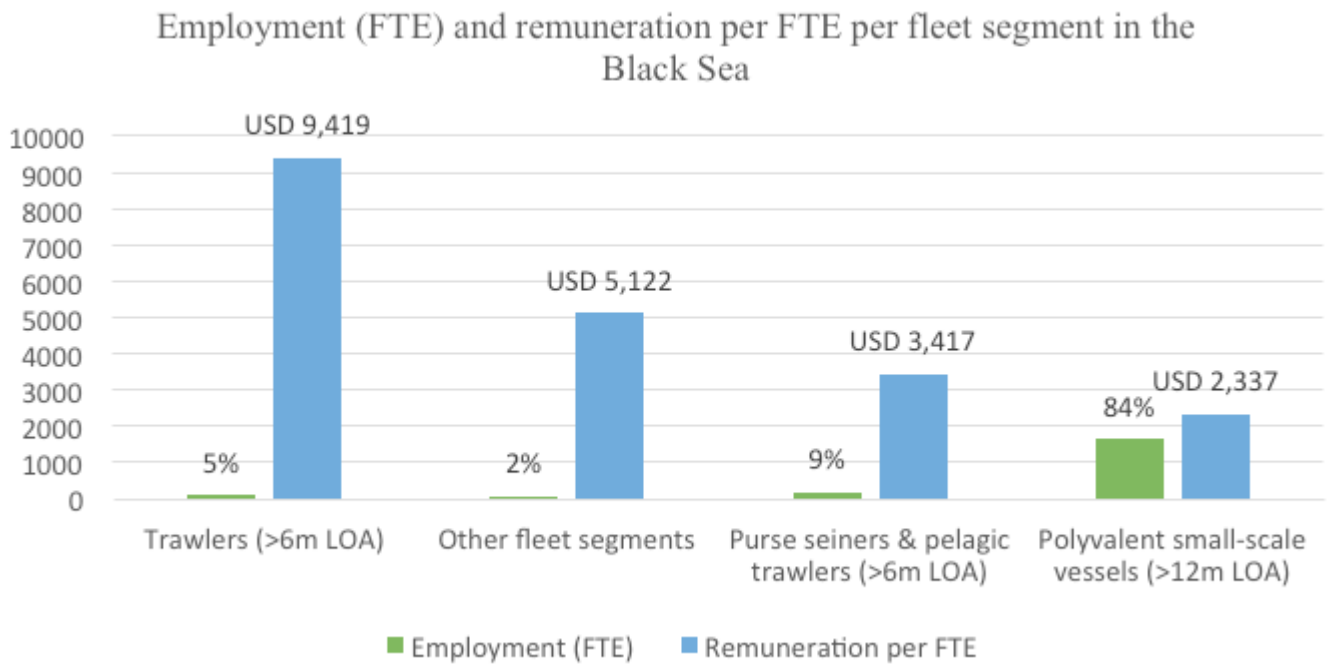
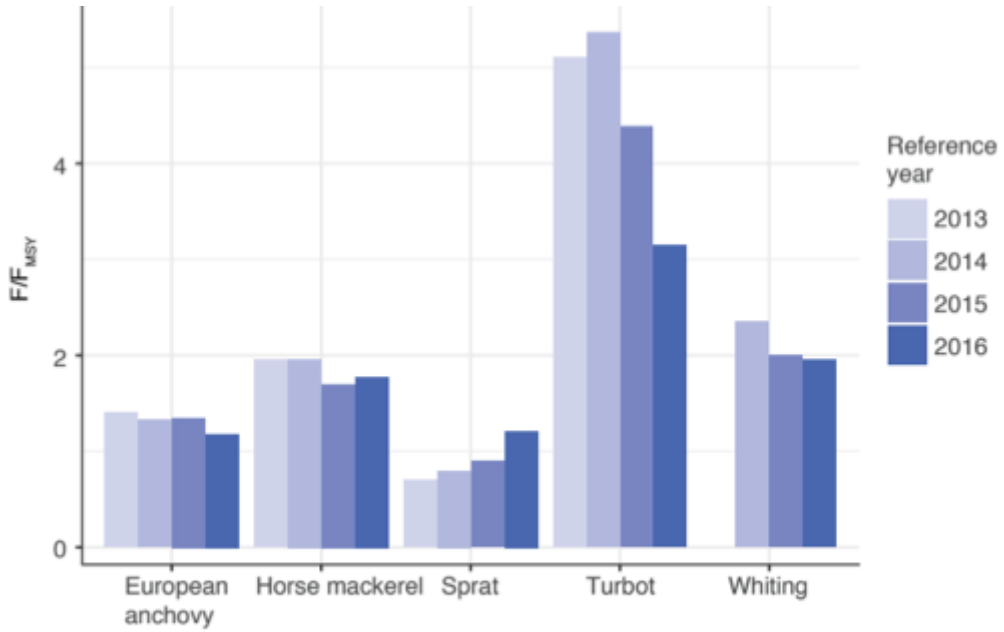


Figure 5 – Remuneration per full-time equivalent by fleet segment in the Black Sea[6]

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 two littoral States currently exporting more fish than they import (Russian Federation and Turkey[7]) – public and private sector investments, particularly in SSF, could generate a high return.[8] 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 Black Sea fisheries to provide socio-economic benefits for coastal communities. 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 taken into account. According to the latest assessments (see figure 6 below), a majority of Black Sea 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). Despite the high number of stocks in overexploitation, there are positive signs, as the rate of overexploitation has

slightly decreased since 2014 (see figure 7 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, will 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.



Note: The index of sprat for 2016 is an average of the two ratios obtained from two different stock assessment methodologies.

Figure 6 – Overexploitation index ($F_{current}$ / F_{MSY}) of five Black Sea priority species since 2013[9]

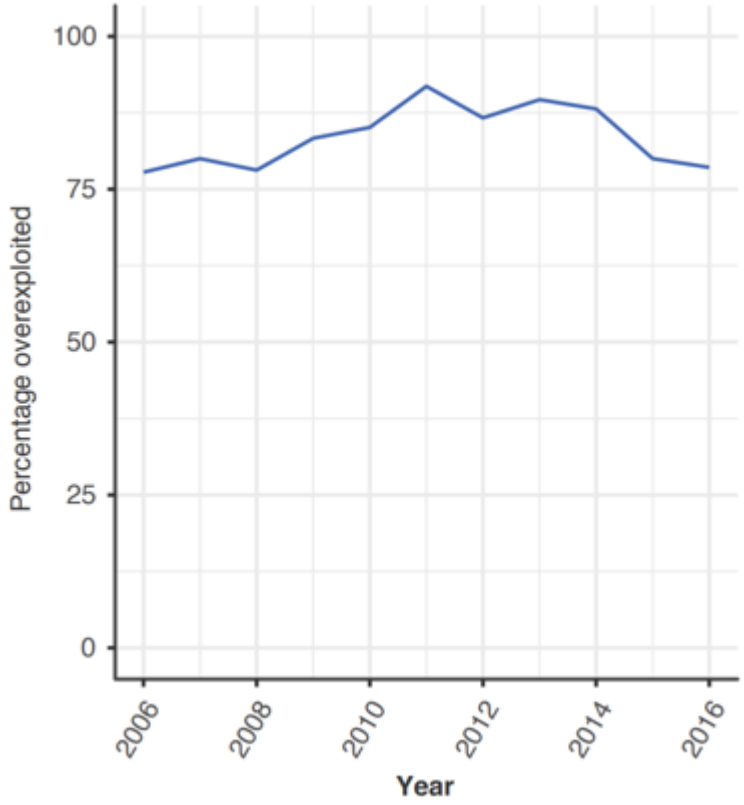
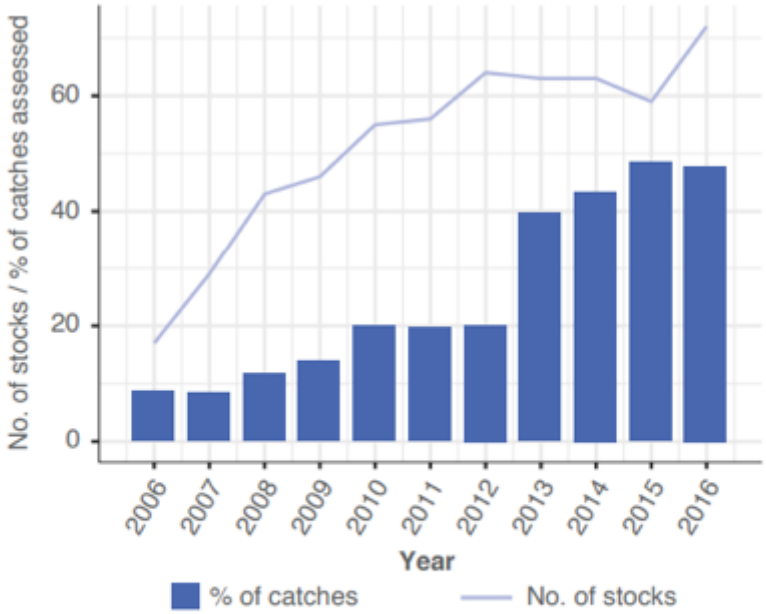


Figure 7 – Percentage of stocks in overexploitation since 2006

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.[10] 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 enanche 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.



Note: Stock units are defined as a combination between species and management units. Only validated and non-deprecated assessments (e.g. less than three years old for small pelagic species or five years old for demersal species) are considered in this plot; stock units for which several assessments exist in a given year are only counted once.

Figure 8 – Number of stock units (blue line) and percentage of declared landings assessed in 2006-2016[11]

To this end, the proposed project is expected to address the following existing barriers:

Overfishing: the most serious threat to the conservation of marine living resources in the Black Sea to the extent that it 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 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 in order to build the capacity needed to reduce overfishing and improve understanding at country level of data-limited stocks. 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.

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 boarders 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 taking into account 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 in particular 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, including for SSF and recreational fisheries. As a quantification of IUU fishing should lead to renewed national commitment to eradicate IUU operations and their ramifications, specific support is needed to harmonize approaches in the fight against IUU fishing and related fisheries crime. In this regard, 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, should be prompted. Also, mitigation strategies to reduce by-catch, discards and the impacts that abandoned fishing gears have on living marine resources are in high demand.

Climate change, marine pollution 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 level of pollution from land-based sources. The development of a regional/Black Sea adaptation strategy to cope with potential effects of climate change and non-indigenous 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.

2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects

2.a Baseline scenario: since the late 90's 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. The baseline scenario of the proposed project is therefore defined by high overexploitation of living marine resources and of ecosystem productivity and health, which are affected by other anthropogenic drivers such as pollution, habitat degradation and climate change (section 1) refers). Only of recent years, 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, 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 Back 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 commitment put forth in these recently adopted declarations.

In 2018, the year of adoption of the two Ministerial Declarations, the total number of fishing vessels operating in the Black Sea was approximately 11,500 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. 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 350 million. It is important to note, however that baseline data needs to be improved in order 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,[12] or approximately USD 910 million.[13] 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. 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:[14]

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, 2 of which representing the operational costs of the Commission paid by the annual contributions of the 24 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,[15] 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.[16] Together these two declarations can bring about a transformational change that a GEF intervention focusing on Black Sea fisheries would contribute to attain.

FAO related projects: the FAO, through its Blue Growth Initiative, 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 several technical cooperation projects were carried out/are being carried out in Turkey. Among FAO managed projects in the Black Sea region, the BlaskSeaFish project in particular, funded by Turkey, should be mentioned as this project has contributed to rekindle the role of the GFCM in the Black Sea.

European Commission related projects: via its DG MARE, the European Commission works to promote maritime policies and stimulate a sustainable blue economy. Its main partners include the blue economy industries, international and regional organizations, including the GFCM, and a wide range of maritime stakeholders (maritime professions, NGOs and civil society, opinion makers, marine and maritime research academia). Under its Association Agreements with Georgia and Ukraine, the European Commission also funds projects for the development of fisheries and aquaculture in these countries. These funds are usually available through DG NEAR, which actively promotes regional cooperation in neighboring countries via the implementation of national assistance programmes addressing existing challenges. Most of the regional cooperation activities under the purview of DG NEAR support priorities already agreed within the EU and with the partner countries. In the context of blue economy in particular, DG NEAR has been implementing TAIEX initiatives and twinning projects, including a recent twinning project with Turkey ("Reinforcement of the Turkish Fisheries Management System", 1,690,000 EUR). Most recently, the Europan Commission adopted a Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea which entails further investments in this region to promote the role of blue economy.

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 ınvertebrates (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 (https://arastirma.tarimorman.gov.tr/sumae/Menu/6/Tubitak-Projeleri).

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: Phase 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.

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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.

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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.

3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

3.a The proposed alternative scenario: the problem that the proposed project seeks to address, as outlined under section 1), is the overexploitation of Black Sea fisheries. 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. To this end, the proposed project will rely on an integrated approach that embeds sustainable and productive fisheries in the context of blue economy via 4 components. The results expected in connection with the first 3 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, 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. 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 Growth 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 blue economy, including via the piloting of NAP+, will inform relevant actions under the proposed project. Similarly, coordination will be ensured also with the other german GEF intervention to be implemented by UNDP in the Black Sea on the updated 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 available through the hpyerlink). 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.

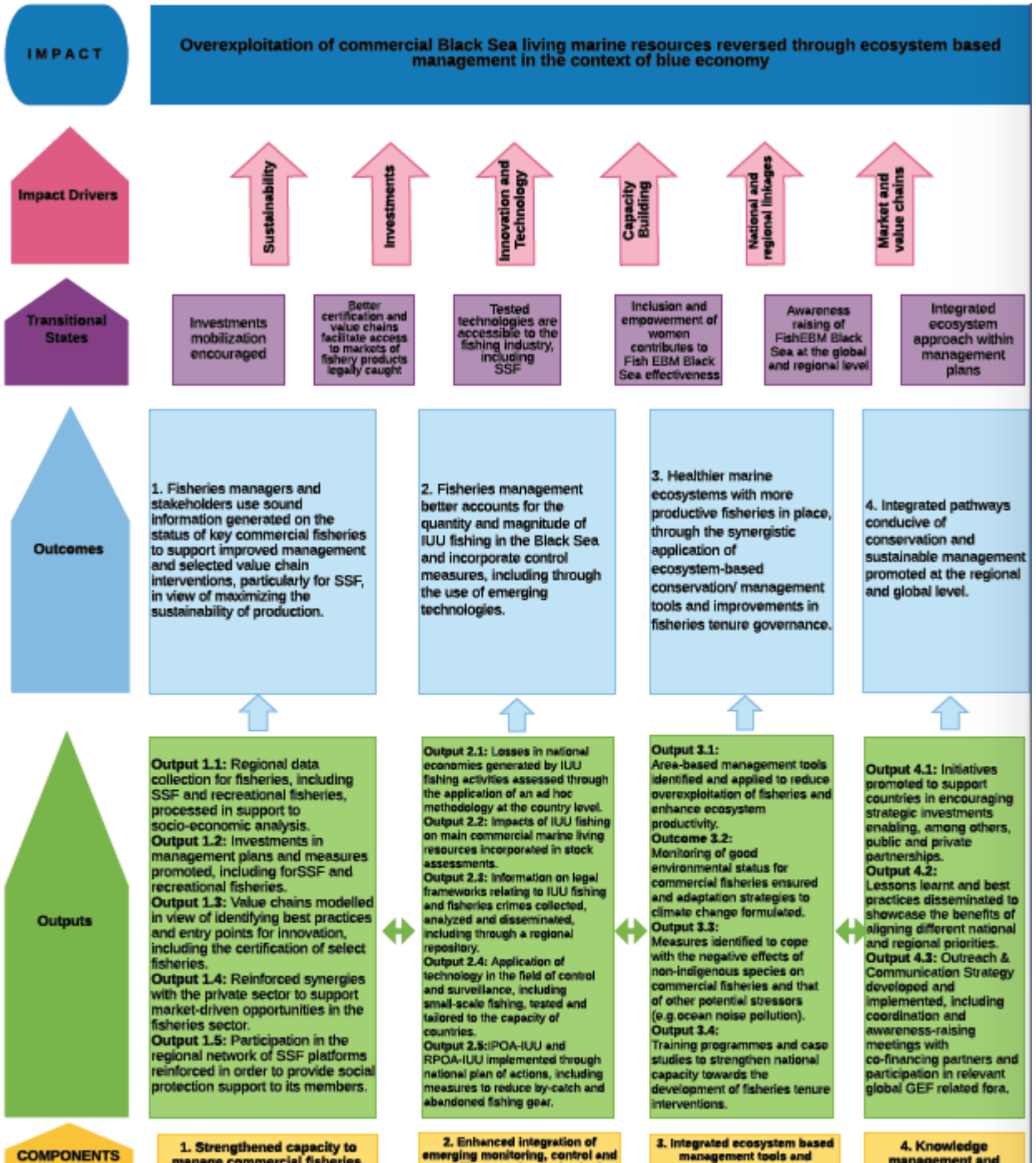
IMPACT
Overexploitation of commercial Black Sea living marine resources reversed through ecosystem based management in the context of blue economy
Impact Drivers
Sustainability
Investments
Innovation and Technology
Capacity Building
National and regional linkages
Market and value chains
Transitional States
Investments mobilization encouraged
Better certification and value chains facilitate access to markets of fishery products legally caught
Tested technologies are accessible to the fishing industry, including SSF
Inclusion and empowerment of women contributes to Fish EBM Black Sea effectiveness
Awareness raising of FishEBM Black Sea at the global and regional level
Integrated ecosystem approach within management plans
Outcomes
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.
2. Fisheries management better accounts for the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Black Sea and incorporate control measures, including through the use of emerging technologies.
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.
4. Integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management promoted at the regional and global level.
Outputs
Output 1.1: Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socio-economic analysis.
Output 1.2: Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including forSSF and recreational fisheries.
Output 1.3: Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for innovation, including the certification of select fisheries.
Output 1.4: Reinforced synergies with the private sector to support market-driven opportunities in the fisheries sector.
Output 1.5: Participation in the regional network of SSF platforms reinforced in order to provide social protection support to its members.
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.
Output 2.2: Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments.
Output 2.3: Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and fisheries crimes collected, analyzed and disseminated, including through a regional repository.
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.
Output 2.5:IPOA-IUU and RPOA-IUU implemented through national plan of actions, including measures to reduce by-catch and abandoned fishing gear.
Output 3.1: Area-based management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity.
Outcome 3.2: Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries ensured and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated.
Output 3.3: Measures identified to cope with the negative effects of non-indigenous species on commercial fisheries and that of other potential stressors (e.g.ocean noise pollution).
Output 3.4: Training programmes and case studies to strengthen national capacity towards the development of fisheries tenure interventions.
Output 4.1: Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investments enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.
Output 4.2: 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 participation in relevant global GEF related fora.
COMPONENTS
1. Strengthened capacity to
2. Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and
3. Integrated ecosystem based management tools and
4. Knowledge

Figure 9 – Theory of Change **(a high quality image is available as a separate PDF document)**

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 while ensuring sustainability and reinforcing positive synergies with other economic activities in coastal areas. This component is expected to reverse the trend of the declining status of key commercial fish stocks at the regional level via the introduction of management plans (output 1.2 refers), in line with the advice produced by GFCM scientific bodies, most notably the Working Group on the Black Sea, and based on data collected by countries (output 1.1). This will 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 on the sustainability of the approximately 100,000 tons of fish caught annually by SSF, upon which approximately 15,000 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 SSF stakeholders in data collection and decision-making processes, 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 double those employed directly onboard vessels). The component will also enhance the productivity and competitiveness of fisheries value chains by developing regional value chain plans to promote economies of scale and ensure that economic improvements go hand in hand with environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness. Such regional value chain plans 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 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 fisheries value chains 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 depolyed 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, including via access to microfinancing. Output 1.5. will tackle these efforts and aim at reinforcing existing networks of SSF stakeholders, as well as the identification of a dynamic characterization of SSF which goes beyond simple variables, such as vessel length and the use of passive gear, and instead addresses social and economic factors differentiating SSF from large-scale,

industrial fisheries. Component 1 will be complemented by interventions at the national level in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries, with a view to address some of the 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.[17]

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. Under this component the proposed project will apply in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries a methodology to estimate the incidence of IUU fishing building upon previous work by FAO on the estimation and quantification of IUU fishing (output 2.1 refers). This will be furthered by the inclusion of all information on the impacts of IUU fishing, including unreported fishing, to be provided by the national scientists involved in the stock assessment run by the GFCM (output 2.2 refers). These outputs will be accompanied 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. The incidence of fisheries crime will be also considered and, through partnerships with other organizations and entities, 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. 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. This 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 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. 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 figth against IUU fishing, consistent with the IPOA-IUU and the RPOA-IUU.[18]

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, including emerging tools such as OECMs, will lead to their application, particularly in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries (output 3.1). 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. 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 in relation to the development of

adaptation strategies to climate change, which could have critical effects on Black Sea fisheries. By the same token, output 3.3. will focus on non-indigenous species and how they are reportedly impacting Black Sea fisheries. Bearing in mind the environmental complexity of the Black Sea, this output would also provide an opportunity to address emerging potential stressors that are hampering the productivity of fisheries and the efficacy of area-based management tools. This is the case, among others, of ocean noise pollution and lost and abandoned fishing gear. Measures will be identified in cooperation with the GEF eligible Black Sea countries. The focus on area-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 management tools into broader user frameworks will be instrumental for relevant users, including fisheries, to have a better understanding of the role and importance 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).[19]

Component 4. Knowledge management and outscaling

Work under this component will focus on delivering 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 expertises of the Implementing Agencies concerned, with the aim of yielding commonalities and aligning targets across these interventions. To this end, a two-tiered approach will be followed. First, 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 (Output 4.1 refers). 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.

4) alignment with GEF focal area:

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 and climate change, marine pollution 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”.

5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, 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 while some other are expected to be confirmed as sources of co-financing during the PPG phase, 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. 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.

Indicative total co-financing mobilized for the proposed project amounts to USD 25 million. The details on the sources of the co-financing, the scope and contribution to the achievement of the project objective are cursorily described in Table C and the accompanying text. During the PPG 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. An indicative break-down of co-financing at the PIF stage (by source and component) is provided in Table 1 below (relevant currency USD):

Source of co-financing	**Project components**				**PMC**	**Total of co-financing**
	1 Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF	**2 Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing**	**3 Integrated ecosystem based management tools and ecosystem approach to fisheries**	**4 Knowledge management and outscaling**		
GFCM	3 400 000	2 098 000	770 000	552 000	180 000	7 000 000

FAO	1 480 000	850 000	670 000			3 000 000
EU	1 700 000	1 250 000	500 000	550 000		4 000 000
Georgia	1 000 000	576 000	269 000	155 000		2 000 000
Turkey	2 294 000	2 070 000	921 000	715 000		6 000 000
Ukraine	1 500 000	1 072 000	428 000			3 000 000
TOTAL	11 374 000	7 916 000	3 558 000	1 972 000	180 000	25 000 000

Table 1- Indicative break-down of co-financing at the PIF stage (by source and component)

6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF):

The proposed project is expected to generate global environmental benefits (GEB) by moving to more sustainable exploitation patterns the priority species of commercial Black Sea stocks identified under Core Indicator 8. 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. Table 2 illustrates to which SDG14 targets the proposed project contributes primarily.

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

Table 2- Expected contribution by the proposed project to SDG14

7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up:

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 will 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 plans.

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 involvement of scientific insitutes involved in collecting data via surveys and research campaigns.

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.

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[1] 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.

[2] 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).

[3] FAO. 2018. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries.* General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome. 172 pp.

[4] Data are estimates based on current knowledge of the situation by the GFCM.

[5] FAO. 2018. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries.* General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome. 172 pp.

[6] Ibid.

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

[8] 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.

[9] Ibid.

[10] 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.

[11] Ibid.

[12] 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.

[13] 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 labour (such as support from family members).

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

[15] More info on the Sofia Declaration is available here: http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/blackseaconference2018/sofiadeclaration
[16] More info on the RPOA-SSF is available here: http://www.fao.org/gfcm/activities/fisheries/small-scale-fisheries/rpoa-ssf
[17] Final information on indicators, including baseline values, assumptions and means of verification, will be provided during the PPG phase following consultations with all the different stakeholders involved.
[18] Final information on indicators, including baseline values, assumptions and means of verification, will be provided during the PPG phase following consultations with all the different stakeholders involved.
[19] Final information on indicators, including baseline values, assumptions and means of verification, will be provided during the PPG phase following consultations will all the different stakeholders involved.

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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

Geographical Coordinates (range): 46°33' - 40°56' N and 27°27' - 41°42' E

2. Stakeholders

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

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above,please explain why:

In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.

During the identification phase, consultations were duly undertaken with a range of stakeholders (e.g. countries, international organizations, NGOs and various stakeholders). This was possible due to the institutional nature of the GFCM which relies on broad stakeholder participation, including but not limited to that of national authorities from the Black Sea countries (as represented by their focal points to the GFCM). At its last annual CoP, the GFCM reported to its counterpart national authorities about the ongoing formulation of the proposed project and secured their support for the initiative. Additional consultations were carried out while the proposed project was being formulated in the months leading to the annual GFCM CoP in the context of the various working groups and workshops regularly organized by the Executing Agency, as well as the meetings of its bureaux, subsidiary bodies, standing committees and focal points. This prompted interest by relevant stakeholders and facilitated the positive decision taken by the last annual CoP sessions as relevant to the proposed project.

This implies that the proposed project can be regarded as a unique opportunity to contribute to the sustainability and profitability of fisheries. In addition, about 50 international organizations and NGOs are among the partners of the GFCM and actively participate in its work, partaking its initiatives.

During the PPG phase activities will be developed by the GFCM, including via the GEF Operational Focal Points, to make sure that the proposed project will respond to priorities of all participating countries and stakeholders. In this respect, the GFCM will rely, among others, on the FAO partnership division to ensure that the appropriate civil society organizations, especially those related to SSF, are involved via appropriate mechanisms for engagement in view of the early stages of the execution of the proposed project. These mechanisms include multi-stakeholder platforms, such as the Friends of SSF platform and the Aquaculture Multi-stakeholder platform. This will contribute not only to the sound implementation of the project, but also to capacity building, knowledge transfer, dissemination and replication. It will also come at no additional cost since all meetings included in the annual workplan of the Executing Agency will provide for an opportunity to involve, depending on their subject matter and target audience, different stakeholders out of the existing wide partner-base and seek their inputs and contributions. They will be constantly briefed on the execution of project activities and encouraged to share their views. Similarly, national authorities will be requested to periodically collect inputs from their relevant departments on the execution of activities vis-à-vis relevant stakeholders that could in turn inform organization, planning and implementation.

The GFCM will also rely on its network of partners which include the Permanent Secretariat of the Bucharest Convention. The proposed project could hence be instrumental to foster collaboration with this RSC on the gathering of scientific information of interest to the work of both bodies to promote a mutually-supportive fisheries/environment relationship. During the implementation phase, a participatory approach will be used across activities to take advantage of the environment-fisheries synergy too. Management plans for key commercial species will be designed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders representing fisher associations and national authorities will benefit from capacity-building interventions. The proposed project will also place a special focus on gender aspects, as described in the following section.

Specific stakeholder roles (in the context of PIF and PPG consultations as well as the project implementation phase) are further outlined in the Table 3 (not exhaustive), with reference to particularly relevant project outputs:

Table 3- Stakeholder roles (expected)

Type of stakeholders	Area(s) of expertise relevant to the proposed project	How the stakeholders are expected to be engaged	Relevant outputs
Fishers (producer organizations, cooperatives, etc.)	Data collection; sustainable management; value chains; social protection; control and surveillance; bycatch reduction; non-indigenous species; tenure;	The active engagement of fishers in participatory processes is essential to the transfer of capacity to ensure the long-term sustainability of project results. In particular, fishers and fisher cooperatives are expected to be engaged in activities such as: contributing to and facilitating data collection, adhering to and promoting sustainable management measures (e.g. co-management); identifying and engaging with innovative value chain interventions, including in cooperation with the private sector; facilitating social protection contributions as well as informal provision; facilitating and contributing to MCS; participating in the circular economy such as the retrieval/recycling of abandoned gear; fishing for non-indigenous species in line with identified scientific priorities (opening of new markets, reduction initiatives, etc.); and equal participation in discussions on tenure and access rights.	Output 1.1 Output 1.2 Output 1.3 Output 1.4 Output 1.5 Output 2.4 Output 2.5 Output 3.3 Output 3.4
National administrations	Management and regulatory tools (e.g. area-based management); public-private partnerships; legal frameworks; MCS and fighting IUU; blue economy; dissemination of best practices	Strengthened regulatory frameworks, implementation and enforcement by national administrations are crucial to providing an attractive investment scenario for the private sector. In particular, national administrations are expected to be engaged in all activities related to strengthening clear regulatory mechanisms, such as: the implementation of management plans and measures; promoting public-private partnerships; strengthening legal frameworks; ensuring liaison with other government authorities to streamline MCS technology application, removing regulatory barriers for innovation; participating in the elaboration of blue economy strategies in coordination with WB and UNDP implemented projects and liaison with other countries at an international level (including in the GFCM context) for a level regional playing-field.	Output 1.2 Output 1.4 Output 2.3 Output 2.4 Output 3.1 Output 3.3

National research institutes	Data collection and monitoring; stock assessment; IUU assessment; area-based management; modeling climate change; selectivity and fishing technology; dissemination of best practices	Research institutes will form the basis of all technical activities, also in view of ensuring capacity development and continuity of activities beyond the project duration. In particular, research institutes are expected to be engaged in all activities in relation to executing data collection (both biological, ecological and market-based/value chain studies); applying the IUU assessment methodology and integrating IUU estimates in stock assessment; testing and identification of adequate area-based management tools; monitoring good environmental status and modeling climate change impacts; carrying out experimental selectivity studies to address non-indigenous species; and disseminating best practices, including in the context of sharing technical scientific research and results at a regional level.	Output 1.1 Output 1.3 Output 2.1 Output 2.2 Output 3.1 Output 3.2 Output 3.3 Output 4.1 Output 4.2
Civil society organizations	Engaging local actors; co-management; value chain; stakeholder capacity building; blue economy; dissemination of best practices	Civil society organizations complement the efforts of national instructions and international organizations through long-standing relationships with actors in the field, including fishers themselves and are expected to be an important link in building capacity among fisher stakeholders. In particular, they are expected to be engaged in strengthening co-management initiatives; initiating local value chain interventions; raising awareness and supporting local social protection initiatives; contributing to discussions relating to marine spatial planning in the context of blue economy strategies expected under the WB and UNDP projects; as well as piloting initiatives at the local level and disseminating results among their networks.	Output1.2 Output 1.3 Output 1.5 Output 3.1
Private sector	Value chain, market-based management tools; MCS technology; new markets/fishing technology for NIS	The private sector has the capacity to facilitate and incubate innovation through investment. The private sector is expected to be engaged particularly in areas where innovation is needed including through value chain interventions such as fisheries certification; market-based solutions to support fisheries management, including developing new markets for non-indigenous species; as well as investing in new technology solutions for monitoring, control and surveillance, as well as for enhancing fishing technology (selective gear, vessel design, etc.).	Output 1.3 Output 1.4 Output 2.4 Output 3.3

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).

The Implementing Agency and the Executing Agency are committed to supporting capacity development of their national partners to adopt approaches that advance women's rights and take account of the full range of their contributions to development. Involving both women and men in the proposed project's activities is likely to increase project effectiveness and efficiency. Considering that the role of women is often invisible or unaccounted for in the fishery sector, concerted efforts under this project to consider the role of women through gender-disaggregated data will also contribute to an improved understanding of the full economic impact of the fishing sector, including along the value chain. Furthermore, participation by both women and men will improve project performance and

the likelihood of sustainability. In other words, the proposed project is more likely to achieve what planners hope it will achieve if women and men (both rich and poor and representing different sectors) will be active participants and decision makers.

The proposed project includes coastal communities and SSF where women play a role at all stages along the value chain. To date, however, gender disaggregated data colletion is not in place in the GEF eligible Black Sea countries and as such, the contribution of women to Black Sea fisheries is not captured through typical data collection systems. However, based on anecdotal and expert knowledge, the role of women is known to be non-secondary throughout the fisheries value chain, providing support from land: mending nets, baiting hooks, as well as processing and marketing catch. Women also often provide crucial home work – caring for children and the household chores – which may not be directly compensated but which permits the men of the household to go to sea and thus is an essential contribution to the household economy. Considering the focus of the proposed project on the whole value chain, its implementation is expected to facilitate more complete data on the role of women along the fisheries value chain, thus ensuring their contribution is counted. A gender analysis will be part of the PPG phase and, based on this analysis, a gender strategy and work plan will be developed during the inception phase and guide the development of the proposed project work programme to ensure it contributes to gender equality. It is important to take into consideration that the proposed project will be developed and executed as a germane intervention to the one for the Mediterranean Sea, also foreseen under the GEF7. Consequently, there will be full coordination and synergy with the gender mainstreaming strategy and relevant work plans developed in the context of the germane intervention for the Mediterranean Sea which will aim, inter alia, at: 1) providing an overarching and harmonized gender approach for the proposed project; 2) supporting and building capacity of the proposed projec through gender-responsive actions within the specific context of each component; 3) monitoring implementation advancements and consistency, as well as cohesion and complementarity of gender focus, during the implementation of the proposed project; and 4) benefitting, on the long term, the Implementing and Executing Agencies, by serving as an entry point and testing ground for mainstreaming gender in their programme of work. In adhering to the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy developed under germane GEF interventions in the Mediterranean, the proposed project will support a transformative approach, positing a gender equality vision that questions established categories and implementing positive measures towards gender-responsive actions in the Black Sea region. Gender mainstreaming will not be regarded as an end (goal), rather, as a means (process) to an end (greater gender equality). This approach will stipulate the importance of identifying gender mainstreaming as a process.

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; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.

Similarly to the case of other stakeholders, private sector actors have been thus far involved in select working groups and workshops organized by the Executing Agency opened to all participants. This was done in accordance with the "FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector" which was recently 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. Though participation of the private sector still remain limited to only certain meetings in particular, this FAO strategy has enabled the initial involvement of some private sector actors to secure a role for them in the implementation of the proposed project.

In this very respect, private sector involvement in the proposed project will be twofold. Fishing associations or cooperatives at regional and national scale that represent fishers and fishing companies will be sought out during the PPG phase to provide a conduit between the proposed 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 proposed project will also stimulate the involvement of other actors from the private sectors which are concerned by the mandate of the Executing Agency, 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. Such involvement will have to be in line with the aforesaid FAO Strategy and with any other relevant policies by the Implementing Agency as relating to relationships with the private sector. As need be, the GEF eligible Black Sea countries might have to be consulted on private sector engagement.

5. Risks

Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the Project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the Project design (table format acceptable)

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 4, 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, the Executing Agency 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).
Tensions among fishers over the access to and management of the living marine resources	Social	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.

Coordination with other expected GEF IW projects in the Black Sea in the implementation of certain activities	Operational	The risk is only in part under the proposed project control. The FAO, the WB and UNDP, anticipate the implementation of parallel GEF projects in the Black Sea, under the IW focal area, which will be complementary. This scenarion could contribute to further advance the impacts of the proposed project. With a view to avoid potential hurdles of administrative nature, the Implementing Agency is intent on liaising with the other Implementing Agencies in connection with the various GEF projects both during PPG phase as well as the project implementation phase, in order to find appropriate solutions/coordination mechanisms and/or agree on derogations from certain practices and internal regulations that could be burdensome on the coordinated execution of activities foreseen (Component 4 of the PIF refers).
Limited national capacity for the proposed project effective implementation in some countries persist	Operational	The risk is only partly under the project control. However, this is a 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 Executing Agency in ensuring the achievement and sustainability of the project outcomes.
Low participation by stakeholders in specific activities	Social	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.
Climate-induced phenomena and variations	Climate	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-invasive 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. A more solid climate risk assessment, as need be, will be carried out during the PPG phase.

Outbreak of diseases in the region and beyond (Covid-19)	Social/ Operational	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 Executing Agencies. 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 Implementing Agency.
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.

Table 4 - Preliminary Risk Assessment

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 risk level will be further re-confirmed at PPG in line following FAO's stakeholder engagement processes. The Agency will make sure that all mitigation measures vis a vis any potential adverse impact are duly considered in the ceo-endorsement package.

6. Coordination

Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

The proposed project will be implemented by one of GEF's Implementing Agency, the 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 close 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. As this GEF Implementing Agency heavily relies on the role of regional fishery bodies to advance progress in the implementation of its fisheries related policies among groups of neighboring countries, the proposed project 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 6-monthly 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 Programme 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 mechanism to maximize synergies and ensure the successful design and implementation of the proposed project. The main role of the PSC will be to 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 foreseen germane GEF interventions in the Black Sea, the other two Implementing Agencies, namely 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. The main role of the PSC will be to 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. It 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.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions

Yes

If yes, which ones and how: 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). 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 5.

National Strategies relating to fisheries and aquaculture	Regional commitments national strategies are to be aligned with	International calls national strategies are to be aligned with
Georgia National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of Georgia 2014 – 2020 (adopted via an ordinance of the Government of Georgia)	2004 Declaration he Ministerial Conference for the Sustainable Development of Fisheries in the Mediterranean; 2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration; 2018 Ministerial Declaration on a Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Small-Scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea; GFCM mid-term strategy towards the sustainability of fisheries (2017-2020); 2018 GFCM Strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture.	United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14; CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets 6 and 11; 2030 United Nations for the Sustainable Development; United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030); FAO Strategic Objectives and Blue Growth Initiative; Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework.
Turkey 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)		
Ukraine Strategy for development of the Fisheries sector of Ukraine (currently pending adoption before the national Parliament)		

Table 5 - Alignment of national strategies with relevant regional/international frameworks

8. Knowledge Management

Outline the Knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

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 (e.g. governments, civil society, etc.) and to various beneficiaries. In particular, lessons learnt will be disseminated to promote blue economy policies in the region and beyond. Appropriate channels of communication (e.g. technical guidelines, radio, video, posters, brochures etc.) will be used to target specific stakeholders. Supervision and monitoring missions will be routinely organized during the proposed project implementation. Any information collected will feed into activities for knowledge management, identify and share good practices, 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 ecosystems conservation. Moreover, alignment with the Knowledge Management Strategy under GEF germane interventions (KM Strategy), will be ensured by the proposed project. The KM Strategy aims at maximizing the impacts of the proposed project by: i) leveraging and systematically sharing knowledge assets generated with the intended beneficiaries and audiences; ii) strengthening the science-policy interface and influencing decision making through data and information collection and sharing, capacity building, and regional stakeholder engagement; iii) supporting the objectives of the GFCM Agreement, the Bucharest Convention and the work of their respective systems through effective stocktaking and scaling up of programme results; and iv) fostering incremental innovation within GEF programmatic approaches and enriching the knowledge base of GEF Implementing and Executing Agencies.

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.

Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And Gef Agency(ies)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).

Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Ms.Nino Tkhilava	Department of Environment and Climate Change	Min. of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	3/20/2020
Oleksandra Kozlovska	Director	Department of International cooperation	3/23/2020
Akif Ozkaldi	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	4/13/2020

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place

Geographical Coordinates (range): 46°33' - 40°56' N and 27°27' - 41°42' E