

# Strengthening the stewardship of an economically and biologically significant high seas area ? the Sargasso Sea

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

10620

**Countries**

Global

**Project Name**

Strengthening the stewardship of an economically and biologically significant high seas area ? the Sargasso Sea

**Agencies**

UNDP

**Date received by PM**

11/29/2021

**Review completed by PM**

2/22/2022

**Program Manager**

Taylor Henshaw

**Focal Area**

International Waters

**Project Type**

FSP

## PIF

### CEO Endorsement

**Part I ? Project Information****Focal area elements**

**1. Does the project remain aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements as presented in PIF (as indicated in table A)?**

**Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Yes.

The project is aligned with IW 2-4. The objective is to facilitate a collaborative, cross-sectoral ecosystem-based sustainable stewardship approach for the Sargasso Sea, as an ABNJ of significant importance, through improvements in the knowledge base and strengthened frameworks for collaboration.

The expected implementation start is indicated as 2/1/2022. Please consider moving this date further out to ensure there is enough time for internal organization ahead of project start, following CEO Endorsement.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

[UNDP Response, 3 February 2022](#)

Implementation start date now set at 1st June 2022 to ensure sufficient time to complete CEO endorsement and UNDP project start-up requirements. CEO ER and ProDoc amended to reflect

## **Project description summary**

### **2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs as in Table B and described in the project document?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. The outputs are tangible and the output sequence is logical. However, please address following points:

- 1) Please expressly embed the principles guiding the child project contributions to the functioning of the Common Oceans Program (found under the Coordination section) into Table B as a separate Output(s) under Component 4. Please then update the description under the alternative scenario section and the project results framework in Annex A accordingly. This is being asked of all child projects under the Common Oceans Program.
- 2) The portal submission is a mix of different font sizes, which makes it harder to read. Please fix so only one font size.
- 3) The portal submission does not include any information on the current baseline, which effects that the submission is not including an incremental reasoning. Please make sure that the portal entry carefully responds to the sub-headings under part II. Project Justification.
- 4) Please include the GEF Core Indicator 11 target of 8560 direct beneficiaries in Table B.
- 5) Please add in the core indicator table a "1", to CI7, as the project, and label that GLOBAL (as the ABNJ is one continuous system)

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

11th of February 2022 (cseverin): No, please address following comments:

#### 1. On co-financing:

- Change Duke University co-financing to ?In-kind? and ?recurrent expenditures?.
- Change Edinburgh University co-financing to ?in-kind? and ?recurrent expenditures?.

#### 2. Budget table:

- (i) Equipment and furniture for PMU is wrongly categorized as Vehicle ? please amend.

(ii) Finance and Admin staff costs are charged across components and PMC ? per Guidelines, the costs associated with the project?s execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC. The co-financing portion allocated to PMC is 1.6 million ? 94% of the co-financing (31.2 million) are represented in grants, so there is room for covering these costs.

(iii) Project Manager/Chief Technical Advisor post is charged across components and PMC ? same comment as above (?the costs associated with the project?s execution have to be covered by the GEF portion and the co-financing portion allocated to PMC?). Also, the TORs in the ProDoc mainly lists management duties and responsibilities with only one technical item which is ?Add technical tasks as necessary?. Please ask the Agency to amend.

(iv) Unspecified miscellaneous items for PMU cannot be covered by GEF funds ? please provide details.

**7th of March 2022** (thenshaw): Partly addressed. Please address the three outstanding issues below.

#### **Issue One - Budget for F&A Officer**

In the GEF Budget table, the Component 1, 2 and 3 and M&E columns each include \$40,000 allocated for ?Component Finance and Administrative Costs (F&A Officer)? (\$160,000 total) and the PMC column includes \$20,000 allocated for F&A Officer. The F&A Officer is considered a project staff position. According the GEF policy, ?If project staff are charged to both PMC and project components (i.e. not only to PMC), clear Terms of Reference describing unique outputs linked to the respective components are required at the time of CEO Endorsement/Approval, for review by the Secretariat.?

The duties and responsibilities of the F&A Officer position as set out in Annex 7 ?Overview of Project Staff and Technical Consultancies?, are purely administrative and not unique to project components. Therefore, the project components cannot absorb any of the costs of the F&A Officer position. **All F&A Officer costs must be absorbed by the PMC column or by project co-financing allocated to PMC, as described in the GEF Guidelines.**

Because the allocation to PMC is already at the cap and the F&A Officer costs cannot be absorbed by GEF Financing allocated to PMC in its current allocation, it is suggested that the \$1.6 million in co-financing allocated to PMC (94% of overall project co-financing, \$31.2 million, is represented in grants) is used to cover these costs. Please note that the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy express that ?GEF

trust funds should not bear a disproportionate burden of the total management costs for GEF-financed projects, when co-financing is included?.

If the Agency is not able to convince project co-financiers to absorb a portion of the costs of this position through grants, then the Agency must find another solution to ensure the budget adheres to GEF Guidelines.

### **Issue Two - Budget for CTA**

Thank you for adding the list of technical tasks of the CTA position to Annex 7 ?Overview of Project Staff and Technical Consultancies.? The CTA is considered a project staff position, with both technical and project management duties and responsibilities. Upon review of the list of technical tasks, it is accepted that there are unique outputs for this position linked to the respective components, and charging this position to both PMC and project components is in line with GEF Policy. However, it appears the staff time for this position is heavily skewed toward technical outputs rather than project management outputs. This is evidenced through the budget table.

Component 1, 2 and 3 and M&E columns include a combined \$270,200 allocated for CTA costs (75% of salary). The PMC column includes \$90,000 allocated for CTA costs (25% of salary). An assumption can be made that the 25% of total salary allocated to project management equals 25% of total staff time allocated to project management. It is difficult to see how only 25% of one staff member?s time allocated to project management can successfully manage this project. Please reconsider whether 25% of the CTA position is sufficient time to serve as the project manager of the project and, if so, please provide justification for why. If not, please amend accordingly.

### **Issue Three - Format of the Budget Table in the GEF Portal**

The Annex E project budget table uploaded to the portal does not display properly. Please re-upload to ensure figures do not display across columns.

6th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Addressed.

### **Agency Response**

[UNDP Response, 3 February 2022](#)

1. To address GEFSec comment, Component 4 and its Outcomes and Outputs in both Table B, the main text (P18 onwards in CEO ER). and in the Results Framework (P.77 of CEO ER) have all been substantially amended to capture this linkage with the Common Oceans Program and particularly the Global Coordination Child Project. The very clear contributions of the Child Project to the Common Oceans program are also fully articulated in Table 1 (P. 28 of CEO ER),

2. CEO ER has been set at single font size as requested

3. All sub-headings are in place within the CEO ER under Part II; Project Justification. UNDP will ensure that they are uploaded appropriately to the portal

4. Table B is not the appropriate location for this project level target which is found in the Core Indicators Worksheet. To address GEFSEC comment, references to achieving the gender balance reflected in the Core Indicator have been added to Table B.

5. Core Indicator 7.1 has a '1' allocated against it. However, to refer to it as 'Global' would be incorrect, ABNJ are by no means 'one continuous system' and the world's ABNJ consists of a diverse range of ecosystem types; that is one of the primary objectives of the Sargasso Child Project: to pilot a stewardship approach to the management and governance of a unique ABNJ marine ecosystem; this experience could then be shared and replicated across other ABNJ ecosystem types.

UNDP Response, 15 February 2022

1. Duke University and Edinburgh University Co-Financing now amended as In-Kind/Recurrent as requested (P.4 ? CEO ER; P.59 ? ProDoc).
2. (i) Erroneous use of 'Vehicle' has been removed (P.163 ? ProDoc)

(ii) Grant donors were approached on this issue regarding the Finance and Administrative staff costs but were not willing to cover these primarily administrative costs for the GEF Project as their Grant/Investment Mobilized financial support is focused primarily on the scientific and technical aspects of the project in support of the EDA and SAP process and setting up effective monitoring and data capture/analysis procedures. The co-funders indicated that their projects have their own project teams and associated PMC which they are committed to cover in full; they indicated that in their view it was the responsibility of the GEF to cover the costs associated with the management of GEF-financed projects. Furthermore, as 'grant' co-finance, each partner has its own signed grant agreements or equivalent which, similar to GEF grants, have clearly delineated allocation of resources to various activities and outputs, with little if any recourse for discretionary redirection of funds to the needs of other projects and programs.

(iii) Similar to above and as noted by GEF in the comments above, the CTA post is charged across both the PMU and the Technical Components reflecting that the bulk of the CTAs role and associated tasks are technical vs managerial. This issue of more of the co-financers grant co-financing being targeted at GEF project management costs/project coordination unit was also discussed with the Grant co-funders who again noted that their Grant/Investment Mobilized co-financing focuses directly on the technical aspects in the four project Components that would deliver (for example) the EDA, the Ecosystem Valuation and Value-Chain Analysis, and the development and

adoption of the SAP itself as well as knowledge management strategies rather than have their funds specifically directed at the administrative side of the GEF Project management. The co-funders indicated that their projects have their own project teams and associated PMC which they are committed to cover in full; they indicated that in their view it was the responsibility of the GEF to cover the costs associated with the management of GEF-financed projects. Furthermore, as 'grant' co-finance, each partner has its own signed grant agreements or equivalent which, similar to GEF grants, have clearly delineated allocation of resources to various activities and outputs, with little if any recourse for discretionary redirection of funds to the needs of other projects and programs.

The ToR for the CTA has been amended to reflect the largely technical nature of the post (P. 125 of ProDoc). Apologies for the oversight and inappropriate information provided here.

(iv) Miscellaneous items have been removed from PMU and the \$944 has been reallocated under Supplies (Total Budget and Work Plan P.70 & 73 ? ProDoc ; Annex 13 - GEF Budget- P.168 ProDoc)

UNDP Response, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022

#### **Issue One - Budget for F&A Officer**

The Finance and Administrative Officer's post is now fully covered by co-financing from FFEM (\$220,000 over 4 years) as it was impossible to cover this post as well as some of the administrative duties of the CTA under the maximum allocation allowed by GEF rules for the PMC (\$126,000 as 5% of GEF Budget). Fortunately, FFEM had agreed to combine this position with their Finance and Administrative posts as many of the functions will be similar. As a complimentary act, the GEF Project will share its Communications Officer with FFEM.

This is clarified in the CEO ER in Table 2. P. 29. Partnership/Stakeholder List. Reference to FFEM co-funding the F&A position; P. 61. Project Organisation Structure. Reference to FFEM and GEF sharing F&A post and Comms Post; and Day-to-Day Management and Coordination. Reference to FFEM and GEF sharing F&A post and Comms Post.

It is also clarified in the ProDoc on P.38. Table 3 - Partnership/Stakeholder List. Reference to FFEM co-funding the F&A position; P.54 Figure 1. Project Organisation

Structure. Reference to FFEM and GEF sharing F&A post and Comms Post; P.57 Day-to-Day Management and Coordination. Reference to FFEM and GEF sharing F&A post and Comms Post; P. 60. Table 4. Co-financing Sources and Amounts. Reference to FFEM co-funding the F&A position

#### **Issue Two - Budget for CTA**

The total allowed budget by GEFSec's own rules for the PMC for this project is \$126,000. \$124,000 of this has now been allocated to the CTA position under the PMC. The rest of the funding for the CTA is spread across the technical aspects of the 4 components as explained now in the Budget notes on P. 72. The balance of the costs by percentage are as follows: Component 1 = 23%; Component 2 = 13.5%; Component 3 = 15.5%; Component 4 = 21%; PMC Component = 27% The costs for the technical components require a level of scientific skill and seniority that is somewhat higher than the level required for project administration and therefore represent somewhat higher daily rates. Furthermore, with the Finance and Administrative Officer now being covered at a higher rate by FFEM it will be possible to have much of the day-to-day administrative duties and responsibilities transferred to that post leaving the CTA post to focus more on the technical and scientific aspects while remaining in overall responsibility for delivery.

This has now been amended (as explained above) in the CEO ER under Table B. GEF allocation for each component and PMC revised and re-balanced to reflect budget changes.

These amendments are also now reflected in the ProDoc on P. 68. TBWP and Budget Notes (extensive revision to capture absorbing \$160,000 (Previous F&A costs) back into Components. Mainly boosting CTA and Comms position funding plus some other increases where appropriate); Annex 7. Overview of Project Staff and Technical Committee. Amendments to CTA to make it close to a full-time position. Notes against F&A staff position on sharing with FFEM; Annex 10. Procurement Plan. Revised throughout to capture changes in first-year annual budget; Annex 13. GEF Budget. Extensively revised to capture changes in the main TBWP

#### **Issue Three - Format of the Budget Table in the GEF Portal**

Budget Table has been re-formatted. Apologies for the misplacement of figures.

**3. If this is a non-grant instrument, has a reflow calendar been presented in Annex D?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

Co-financing

**4. Are the confirmed expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented, with supporting evidence and a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized, and a description of any major changes from PIF, consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?**



Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 15th of December 2021  
(cseverin): Partly. Please address following comments:

- 1) Please spell out all acronyms in the Co-financing table (re: FFEM).
- 2) World Maritime University and Bermuda Institute of Ocean Science should not be classified as 'Donor Agency' but rather as 'Other'.
- 3) Co-financing letters for each entity providing co-finance are uploaded to the portal. The FFEM letter includes co-financing stated in euros. Please provide the exchange rate calculation that was done to reach \$1,532,000. The letter indicates 961,000 euros which is equivalent to about \$1,088,000 in December 2021. The figures in all other co-finance letters match their corresponding Table C co-finance figures.
- 4) A co-finance letter from Imperial College London is present in the portal but is not reflected in Table C.
- 5) Please provide explanation as to why the implementing and executing agency does not provide co-financing to this investment.
- 6) ) The explanations of investment mobilized are numbered in a footnote format, but they do not have corresponding reference marks in Table C. Portal formatting does not allow for this. Under the 'Describe how any investment mobilized was identified section,' please instead reference each entity before the corresponding explanation.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. Acronyms now expanded to full names
2. WMU now classified as 'Other - Academic Institute'. BIOS was already classified as 'Other - Scientific Institute'
3. Appropriate exchange rate for date of submission amended against FFEM used to deliver figure of \$1,088,000

The co-financing letter provided by Imperial College referred to past contributions and not co-funding during the project lifetime. Although Imperial College remains as a partner in the project it was not considered appropriate to include them in the co-

financing list for the above reason. The letter was erroneously uploaded to the portal and should/will be removed

4. Apologies for this oversight. Co-financing amended to show UNDP (\$498,500) and IOC-UNESCO (\$188,308) contributions. UNDP to ensure these co-financing letters are uploaded to the portal when this response is returned to GEFSec.

Descriptive Note for each co-financing source now preceded by name of source as requested to overcome shortfall in portal design.

**GEF Resource Availability**

**5. Is the financing presented in Table D adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 15th of December 2021  
(cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**Project Preparation Grant**

**6. Is the status and utilization of the PPG reported in Annex C in the document?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request 15th of December 2021  
(cseverin): Yes

Agency Response

**Core indicators**

**7. Are there changes/adjustments made in the core indicator targets indicated in Table E? Do they remain realistic?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please address following points:

1) Please include the methodology behind the calculated targets for core indicators 5, 7 and 11. This explanation is presented in the uploaded word version but is not present in the portal submission.

2) Please note that the Indicator 5 Area of marine habitat under improved practices corresponds to the approx. area of the Sargasso Sea (685 million ha). It may be intentionally, but it would be good to include some reasoning behind including the entire area of the Sargasso Sea

3) Please include a "1" and label that "global" under CI 7.1, in order to capture that this investment will be taking place in the ABNJ

4) Annex E: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet is not present in the portal submission. It is present in the uploaded word version. Please include on resubmission.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. UNDP will ensure highlighted section in Annex E: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet is uploaded appropriately to the portal

2. The text from the section "Project Description" provides the reasoning. This has now been copied down and duplicated now in Annex E: GEF 7 Indicator Worksheet to ensure clarity as follows: *In the context of Indicator 5, The Sargasso Sea is an open ocean ecosystem in the North Atlantic. Its specific boundaries vary seasonally and depending on the defining boundary current currents. For the purposes of this Project the Sargasso Sea "Geographical Area of Collaboration" is defined in the Hamilton Declaration as the portion of high seas and the "Area" under that portion of the high seas, (excluding the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and territorial sea around Bermuda, and the extended continental shelves of neighbouring states) as shown on the illustrative map therein and in Annex D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates appended to this document. This covers an area of approximately 685 million hectares. Since the project is advancing stewardship of the entire Sargasso Sea ecosystem in a holistic, ecosystem-based manner, applying the GEF TDA/SAP approach cutting across each of the sectors whose activities may affect sustainable use of the ecosystem, it was considered justified to list the entire area of meeting the criteria of being under improved practices. It will of course take time beyond the project time frame for the impacts and benefits of such improved practices to manifest and be measurable at both the stress reduction and environmental and socioeconomic status levels.*

3. Core Indicator 7.1 has a "1" allocated against it. However, to refer to it as "Global" would be incorrect, ABNJ are by no means "one continuous system" and the world's

ABNJ consists of a diverse range of ecosystem types; that is one of the primary objectives of the Sargasso Child Project: to pilot a stewardship approach to the management and governance of a unique ABNJ marine ecosystem; this experience could then be shared and replicated across other ABNJ ecosystem types.

4. UNDP will ensure GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet is uploaded to the portal when this response is returned to GEFSec.

## Part II ? Project Justification

**1. Is there a sufficient elaboration on how the global environmental/adaptation problems, including the root causes and barriers, are going to be addressed?**

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please address following points:

1) Please recast the relevant portion of this Project Description text into a standalone section that clearly identifies the environmental problems, root causes, threats and barriers to be addressed *using existing literature*. The reviewer understands that the Component 1 activities will help establish the root causes, threats and barriers, but the existing knowledge of these issues must be expressed here. Summarizing the annexed causal chain analysis would help to this end.

2) Please clearly elaborate on the four identified ?primary and actual threats to the Sargasso Sea?: A. Impacts from Fisheries; B. Impacts from Shipping; C. Impacts from other Commercial Activities; and D. Impacts from Climate Change and Ocean Acidification.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. A standalone section had now been added (Page 6 of CEO ER) under the heading of ?The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)?.
2. The new section as mentioned above (Page 6 of CEO ER) includes an elaboration on the four identified impacts

**2. Is there an elaboration on how the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects were derived?**

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): No, please address following points:

- 1) The baseline scenario and associated baseline projects are not established, or the presentation is not sufficiently clear.
- 2) The project is missing basis information on the existing baseline knowledge. The section need to include the alternative scenario, incremental cost reasoning and global environmental benefits from the project.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects has been gathered together and elaborated under ?The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects? (Page 9 of CEO ER)

2. The following headings have now been added into the document and the appropriate information collected and elaborated under them as appropriate:

Main Baseline Projects Supporting the Sargasso Sea Commission and the UNDP GEF Sargasso Child Project? (P.10, CEO ER)

?The proposed alternative scenario and the intended outcomes and components of the project? (P.11, CEO ER)

?Incremental/Additional Cost Reasoning? (P.22 CEO ER)

?Global Environmental Benefits? (P.23 CEO ER)

**3. Is the proposed alternative scenario as described in PIF/PFD sound and adequate? Is there sufficient clarity on the expected outcomes and components of the project and a description on the project is aiming to achieve them?**

### Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly, will be easier to assess when the full baseline description will be uploaded.

However, even though the full project logic cannot be established without a full baseline entry and described incremental cost reasoning, the sequence of activities and expected outcomes on its face is sound. The Table 1 on page 27/28 describes sufficient conformity between the child project and the overall outcomes of the Common Oceans program. Please address following comments:

1) Please include the Theory of Change diagram in this section to accompany the 'Logic to Project Delivery'.

2) Please ensure the descriptions of each Component, Outcome and Output under this section are aligned with the requested change(s) to Table B concerning alignment with the umbrella coordination project.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. Theory of Change Flow Chart now moved up from Annexes and added into Main text in CEO ER (P.14). ToC already in the main ProDoc text as Table 1.

Table 1 - Conformity with the Child Project identified how each Component is aligned. Additional Text has been added specifically to Component 4's Outcome and Outputs both in Table B and in the main text (P.18 onward 'CEO ER) to further clarify the linkages. A section has been further elaborated in the main text (Coordination with the overall Common Oceans Program and other associated Child projects. P. 26 of CEO ER) as well as a section on 'Knowledge Management' P.66 of CEO ER) both of which provide considerable detail on the alignment with the umbrella Program and the Global Coordination Child Project. Changes to Table B such as adding outputs would not be appropriate at this stage and are unnecessary as the linkages are clearly elaborated in the appropriate text as noted as well as in Table 1.

**4. Is there further elaboration on how the project is aligned with focal area/impact program strategies?**

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): No. This is not sufficiently established. Please revise.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

New section heading added on 'Alignment with Focal Area and/or Impact on Program Strategies' (P. 18 CEO ER) and relevant information gathered under and further elaborated

**5. Is the incremental reasoning, contribution from the baseline, and co-financing clearly elaborated?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): No. This is not sufficiently established. Please revise.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

The following headings have now been added into the document and the appropriate information collected and elaborated under them as appropriate:

?The proposed alternative scenario and the intended outcomes and components of the project? (P.11, CEO ER)

?Incremental/Additional Cost Reasoning? (P.22 CEO ER)

?Global Environmental Benefits? (P.23 CEO ER)

**6. Is there further and better elaboration on the project's expected contribution to global environmental benefits or adaptation benefits?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021(cseverin): No. This is not sufficiently established. Please revise.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

The following heading has now been added into the document and the appropriate information collected and elaborated under it as appropriate:

?Global Environmental Benefits? (P.23 CEO ER)

**7. Is there further and better elaboration to show that the project is innovative and sustainable including the potential for scaling up?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): No, please address following comments:

- 1) Please explain how the project is innovative in its design.
- 2) Please explain how the project has sustainability built into its design (not just that an exit strategy and sustainability plan will be developed). What role will the umbrella coordination project play in innovativeness, sustainability and upscaling?

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. The existing section on 'Innovativeness, Sustainability and Potential for Scaling Up?' (P. 25 CEO ER) has been further elaborated and expanded to address this in more detail including capturing the vision and objectives for same as articulated in the overarching Common Oceans Programme document
2. Please see expanded section on 'Innovativeness, Sustainability and Potential for Scaling Up?' (P. 25 CEO ER). The Program has an overall strategy for sustainability built into it and the Child Project will interact with these 'sustainability' processes as defined under this section. Nevertheless, the Child Project has a number of specific elements to support its long-term sustainability, not least of which being the SAP itself as a delivery from the Project which will have a built-in sustainability plan (partnerships, monitoring, funding) as with all SAPs. The role of the umbrella coordination project is also now clearly defined under this section. Please also refer to 'Component 3: Partnerships and Collaboration for the Sustainability of the Natural Resources of the Sargasso Sea Ecosystem' where the 'sustainability' from the SAP process is defined.

### **Project Map and Coordinates**

**Is there an accurate and confirmed geo-referenced information where the project intervention will take place?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): [Partly](#).

[The project map and coordinates should not only be referenced in Annex D. Please include the map and coordinates under this section so the CEO document can be read standalone.](#)

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

Map and Coordinates copied from Annex E into main text of CEO ER on P.42

### **Child Project**

**If this is a child project, is there an adequate reflection of how it contributes to the overall program impact?**



## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): No. This section is blank.

Please populate by adequately describing how this child project contributes to the overall Common Oceans Program impact.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

There is now a heading in the CEO ER 'Coordination with the overall Common Oceans Program and other associated Child projects' (P. 26) which, along with Table 1: Conformity between ABNJ Programme and Child Project (P.28) and the section on 'Coordination with Common Ocean Programme and other Relevant Child Projects on Monitoring' (P.72) provides a detailed description of how the Long-Term Goals are aligned to the Overall Program and contribute to the program impact. However, this was not initially placed in the correct section of the portal. This has now been rectified in UNDP's resubmission. This section has also been expanded to provide more clarity on this subject.

### **Stakeholders**

**Does the project include detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase? Is there an adequate stakeholder engagement plan or equivalent documentation for the implementation phase, with information on Stakeholders who will be engaged, the means of engagement, and dissemination of information?**

## Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please address following comments:

1) The section does not include a detailed report on stakeholders engaged during the design phase. The stakeholder table in an earlier section in the document sets out 'the expected inputs as agreed during the PIF/PPG process' includes these stakeholders. Please describe how these stakeholders were engaged during project design.

2) A skeletal stakeholder engagement plan is presented, which covers the means of engagement and dissemination of information. This plan is rather generic. Please ensure the fully prepared SEP will be fully tailored to the project's stakeholders

3) How will stakeholder engagement under this project tie into the overall Common

Oceans stakeholder engagement process? How will the project coordinate with other child projects on this front?

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. An entire new section has now been added into the Stakeholder Engagement Plan entitled 'Involvement of Stakeholders during Project Development' (P. 45 in CEO ER) that defines those stakeholders that took part in the Project Development and Submission process and also provides details of when they were involved and through which process or mechanism.
2. UNDP maintains that this SEP is both comprehensive and comparable to plans that most projects prepare and submit at CEO ER stage. The SEP was also reviewed and cleared by the UNDP Stakeholder Engagement Team (including as part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework) and represents the most detailed articulation possible of the SEP at this stage. Some elements will be further detailed during project implementation. For the sake of clarity this has been further elaborated in the 'Objective of the Stakeholder Engagement Process' section in the SEP (P.43). Specifically, this mentions that 'This [SEP] will be revised and evolved as the Project moves on The TDA-SAP process which has been thoroughly tried-and-tested by GEF over more than two decades, particularly through its LME projects, recognises the need for the TDA (or, in this case, the EDA) to A. further identify stakeholders that wish to engage and may not have done so at the development and submission stage, and B. for the SAP to identify the long-term stakeholder interaction processes and how these will be maintained and sustained. Both of these requirements form part of the project implementation process, which builds on the existing SEP and will ensure this the SEP becomes fully tailored and sustainable for the needs of the Project stakeholders through the SAP and therefore beyond the project lifetime
3. The aforementioned Section (P. 43) provides elaboration on how the SEP will link into the GCP Child Project of the overall Program and this is also elaborated under the main section on 'Coordination with the overall Common Oceans Program and other associated Child projects' on P. 26 of the CEO ER. For example, *'The overarching Program will support capacity building - mechanisms, tools and resources - to facilitate information exchange and coordination between key stakeholders over ABNJ governance and management arrangements'* and *'The GCP will track and report progress towards achieving program-level outcomes, in collaboration with the child projects, utilizing appropriate outcome indicators with well-defined targets, in order to track the cumulative impact of the program as a whole. A partnership strategy, to be fully developed during the formulation of the projects, will be key to ensuring that all stakeholders understand and commit to the Program goals and objectives as well as contributing to the success of their respective projects. The Global Coordination Project, responsible for program-wide coordination, knowledge management, communication and outreach, monitoring, and adaptive management, will play a vital role in ensuring that the potential for value-added offered by the programmatic*

*approach, in terms of effectiveness, impacts, partnerships, collaboration, sustainability and upscaling, is realized?. See P.26 and 27 of CEO ER for these sections in the text.*

#### **Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

**Has the gender analysis been completed? Did the gender analysis identify any gender differences, gaps or opportunities linked to project/program objectives and activities? If so, does the project/program include gender-responsive activities, gender-sensitive indicators and expected results?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please address following points:

1) A table of project components and outputs and gender-related activities and responses is present. Please ensure these activities and responses are embedded, to the extent possible, in Table B, the detailed description under the alternative scenario, and the Annex A results framework.

2) The results framework does include sex-disaggregated indicators for GEF core indicator 11 and for capacity building participation, but the document does not go far enough in describing gender responsive activities, sensitive indicators and expected results in these sections. Please revise accordingly.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. Gender-related activities are now embedded as appropriate under Table B in relation to Outcome 1.3 and Outcome 2.1, which reflect what is in the Alternative Scenario and in the Results Framework
2. Outcome 1 activities include gender mainstreaming as part of the Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (P.15 of CEO ER) and this will be captured within the final SAP. This latter point has been clarified also in the text under Output 2.2 (P. 18 of CEO ER).

The mechanism of ?How to address and achieve gender-responsive activities and outcomes is very well articulated in the Gender Analysis and Action Plan which was reviewed and vetted by UNDP Gender specialists.

#### **Private Sector Engagement**

**If there is a private sector engagement, is there an elaboration of its role as a financier and/or as a stakeholder?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly.

Please provide a stronger narrative on the overall role the private sector will play as a stakeholder in the project. implementation. Reference to the International Cable Protection Committee is noted. However, which other private sector actors will be targeted and what value can they provide to project implementation? What about the shipping, tourism and fisheries industries? What is the strategy to engage the private sector? How will private sector engagement under this project tie into the overall Common Oceans private sector stakeholder engagement process? How will the project coordinate with other child projects on this front?

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

There are a number of references in the document that identify the role of the private sector be it shipping (particularly with IMO) or fisheries. Where appropriate the text has been strengthened and expanded (e.g. P.10) to provide further elaboration. Much of the role of the private sector as a stakeholder will, of course, be defined through the EDA process (see Outcome 1.1, 2.1 and 2.2 to clarify). For Example, Outcome 1.1 for developing the Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis states that "the Project will use this EDA process to develop closer links with the Private Sector, engaging them in the provision of relevant data, into the discussions and analyses on risks to their stakeholder interests and overall threats and root causes as a prelude to development of the SAP". Outcome 2.2 states "As with defining the appropriate actions to address and mitigate impacts, the SAP development process will include close engagement with and input from the Private Sector as important potential partners thus ensuring their full engagement and contribution to the immediate and longer-term sustainability of actions committed to under the SAP" (P.17 of CEO ER). This includes Activities focusing on "Establish a SAP Development and Drafting team involving appropriate stakeholders and partners including relevant private sector representation?". See P. 17 of CEO ER also for this statement.

The list of Collaborating Partners (including the Private Sector) is now referenced under the "Baseline Scenario" description on P. 10 of the CEO ER.

P. 10 (Baseline Scenario) and P.44 (Stakeholder Engagement Plan) of CEO ER now include further information on which Private Sector bodies the Sargasso Sea Commission is already involved with and will bring into the Project. This has been further expanded to include information relating to Cruise Lines International Association (the world's largest cruise industry trade association), the International Chamber of Shipping (the global trade association for shipowners and operators) and the

World Shipping Council (representing the 'voice' of liner shipping and working closely with policymakers and industry groups across the globe).

Private Sector Engagement (P. 57 onward) includes answers to the above including the strategy to engage private sector (and other stakeholders). For example 'groups of stakeholders with specific interest or concerns (e.g. RFMOs, NGOs, private sector) may request the Project to convene an open Stakeholder Meeting for discussion of pre-selected issues and concerns. The outcome and proposed solutions to the issues and concerns raised will then be carried forward to a formal 'Stakeholder Consultation Workshop' (P. 48 of CEO ER).

Defining 'value' to project implementation by each private sector stakeholder is a nebulous concept at this stage of project development and submission and would be more appropriately developed through the EDA which is specifically designed to address such approaches. The strategy to engage the private sector is captured under the appropriate Components and Outputs.

#### **Risks to Achieving Project Objectives**

**Has the project elaborated on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved? Were there proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation?**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseveirn): Partly.

Please upload a separate matrix that clearly focuses on the specific risks associated with Covid-19 should be included Please provide a more thorough analysis of the potential impacts (including both opportunities and constraints) of the pandemic to the project (both short term and long term). Please also describe the risks of the pandemic to project sustainability and how these will be overcome.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

[UNDP Response, 3 February 2022](#)

The project addresses the pandemic in a number of places and even includes a specific monitoring activity under the various Outcomes (e.g. Output 4.1.4. - Quarterly and Annual reviews of progress (Quarterly Reports and PIRs) with main focus on RF Indicators and Targets as well as any issues or problems what may arise as a result of the on-going COVID pandemic (see P. 20 of CEO ER). The Risk section further discusses COVID.

The Risk Register Table (Annex I) also provides focus on the significantly problematic risks being created as a result of the COVID pandemic within its Matrix (see Risk # 5

and 10 in Annex I). The PIR will also specifically address any issues or problems that may arise as a result of the on-going COVID pandemic (See P. 70 of CEO ER)

There is a specific section on 'Management under COVID 19 Constraints' which was in the Project Document but did not get included initially in the CEO ER - this has now been rectified (see P. 62 of CEO ER). There is also a reference to the role and function of the Project Board (under Institutional Arrangements and Coordination - P.61 of CEO ER) which states 'Provide guidance on new Project risks, and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks, with a particular focus on the problems arising from the on-going COVID pandemic'

**Coordination**

**Is the institutional arrangement for project implementation fully described? Is there an elaboration on possible coordination with relevant GEF-financed projects and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly.

Please describe whether there is any coordination with other non-GEF initiatives in the project area planned.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

**Agency Response**

[UNDP Response, 3 February 2022](#)

A new section has now been added to address this request. 'Coordination with other Non-GEF Initiatives (P. 27 of the CEO ER)

**Consistency with National Priorities**

**Has the project described the alignment of the project with identified national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under the relevant conventions?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly.

Please elaborate on the project's consistency with the *Hamilton Declaration* (only mentioned in brief in this section) and national priorities of signatories underlying the statement (including in various sectors).

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

### Agency Response

[UNDP Response, 3 February 2022](#)

A new section has been added as 'Consistency with National Priorities' to address this (P. 63 of CEO ER). This also provides considerable detail about the consistency with the Hamilton Declaration which effectively represent the 'national' interests in this ABNJ

### Knowledge Management

**Is the proposed 'Knowledge Management Approach' for the project adequately elaborated with a timeline and a set of deliverables?**

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please address following comments:

1) Please include a summary table of key deliverables, budget and timeline.

2) Please describe how the project knowledge management will feed into the overall programmatic knowledge management for the Common Oceans Program and specifically into the Global Coordination Project for the Common Oceans ABNJ Program ('GCP Project') GEF ID 10626 and harmonized with its Component 2 programmatic knowledge management, communications and outreach, specifically: 'Output 2.1.1 Integrated Program KM and Communication Strategy developed and implemented with common messaging and guidance for coordinated, consistent and harmonized communication?', 'Output 2.1.2 Guidance and support provided to the projects for consistent and harmonized dissemination of knowledge products that capture lessons learned. Consolidation of lessons learned across the Program into a narrative of the programmatic impacts?', and 'Output 2.3.1 Consistent and branded outreach and awareness raising efforts for civil society stakeholders communicated by child projects, and coordinated at the Program level.'.

3) Please ensure the coordinating principles for the Common Ocean Program on knowledge management, as noted under the Coordination section, are described here and sufficiently embedded into Table B, the alternative scenario description, and the results framework.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. This (key deliverables, budget and timeline) has been addressed and discussed under a new section on Knowledge Management ? see below
2. An expanded and detailed section on ?Knowledge Management? (P. 66 onward in CEO ER) now addresses all of these concerns.
3. An expanded and detailed section on ?Knowledge Management? (P. 646 onward in CEO ER) now addresses this concern and are captured in Table B as appropriate, specifically under Component 4 and its Outcomes/Outputs.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

**Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?**

### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly. Please address following points:

- 1) Please describe how the project M&E will feed into the overall programmatic M&E for the Open Oceans Program and specifically into the Global Coordination Project for the Common Oceans ABNJ Program (?GCP Project?) GEF ID 10626 and harmonized with its Component 1 Output 1.3.1: ?Harmonized programmatic M&E system to guide adaptive program management and reporting?.
- 2) Please ensure the coordinating principles for the Common Ocean Program M&E, as noted under the Coordination section, are described here and sufficiently embedded into Table B, the alternative scenario description, and the results framework.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

The additional section on ?Coordination with the overall Common Oceans Program and other associated Child projects? (P. 26 of CEO ER) explains how the programmatic approach will facilitate better coordination of knowledge management under one strategic program framework and harmonization of project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to facilitate reporting. It further explains that ?*The GCP will assist the child projects in delivering their respective outcomes by providing support to the projects on coordination, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management, and communications to ensure cohesiveness and consistency at the Program level?*.



Furthermore, an additional section has now been added to the end of the Monitoring (P.72 of the CEO ER) and Evaluation section that explains the relationship with and interaction between the Sargasso Child Project and the GCP and Common Oceans Programme.

#### **Benefits**

**Are the socioeconomic benefits at the national and local levels sufficiently described resulting from the project? Is there an elaboration on how these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of GEBs or adaptation benefits?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): [Partly](#).

[Please elaborate on how this child project will support/feed into the socioeconomic benefits aimed to be achieved under the Common Oceans Program.](#)

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### **Agency Response**

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

The following explanatory text has been added to the section on Global Environmental Benefits (P. 23 of CEO ER).

?This focus on socioeconomic benefits, although not captured in any detail within the main Program document, is important here for the Sargasso Child Project as any attempt to define and adopt a stewardship or management approach within an ABNJ like the Sargasso will need to have its foundation set within the intrinsic value of the goods and services provided by such an ABNJ. This is why the Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis and the Strategic Action Programme have such specific activities related to capturing the baseline on socioeconomics (Fisheries, tourism, dependent livelihoods, shipping, etc.) and the monitoring and review of findings from the Project that include a publication 'Sargasso - The State of the Marine Environment and Socioeconomics'.

#### **Annexes**

**Are all the required annexes attached and adequately responded to?**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): [Partly](#).

1) Annex A: Project Results Framework. Please include an indicator under Component 4 pertaining to the project's contribution to coordination of knowledge management,

monitoring and evaluation under the Common Oceans Program and the umbrella coordination project.

Please embed the principles guiding the projects contributions to the functioning of the Common Oceans Program into the Results Framework. This is being asked of all child projects.

While project support to and engagement with IW:LEARN is noted as Output 4.1.3 in the Results Framework, please also include IW:LEARN activities as a separate indicator under Component 4.

2) Annex B: Responses to Project Reviews. Partly.

To respond to Germany, it is noted that ?the specific issue of avoidance of abandoned, discarded or otherwise lost fishing gear and the need for improved marking and tracking of such will be addressed through both Outcome 2 and Outcome 3. This has been added to Output 2.1.1 as a specific activity.?

This does not expressly appear as an activity under Output 2.1 on page 23 of the portal submission. Please explain where this is in the document or revise accordingly.

3) Annex E: Project maps and coordinates. Yes, but incorrectly labeled as Annex D

4) Annex F: GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet. Please upload, this is missing

5) Annex G: GEF Project Taxonomy Worksheet please upload, this is missing

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes, annexes E, F and G are part of the CEO Endorsement document uploaded by the agency.

## Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. Component 4 indicators and targets in RF amended to capture the project?s contribution to coordination of knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation under the Common Oceans Program and the umbrella coordination project. (P.77-78 CEO ER)

Component 4 indicators and targets in RF amended to capture new Indicator for IW:LEARN (P.77-78 CEO ER)

2. Apologies; the addition to Outcome 2 seems to have been lost in the various rewrites and iterations. This has now been amended and appropriate text added to Outcome 2.1 description as well as Activities (CEO ER P.17). The Potential Inputs [of stakeholders] into Project-Related Activities under Table 2: Partnership/Stakeholder List (Existing Initiatives, Roles and Expected Inputs and/ or Guidance into Project Activities) has also been amended where it addresses 2.1.1. to reflect this (P.35 & P.38 of CEO ER)
3. ?Maps and Coordinates? Annex was correctly labelled and referenced as Annex D in the ProDoc, as there is no requirement in this Project for original template Annex D which is the **Calendar of Expected Reflows (if non-grant instrument is used)** ? therefore Annex E moves up to become Annex D. To address GEFSec? concern, Annex D has been added back into the document with the clarification that it is **Not Applicable** so that the ?Maps and Coordinates? can now revert back to Annex E. (P.82 CEO ER) to avoid any possible confusion.
4. UNDP will ensure that the GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet is uploaded appropriately to the portal
5. UNDP will ensure that the GEF Project Taxonomy Worksheet is uploaded appropriately to the portal

#### **Project Results Framework**

#### Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): Partly, as noted above, please address following points:

- 1) Please include an indicator under Component 4 pertaining to the project?s contribution to coordination of knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation under the Common Oceans Program and the umbrella coordination project.
- 2) Please embed the principles guiding the projects contributions to the functioning of the Common Oceans Program into the Results Framework. This is being asked of all child projects.
- 3) While project support to and engagement with IW:LEARN is noted as Output 4.1.3 in the Results Framework, please also include IW:LEARN activities as a separate indicator under Component 4.

8th of February 2022 (cseverin): Yes

#### Agency Response

UNDP Response, 3 February 2022

1. Component 4 indicators and targets in RF amended to capture the project?s contribution to coordination of knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation

under the Common Oceans Program and the umbrella coordination project. (P.77-78 CEO ER)

2. This has now been captured under Component 4 of the Results Framework (P. 77-78 CEO ER)

3. Component 4 indicators and targets in RF amended to capture new Indicator for IW:LEARN (P.77-78 CEO ER)

**GEF Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Council comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**STAP comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Convention Secretariat comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Other Agencies comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**CSOs comments**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Status of PPG utilization**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Project maps and coordinates**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

**Does the termsheet in Annex F provide finalized financial terms and conditions? Does the termsheet and financial structure address concerns raised at PIF stage and that were pending to be resolved ahead of CEO endorsement? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

NA

Agency Response

**Do the Reflow Table Annex G and the Trustee Excel Sheet for reflows provide accurate reflow expectations of the project submitted? Assumptions for Reflows can be submitted to explain expected reflows. (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**Did the agency Annex H provided with information to assess the Agency Capacity to generate and manage reflows? (For NGI Only)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Agency Response

**GEFSEC DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Is CEO endorsement recommended? (applies only to projects and child projects)**

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

15th of December 2021 (cseverin): No, please address above comments and resubmit

11th of February 2022 (cseverin): Please address comments and resubmit.

7th of March 2022 (thenshaw): No, please address above comments and resubmit.  
Thank you.

6th of April 2022 (thenshaw): Yes, recommended for CEO Endorsement.

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>		

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief reasoning for CEO Recommendations**

This project is one of five child projects under the 'Common Oceans' programme (developed in collaboration by FAO, UNDP, UNEP and GEF) which aims to demonstrate and promote more comprehensive processes and integrated approaches to the sustainable use and management of the ABNJ.

The project objective is to facilitate a collaborative, cross-sectoral ecosystem-based sustainable stewardship approach for the Sargasso Sea (as an ABNJ of significant importance) through improvements in the knowledge base and strengthened frameworks for collaboration. Despite its importance as a unique ecosystem, the increasing range and impact from threats to the Sargasso Sea demonstrate the weakness of the current system of ocean governance in addressing cumulative impacts of human activities on the high seas.

The project aims to provide a concrete demonstration (which can be replicated and scaled up elsewhere) of how this stewardship strategy and partnership can play a leading role in sustaining and restoring the health, productivity and resilience of an ABNJ. Importantly, the project would innovatively be the first application of the TDA-SAP approach within an ABNJ setting.

Global environmental benefits deriving from the project will include delivery of some 685 million hectares of area of marine habitat under improved practices and a sound demonstration that could pave the way for better global management of ABNJ and BBNJ elsewhere.