



## **Fisheries and Ecosystem Based Management for the Blue Economy of the Mediterranean - (FishEBM MED)**

### **Part I: Project Information**

#### **GEF ID**

10560

#### **Project Type**

FSP

#### **Type of Trust Fund**

GET

#### **CBIT/NGI**

☐ CBIT

☐ NGI

#### **Project Title**

Fisheries and Ecosystem Based Management for the Blue Economy of the Mediterranean - (FishEBM MED)

#### **Countries**

Regional, Albania, Algeria, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey

#### **Agency(ies)**

FAO, UNEP

#### **Other Executing Partner(s)**

#### **Executing Partner Type**

**Other Executing Partner(s)**

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and Mediterranean Action Plan (Barcelona Convention)

**Executing Partner Type**

Others

**GEF Focal Area**

Multi Focal Area

**Taxonomy**

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

**Rio Markers****Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 0

**Climate Change Adaptation**

Climate Change Adaptation 1

**Duration**

48 In Months

**Agency Fee(\$)**

691,027

**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	3,500,000	14,000,000
IW-2-4	GET	3,500,000	14,000,000
BD-1-1	GET	150,000	600,000
BD-2-7	GET	123,973	600,000
Total Project Cost (\$)		7,273,973	29,200,000

**B. Indicative Project description summary**

**Project Objective**

To reverse the over-exploitation of select commercial living marine resources by enhancing the capacity of Mediterranean countries to manage fisheries, including through the application of ecosystem-based management tools, in their blue economy development pathway. Footnote: Egypt and Bosnia-Herzegovina are finalizing internal approval processes of the PIF and may join the project during the PPG phase.

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
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Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
1: Strengthened capacity to manage commercial fisheries, with particular focus on SSF.	Technical Assistance	<p><b>Outcome 1:</b></p> <p>Fisheries managers and stakeholders use sound information generated on the status of key commercial fisheries to support improved management and selected value chain interventions, particularly for SSF, in view of maximizing the sustainability of production.</p> <p><i>Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 1.1: number of countries where regular data collection campaigns/surveys have been carried out to collect biological and socio-economic data</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Potential target: 8)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 1.2: percentage of priority species for which the quality of stock assessments has improved</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Potential target: 70%) and number of management plans/measures adopted</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Potential Target: 7)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 1.3: number of value chains studies carried out</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p>	<p>Output 1.1:</p> <p>Regional data collection for fisheries, including SSF and recreational fisheries, processed in support to socio-economic analysis.</p> <p>Output 1.2:</p> <p>Investments in management plans and measures promoted, including for SSF and recreational fisheries.</p> <p>Output 1.3:</p> <p>Value chains modelled in view of identifying best practices and entry points for</p>	GET	1,827,593	9,000,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
2. Enhanced integration of emerging monitoring, control and surveillance technologies in the fight against IUU fishing.	Technical Assistance	<p><b>Outcome 2:</b></p> <p>Fisheries management better accounts for the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Mediterranean Sea and incorporate control measures, including through the use of emerging technologies.</p> <p><i>Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 2.1: number of countries where a methodology for the assessment of IUU fishing has been applied (Baseline: 0)</i></p> <p><i>Potential target: 8)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 2.2: percentage of integration of IUU estimates in stock assessments of main commercial species (Baseline: 0)</i></p> <p><i>Potential target: 70%)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 2.3:</i></p> <p><i>number of national legislation retrieved and made available on a regional repository/database (Baseline: 0)</i></p> <p><i>Potential target: 50)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 2.4:</i></p> <p><i>number of MCS systems launched/solutions applied at the country level following tests and trials</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0)</i></p>	<p>Output 2.1:</p> <p>Losses in national economies generated by IUU fishing activities assessed through the application of an ad hoc methodology at the country level.</p> <p>Output 2.2:</p> <p>Impacts of IUU fishing on main commercial marine living resources incorporated in stock assessments.</p> <p>Output 2.3:</p> <p>Information on legal frameworks relating to IUU fishing and</p>	GET	1,450,000	6,000,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
3: Integrated ecosystem based management tools and ecosystem approach to biodiversity protection and sustainable fisheries	Technical Assistance	<p><b>Outcome 3:</b></p> <p>Healthier marine ecosystems with more productive fisheries in place, through the synergistic application of ecosystem-based conservation/ management tools and improvements in fisheries tenure governance.</p> <p><i>Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: <a href="#">[1]</a></i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 3.1:</i></p> <p><i>number of new area-based management tools in place</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 12)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 3.2:</i></p> <p><i>percentage of integration number of GES for commercial fisheries into monitoring plans</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 70%) and number of adaptation strategies to climate change formulated</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 5)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 3.3:</i></p> <p><i>number of measures to address the negative effects of non-indigenous species and other potential stressors</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 6)</i></p>	<p>Output 3.1:</p> <p>Area-based management tools identified and applied to reduce overexploitation of fisheries and enhance ecosystem productivity.</p> <p>Output 3.2:</p> <p>Monitoring of good environmental status for commercial fisheries and biodiversity ensured, together with established interrelation of pollution impacts and sustainable use of marine ecosystem services, and adaptation strategies to climate change formulated.</p>	GET	1,450,000	6,000,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
4: Innovative blue economy solutions accounting for the fishery sector.	Technical Assistance	<p><b>Outcome 4:</b></p> <p>Blue economy at the regional and country level promoted through the identification of existing hurdles via a concerted approach among relevant stakeholders.</p> <p><i>Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 4.1:</i></p> <p><i>number of investments mobilized in the context of marine spatial planning</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 5)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 4.2:</i></p> <p><i>number of studies on innovative solutions prepared in view of the dissemination of blue economy related knowledge</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 4)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 4.3:</i></p> <p><i>number of pilot NAP+ carried out</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 1)</i></p> <p><i>OUTPUT 4.4:</i></p> <p><i>number of actors participating in new partnerships in place</i></p>	<p>Output 4.1:</p> <p>Analysis carried out on how the fishery sector can mobilize investments, including in diversification of livelihoods (e.g. aquaculture planning, pescatourism), against the background of marine spatial planning.</p> <p>Output 4.2:</p> <p>Factsheets on successful innovative solutions for the fishery sector and sustainable use of marine ecosystem services prepared in view of attracting blue economy</p>	GET	1,700,000	6,000,000



Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
5: Knowledge management and outscaling.	Technical Assistance	<p><b>Outcome 5:</b></p> <p>Integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management promoted at the regional and global level.</p> <p><i>Proposed indicators of the outcome being achieved could include: [1]</i></p> <p><b>OUTPUT 5.1:</b></p> <p><i>Number of experience notes and publications to support investments</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target:</i></p> <p><i>8)</i></p> <p><b>OUTPUT 5.2:</b></p> <p><i>Number of</i></p> <p><i>awareness raising communication tools presented in regional and global fora on the objectives, progress and accomplishments of the GFCM-MAP approach</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 15)</i></p> <p><b>OUTPUT 5.3:</b></p> <p><i>Number of outreach and communication strategy</i></p> <p><i>(Baseline: 0</i></p> <p><i>Proposed target: 1) and of meetings attended at the global level as relevant to the attainment of GEF objectives under</i></p>	<p>Output 5.1:</p> <p>Initiatives promoted to support countries in encouraging strategic investment enabling, among others, public and private partnerships.</p> <p>Output 5.2:</p> <p>Lessons learnt and best practices disseminated to showcase the benefits of the concerted GFCM-MAP approach in aligning different national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Output 5.3:</p>	GET	500,000	1,000,000

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
Sub Total (\$)					6,927,593	28,000,000
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
GET					346,380	1,200,000
Sub Total(\$)					346,380	1,200,000
Total Project Cost(\$)					7,273,973	29,200,000

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(\$)
Others	GFCM	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	7,000,000
Others	MAP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	Investment mobilized	3,000,000
Donor Agency	EU (DG MARE, DG NEAR, LIFE)	Grant	Investment mobilized	4,000,000
Government	Albania	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000
Government	Lebanon	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000
Government	Montenegro	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,500,000
Government	Morocco	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,000,000
Government	Tunisia	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,500,000
CSO	MAVA Foundation	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,200,000
Government	Libya	Grant	Investment mobilized	500,000
Government	Turkey	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,000,000
Government	Algeria	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,500,000
			<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>	<b>29,200,000</b>
Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified				

Aligned with the GEF Co-financing Guidelines, the investment mobilized comprises all relevant investments by project partners in the Mediterranean that are not operating or operational costs. A cursory summary of mobilized investments is provided below: The FAO currently runs several projects in the Mediterranean 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. Albania's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Algeria's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Fisheries in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Lebanon's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Libya's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the General Authority for Marine Wealth in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Environment General Authority in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Montenegro's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Morocco's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Tunisia's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Turkey's mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture in support to the fishery and aquaculture sectors. Moreover, mobilized investment consists of projects executed by the Ministry of Environment in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. MAVA Foundation's projects in participating countries focus on making fisheries more sustainable by limiting impacts on stocks and habitats. The Foundation increasingly invests into larger project portfolios funded by donor consortia which are delivered by large partnerships.

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

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Trust Fund</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Focal Area</b>	<b>Programming of Funds</b>	<b>Amount(\$)</b>	<b>Fee(\$)</b>	<b>Total(\$)</b>
FAO	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	5,000,000	475,000	5,475,000
UNEP	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	2,000,000	190,000	2,190,000
UNEP	GET	Montenegro	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	273,973	26,027	300,000
<b>Total GEF Resources(\$)</b>					<b>7,273,973</b>	<b>691,027</b>	<b>7,965,000</b>

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required

☐

PPG Amount (\$)

200,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

19,000

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
FAO	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	143,000	13,585	156,585
UNEP	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	57,000	5,415	62,415
Total Project Costs(\$)					200,000	19,000	219,000

**Core Indicators**

**Indicator 2 Marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
125,845.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Indicator 2.1 Marine Protected Areas Newly created**

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
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**Indicator 2.2 Marine Protected Areas Under improved management effectiveness**

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
125,845.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Akula National Park TBC	125689	Select	125,845.00						<input type="checkbox"/>

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	Mediterranean Sea			
Count	1	0	0	0

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

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Mediterranean Sea	4			<input type="checkbox"/>
Select SWE				

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)
Mediterranean Sea	4			<input type="checkbox"/>
Select SWE				

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)
Mediterranean Sea	1			<input type="checkbox"/>
Select SWE				

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



Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Mediterranean Sea	1			
Select SWE				

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)
238,000.00			

Fishery Details

Sardina pilchardus 145000 Engraulis encrasicolus 45000 Merlucius merluccius 23000 Parapenaeus longirostris 8000 Solea solea 5000 Mullus barbatus 4000 Squilla mantis 2000 Nephrops norvegicus 4000 Aristeus antennatus 1600 Aristaeomorpha foliacea 200 Pagellus bogaraveo 100

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

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

**Methodology to estimate core indicator 2 target:** The determination of Core Indicator 2, and the proposed methodology to determine it as included herein, will depend on the endorsement by GEF eligible Mediterranean countries of the project proposal. After their endorsement it will be possible to carry out consultations on the coastal areas to be targeted. Bearing this in mind, the methodology applied to provide what is expected at PIF stage takes into account: - that the percentage (%) of the nationally designated MPAs is reported to be 1.31 % (3,297,200 Hectares) for the whole Mediterranean Sea (source: MedPAN and SPA/RAC, 2019); - that 90.05 % of the total Mediterranean surface under designation is located in European waters; - that GEF Mediterranean eligible countries cover roughly 10% of the total Mediterranean surface under designation (i.e. 0,13 %); - that a conservative (50%) assessment of the potential hectares in the beneficiary countries is being used at the PIF stage, namely 0.065 % (50% of 0,13 %); - that the proposed project would contribute, to the maximum extent possible, to 80% of ongoing national efforts of MPA designation out of the proposed conservative assessment (i.e. 0.05 %, which represents the 125,845 hectares expected at PIF stage). Methodology to estimate

core indicator 8 target: 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 Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (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. Comment about core indicator 11 targets: Data on the number of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender will be collected in the framework of a gender assessment that will be developed during the PPG phase.

## 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):

*Notwithstanding the innovative aspect advocated by the proposed project in combining the GFCM-MAP mechanisms, the main focus of the following systems description, including root causes and barriers described, is on the current state of Mediterranean fisheries. This because the proposed project is conceived of as a complementary GEF intervention to the ongoing MAP-executed “Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security (GEF ID: 9607)”, justified by the need to accelerate progress towards GEF7 Core Indicator 8.*

#### a) The root causes

*a1. A sector overlooking ecosystem-based approaches:*

The Mediterranean has sustained fisheries exploitation since ancient times. Today, industrial, semi-industrial and small-scale fisheries coexist in the region, each using a large variety of fishing gear to harvest a multi-species marine environment extremely rich in biodiversity. In contrast with other major fishing areas in the world, where fishing fleets extend their operations well onto the high-seas to target select stocks, the Mediterranean Sea generally lacks large mono-specific fisheries and instead exploits a variety of benthic and pelagic stocks of fish, as well as molluscs and crustaceans. In addition, since the Mediterranean is a semi-enclosed sea, exploited stocks are mostly shared among the fishing fleets of littoral States, which calls in turn for the need to ensure very strong cooperation and coordination among them in the elaboration and implementation of those measures which are essential for the sustainable management of the fisheries. This was corroborated by the TDA for the Mediterranean Sea, which some 15 years ago identified and analyzed in some detail the major environmental concerns in the region, including the decline of biodiversity. In the statement of the causes of such concerns the TDA included invasive species, introduced species, overfishing, by-catch, adverse effects of fishing gear and uses on marine habitats (e.g. bottom trawling), inadequate or non-existent legislation and available enforcement means. Yet only limited attention was given to these concerns, as opposed to that received by other concerns which were outlined in the TDA, until recent years.

While the fishery sector has traditionally been engraved in the socio-economic fabric of the Mediterranean region, its output compared to other sectors on the rise of late decades (e.g. tourism, oil and gas exploration, etc.) has been often overlooked. To a certain extent, the traditional contribution by the fishery sector has been progressively played down as the littoral States moved on to focus on targeting new uses of the Mediterranean Sea. With a reported annual production amounting to roughly 827,000 tons of fish though, the fishery sector offers employment opportunities to several hundred thousand 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. It is precisely in these communities where this sector provides a source of livelihoods throughout the Mediterranean (particularly in non-EU countries – see figure 1 below).

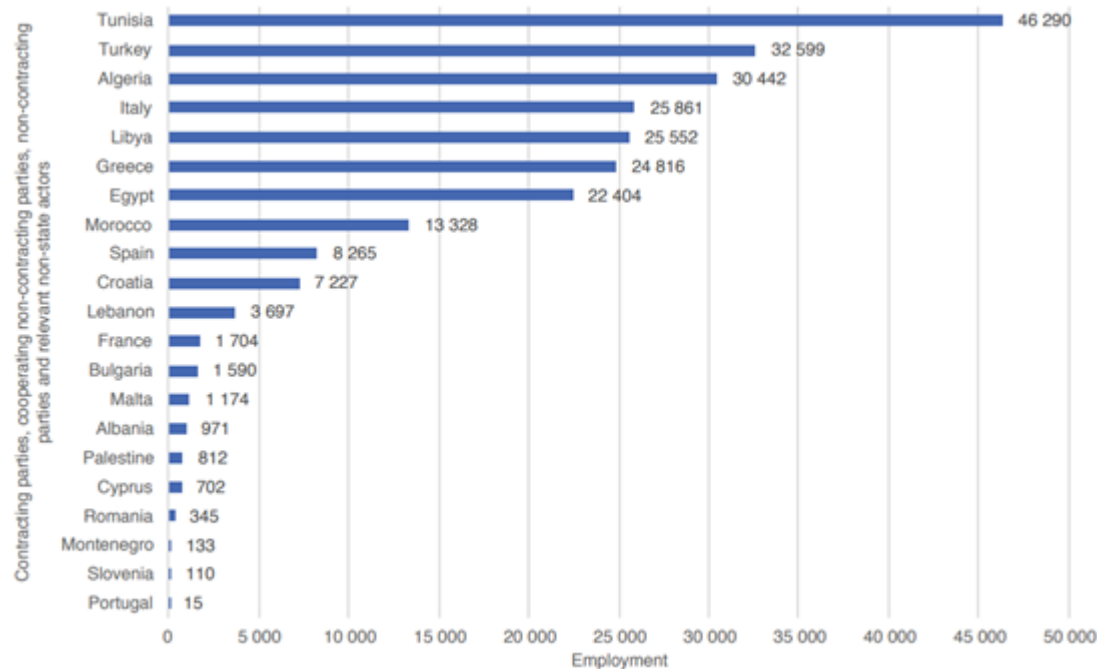


Figure 1 – Total employment onboard fishing vessels in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea<sup>[1]</sup>

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

#### *a.2 Markets not accounting for the predominant SSF:*

83% of Mediterranean fisheries is 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 Mediterranean 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 59% of employment in fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea, but only account for 26% of revenue, whereas for large-scale vessels this is inversed (see figure 2 and 3 below). On average, small-scale fishers earn about half of what their peers on trawlers and purse seiners can expect to make, despite SSF being generally considered to be more selective and to have a lower environmental impact (see figure 4 below). 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 middlemen and 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 limited investments could produce considerable socio-economic impacts. Should SSF be given the consideration they arguably deserve, in light of data and figures, the entire Mediterranean fishery sector would benefit from it.

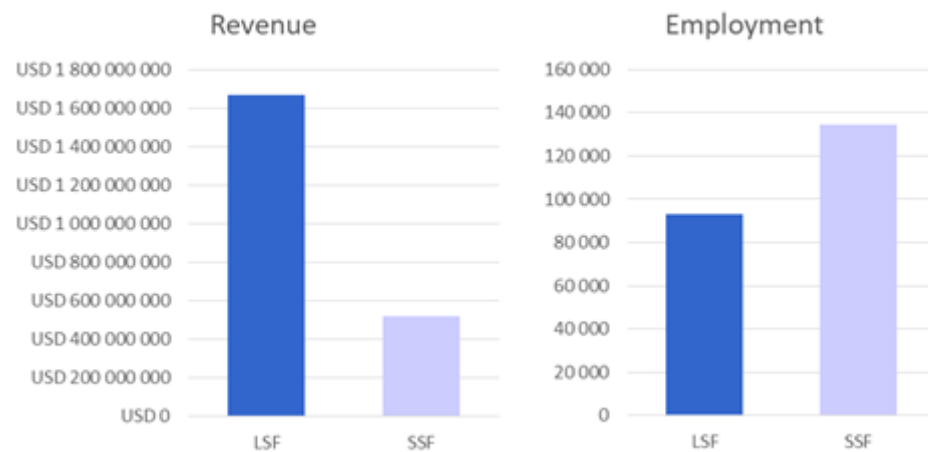


Figure 2 – Total annual revenue from large- and small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean<sup>[1]</sup>

Figure 3 – Total annual employment in large- and small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean<sup>4</sup>

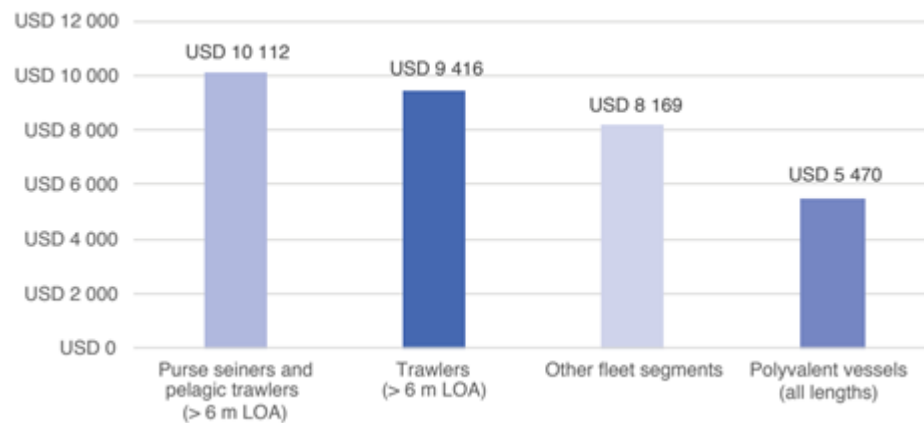
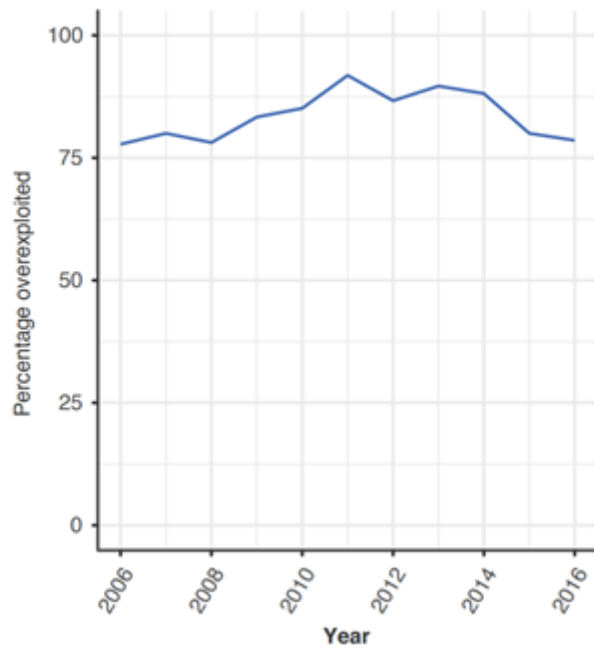


Figure 4 – Remuneration per full-time equivalent by fleet segment in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea<sup>[1]</sup>

Noting the demand for fresh and local fish in the Mediterranean market, as well as the fact that the majority of Mediterranean countries remain net importers of fish products, as there is high demand from other regions of the world – with only seven countries currently exporting more fish than they import (Morocco, Turkey, Tunisia, Croatia, Malta, Albania and Greece) – public and private sector investments, particularly in SSF, could easily generate a high return, as highlighted by a number of best practice cases in the Mediterranean region[2]<sup>2</sup>. This would still be nullified without accounting for the different processes and stressors threatening the sustainability of Mediterranean fisheries. Though social and economic considerations are always the first to be made and debated, biological and environmental considerations matter as much when it comes to fisheries. The general poor state of main Mediterranean commercially important stocks currently reduces the capacity of marine ecosystems to provide socio-economic benefits for coastal communities. This cannot be addressed without processing a considerable amount of data and information at the same time.

*a.3 Multiple drivers to unsustainability:* considering the role the fishery sector plays in providing livelihoods for rural coastal communities and considering the dependence of this sector on the long-term sustainability of Mediterranean living marine resources, the findings of recent stock assessments of main commercial fish stocks in the Mediterranean are concerning. A significant majority of stocks assessed by the GFCM – 78% – are regarded as overexploited, which means more fish are being caught than the population can naturally replace. High as this percentage is, though, it has slightly decreased since 2014, when the figure was 88% (see figure 5 below). This reflects the difference recent management plans introduced by the GFCM have made, which for several decades have been lacking as countries were not effectively coordinating their policies. Absent further investments in management and adequate level of capacity to adapt fishing operations to GFCM measures at the national level, only very little progress can be expected.



**Figure 5 – Percentage of stocks in overexploitation since 2006**

Almost half (47%) of stocks in the Mediterranean currently show low biomass: this may reflect the long time-frame over which they have not been properly managed by countries, diminishing their capacity to replenish (see figure 6 below). The most seriously overexploited species in the Mediterranean is European hake, which – due to its presence in most trawl fisheries – shows an overexploitation rate 5.8 times higher than the target. In addition, some species such as sardines and anchovies have a low fishing pressure, however, they show a low biomass which could be linked to other environmental effects apart from fisheries. Even so, aside from hake, overexploitation indexes have been slightly decreasing in those species for which management plans have been adopted (see figure 7 below).



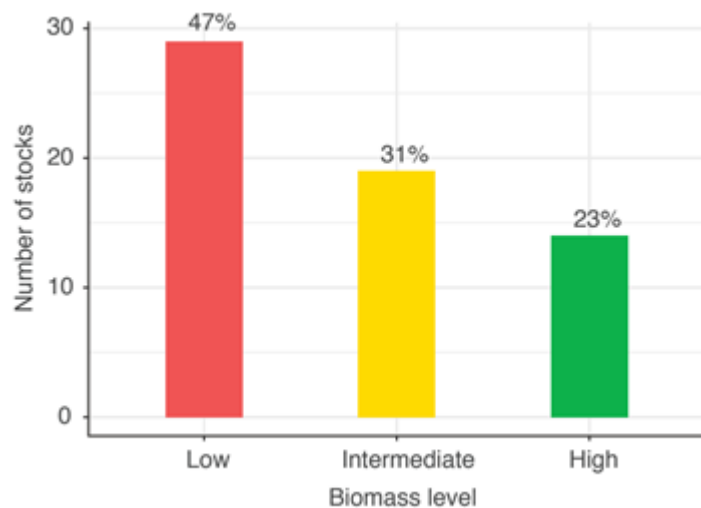


Figure 6 – Number of stocks (and percentage on top of the bars) at low, intermediate and high biomass levels in the Mediterranean Sea, based on information available for 62 stocks over a combination of 20 Geographic Subareas (GSAs) and 14 species[1]

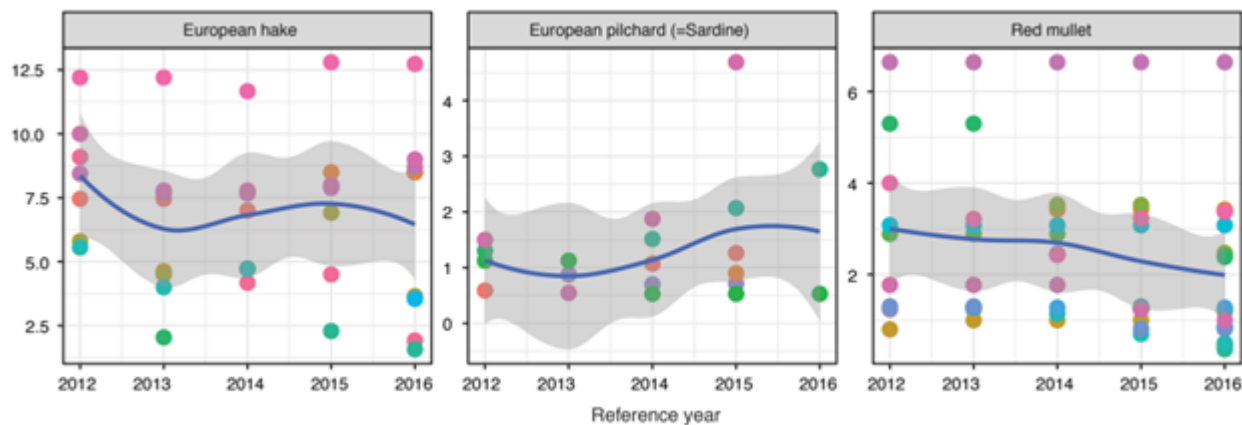
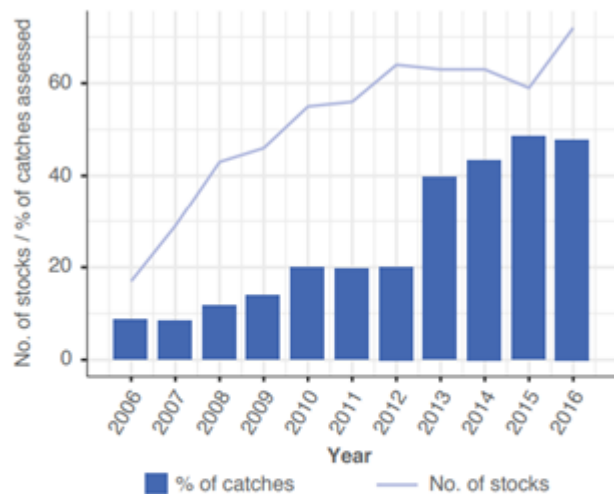


Figure 7 – Trend (Loess smoother) in the overexploitation index ( $F_{current}/F_{MSY}$ ) of selected species in the Mediterranean Sea since 2013[1]

The quality of scientific advice provided by the GFCM has been improving significantly in recent years (see figure 8 below) and, concurrently, the GFCM has advanced towards the management of fisheries in its area of application. However, advice in support of management still addresses only a percentage of exploited stocks, marine populations, ecosystems and areas. This might not be enough to revert the effects of prolonged unsustainable management. With this in mind, the GFCM, in consultation with experts and managers, has identified a list of priority commercial species for which advice should be consistently produced, based on both the socio-economic importance and conservation concern of these species.<sup>[2]</sup> Having regard to this justification and the source of data used, these species will be targeted by the proposed project to revert their overexploitation trend and are identified under appendix B.



**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<sup>[1]</sup>**

*a.4 Lack of capacity:* in past decades, the limited capacity of national administrations to implement sound and adequate management measures has been a major constraint, therefore also hampering coordinated efforts at the regional level. In recent years, however, the regional organizations in place, namely the GFCM and the MAP, have been instrumental in building capacity at the national level. The incremental value of the GEF intervention sought via the proposed project is therefore to further empower GEF eligible

Mediterranean countries in the ecosystem-based management of commercial stocks thanks to continued and enhanced support by these regional organizations. These organizations have entered into a memorandum of understanding to formalize their cooperation as the countries in the region, participants in both, noted that they have been successful in effectively providing technical assistance and facilitating knowledge-sharing. By aligning and coordinating country actions with that of regionally agreed strategies, the GFCM and the MAP have made significant strides in advancing agreed upon transboundary priorities, while building capacity. The long-term objective being to ensure that capacity is transferred to national level stakeholders, thereby enabling greater autonomy in both technical implementation of policies formulated and financial management. Currently, lack of capacity is being experienced at country level in connection with the ability to generate scientific knowledge, including at the level of human resources addressing scientific/technical issues of relevance to the work of the GFCM and the MAP, the ability to properly collect and analyze data, the ability to transpose regional policies into national legislation and monitor their implementation and the ability to set in motion administrative actions needed in support to the fishery sector (e.g. establishment of VMS systems, launching of surveys, replacement of equipment such as fishing nets and refrigerators, etc.) Previous GEF interventions in the Mediterranean Sea, and particularly under the MedProgramme have been decisive to addressing the main root causes of lack of capacity in connection with degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems focusing, among others, on Integrated Water Resource Management, Water-Food-Energy and Ecosystems Nexus, Land base Sources of Pollution and investments on water security and MPAs. However, the MedProgramme lacks a fishery component. It is therefore important, however, that the fishery sector not be left behind; the successful model that is being applied by the MedProgramme to conserving the marine environment can be replicated to ensure that favorable conditions are created towards integrating fisheries into existing national National Action Plans (“NAPs”; section 2.a refers) and in view of mobilizing investments, either public, private or by public-private partnerships.

The proposed project will capitalize on the GFCM-MAP synergies not only to build capacity of the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries in the fishery sector, but also in order to demonstrate that healthy marine environment and sustainable fisheries are an integral part of blue economy investment-driven policies. This will enhance capacity building at country level in the context of a blue economy where fisheries are fully integrated and actively contribute. A different understanding of the fishery sector will emerge thanks also to the progress expected under the proposed project in addressing existing barriers.

**b) Barriers preventing the management of resilient and sustainable fisheries:**

The major barriers to be addressed by the proposed project are overfishing, IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices (direct stressors) and the negative effects of anthropogenic activities on commercial fish stocks, with pernicious impacts on local coastal economies and national capacity (indirect stressors). More precisely:

*b.1 Overfishing.* The most serious threat to the conservation of marine living resources in the Mediterranean Sea to the extent that it seriously puts at risk the socio-economic well-being of coastal communities in littoral States. The Mediterranean region has been strengthening collaboration towards the common management of fisheries resources. Enormous 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 trigger 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 being made, 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 Mediterranean 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 Mediterranean region. The proposed project will support the capacity building needed to reduce overfishing and improve understanding at country level of data-limited stocks for improved fisheries governance and biodiversity conservation outcomes. Since weak enforcement of the management regimes is also known to contribute to overfishing of many commercial stocks, the proposed project will aim at leading to improvements and updates in the regulatory frameworks of the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries.

*b.2 IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices.* It is recognized that better management of fisheries in the Mediterranean is greatly challenged by a wide array of illegal activities, spanning from the use of dynamite and poison fishing in some coastal communities to the widespread disregard of common rules in place, leading to a culture of non-compliance. 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. Also, analysis of trends is difficult due to existing uncertainties, and when it comes to a semi-enclosed sea like the Mediterranean, specific regional estimates should be made in the remit of robust scientific advice for management purposes. It is stressed that Mediterranean countries, 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. Through the proposed project, support will be provided to enhance efforts to quantify the extent and magnitude of IUU fishing. A methodology will be tested at the country level to this end. At the same time, as a quantification of IUU fishing should lead to renewed national commitment to eradicate IUU operations, the proposed project will strive to harmonize monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing vessels. In this regard, the proposed project will involve the private sector to increase investments in best practices such as catch documentation schemes, traceability systems, eco-labelling, gear sensors and ad hoc technologies, such as solar-power based transponders and drones. Also, mitigation strategies to reduce by-catch, discards and the impacts that abandoned fishing gears have on living marine resources are in high demand.

*b.3 Climate change, biodiversity loss and marine pollution, including marine litter, and non-indigenous species.* It is recognized that anthropogenic 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. The proposed project calls for the creation of a regional/Mediterranean Sea adaptation strategy to cope with potential effects of climate change and non-indigenous species on fisheries consistent with the SAP-BIO. 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 Mediterranean fisheries. Other indirect stressors that are known to be currently aggravating the situation include ocean noise pollution, acidification, micro-

plastic and abandoned fishing gear. While the ongoing MedProgramme tackles heads-on issues relating to marine pollution, the proposed project will be crucial to elaborate the aforesaid adaptation strategy for key Mediterranean fisheries whilst taking into account the consequences that other anthropogenic activities can have on fisheries conservation.

*b.4 Limited coordinated and integrated programming.* There are many programmes, projects and initiatives implemented and planned in the Mediterranean region. Some are sector specific while others are geographically focused but these are often limited in scope and informed by a siloed approach. This siloed approach to tackling issues relating to marine environment and living resources is known to lead to inefficient use of resources, lost opportunities, duplication and, in the worst case scenario, conflicts. Where there is greater coordination of efforts at regional scale, as seen in the partnership between OSPAR and the NEAFC, implementation of proposed actions is more efficient and effective, including avoiding/minimizing conflicts. Over time, cooperation and collaboration has increased progressively among competent agencies with sectoral mandates over the Mediterranean Sea as well, especially between the GFCM and the MAP. Greater impact and stronger outcomes can be expected if both agencies jointly programme actions so that each other's comparative advantages and mandates are capitalized upon and so that together the impact of their action is greater than operating independently.

As a result of these barriers, which echo the findings of the TDA, market opportunities are not fully seized and the benefits of fisheries value chains are not leveraged in the Mediterranean region. This, coupled with the growing regional demand for fish, adds new perspectives to the overall diagnostic of the current state of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas thereby triggering ad-hoc remedial actions for the fishery sector.

## **2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects:**

2.a Baseline scenario: In 2018 approximately 80,000 fishing vessels were operating in the Mediterranean region. Compared to 2016, represents a 5% decrease. Similarly, trends in landings have also been decreasing. In the 1990s, annual landings of commercial fish species from the Mediterranean Sea exceeded 1,000,000 tons; since then landings have declined to approximately 850,000 tons. In addition to the overall state of the major commercial living resources, this change can be linked to the adoption of two separate Ministerial Declarations in the context of the GFCM (one in 2017 for commercial stocks and one in 2018 for SSF, 2.b refers). Such renewed commitment has helped advance some initial positive fisheries-related trends across the region. Also, it has helped increase awareness of the problems afflicting the fishery sector in the broader context of an ecosystem-based management approach. Promoting this approach is a priority not only for the GFCM but also for the MAP.

These two regional agencies have been working with Mediterranean countries to elaborate regional strategies and initiatives for many years. Thanks to the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2012, they have been making strides towards a better understanding of their mutual mandates, exchanging information on their programmes of work and trying to avoid duplication or conflicts. Irrespective of their regional programmes, strategies and action plans, which each agency is successfully executing, there is rarely joint participation in common activities. Were the impacts of respective efforts by the GFCM and the MAP to be more closely aligned, there could be wider positive implications for the Mediterranean countries which, while calling for a greater collaboration between these agencies, have provided little guidance on how such collaboration should be operationalized. Arguably, there are two common priority areas of work that could facilitate integration between the work of GFCM and the MAP: the ecosystem approach, which is a pillar of the work of both agencies, and the TDA-SAP/NAP system, which can be linked to the blue economy.

It is worth recalling that in connection with past GEF interventions Mediterranean countries have already addressed those baselines, agreeing on how to deal with environmental concerns through two separate SAPs (i.e. the SAP-MED and the SAP-BIO), which then led to the adoption of NAPs to move forward with the implementation on the ground. However, these interventions have not helped to bridge the gap between the sectoral mandates of the GFCM and the MAP which resulted in neither priority area having been fully capitalized on to integrate the work by these agencies. As a result, most recent NAPs updated by Mediterranean countries have prioritized measures aimed at achieving good environmental status in several areas, including commercial fisheries, against the background of ecosystem approach based ecological objectives. Yet, issues relating to the sustainable management fisheries have been left behind in the NAPs, although such management is essential to achieve good environmental status of marine habitats and the conservation of numerous emblematic species of the Mediterranean Sea.

There is currently a keen interest in maintaining Mediterranean fisheries sustainability and ensuring their profitability, as the economic output of the fishery sector is considerable, producing a total estimated annual revenue of over USD 2.44 billion. Whereas this 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 Mediterranean region, including the value of fisheries-dependent industries, is at least 2.6 times the value at first sale [1] or approximately USD 6.3 billion. Similarly, according to latest statistics and data by GFCM, jobs in the fisheries sector have been increasing. And, by some estimates, this fisheries-dependent employment is expected to account for as much as half of all employment in the fisheries sector,[2] underlining the need to improve socio-economic benefits. Realizing that these social and economic benefits depend on a resilient environment of healthy habitats could build further momentum on combining the efforts by the GFCM and the MAP, incorporating for instance MAPs work on habitats into GFCM fisheries management at the regional and national levels.

Under the framework of the proposed project, the sectoral mandates of the GFCM and the MAP would be fully aligned to facilitate integration of work in the execution of regional level activities. This would make sure that biological and environmental considerations inform the socio-economic dimension of fisheries management while the socio-economic dimension of fisheries management is factored into biological and environmental conservation. Moreover, with a view to contribute also to the alignment of national policies relating to the protection of marine environment and the sustainable management of fisheries, the proposed project would pursue the development of a pilot NAP+ in at least one country, where the implementation of ecosystem-based conservation and management tools will be tested, as relevant to the implementation of the SAP-BIO. Such a pilot would be instrumental in fostering a more holistic environment-fisheries approach, mainstreaming GFCM–MAP regional mandates into a national blue economy strategy that, in the context of the pilot NAP+, could lead to new partnerships and facilitate broader transversal networks.

Montenegro, which is expected to pilot the anticipated NAP+ (output 4.3 refers), is a perfect candidate with its 293 km of coastline along the Adriatic Sea and its maritime zone extending up to 12 nautical miles offshore, covering an area of about 2,500 km<sup>2</sup> with a maximum depth of 1.233 m<sup>2</sup>. The diversity of geological formations, landscapes, climate and soils, as well as the position of Montenegro on the Balkan peninsula and Adriatic Sea, have created conditions to host biological diversity with very high values, making the country one of the biological “hot-spots” of European and world’s biodiversity.[3]<sup>3</sup> Major areas for biodiversity include the area around Boka Kotorska Bay, which is an important spawning site and probably the best-studied area biologically, and has a number of rare species such as the mollusks *Tijsira orahoviciana* and *Mitra zonata*. A range of human activities reportedly threatens many of these species: pollution from land-based sources, such as discharges of excess nutrients and hazardous substances, marine litter, overfishing

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and degradation of critical habitats. These are among the key factors responsible for biodiversity loss, including fisheries. As much as other activities to be undertaken in the remit of the proposed project, the pilot NAP+ in Montenegro can't happen without a proper integration of the work by the GFCM and the MAP.

The baseline scenario described above is embedded in the theory of change under Section 3 and is sufficiently robust to support the incremental reasoning of the expected GEF intervention, set to be the first ever promoting a concerted approach between a RFMO and a RSC. In this regard, the proposed project will leverage the outcomes of the associated baseline projects, as listed below, catalyzing transformational change.

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[1] Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment: Fourth National Report of Montenegro to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Vasilije Buskovic & Milena Kapa (Eds). Podgorica, September 2010

[2] 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.

[3] Sauzade, D. & Rousset, N. 2013. *Greening the Mediterranean fisheries: tentative assessment of the economic leeway*. Plan Bleu, Valbonne, France. Available at: <https://planbleu.org/sites/default/files/publications/greeningmediterraneanfisheries.pdf>

#### 2.a Associated baseline projects:<sup>[4]</sup>

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 Mediterranean 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 USD 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 Mediterranean basin. The GFCM also plays an important coordinating role to make sure that different interventions, as relevant to Mediterranean 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 Mediterranean littoral States, the so-called MedFish4Ever Declaration towards the sustainability of fisheries,[1] which renewed their political commitment[2] 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 national capacity. The MedFish4Ever Declaration was

supplemented by another declaration, also adopted by the competent Ministries in the countries, to promote sustainable SSF via a wide-ranging regional plan of action.[3] Together these two declarations can bring about a transformational change that a GEF intervention focusing on Mediterranean Sea fisheries would contribute to attain.

MAP related projects: in addition to the aforementioned MedProgramme (GEF ID 9607), the MAP is executing/executed several projects in the Mediterranean region. These interventions, aiming to the achievement of the Good Environmental Status (GES) of the Mediterranean Sea, are supported by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and by several donors, mainly the GEF and the European Union (EU). The partnership between the GEF and the MAP delivered several strategic products between 1997 and 2016, among them: 1) the Mediterranean Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA); 2) the Strategic Action Programme to Address Pollution from Land-Based Activities (SAP-MED); and 3) the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity (SAP-BIO) and the Mediterranean National Actions Plans (NAPs). In its later stage, between 2009 to 2016, this process was supported by two GEF investments, the “Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem – MedPartnership” (GEF ID 2600 – US\$ 12,891,000) and the “Integration of Climatic Variability and Change into National Strategies to Implement the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean ClimVar&ICZM” (GEF ID 3990 – US\$ 2,298,545). The two projects fostered a coordinated effort to setup and catalyze the policy, and legal and institutional reforms necessary to reverse the degradation trends affecting the Mediterranean LME and set the base for the development of the MedProgramme including its fishery dimension represented by the current proposed Project. The EU, through the EcAp MED I and II projects, supported the ecosystem approach (EcAp) strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. The EcAp MED I and II projects, funded with a total of approx. US\$ 4,000,000, achieved many objectives including the development of national integrated monitoring programmes in line with regional common indicators for biodiversity, fisheries, non-indigenous species, coast and hydrography. Linking fisheries information to other data has enriched collection of information for ecosystem based management in the context of marine spatial planning. In addition the Barcelona Convention and MAP system is developing several activities related to the implementation of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity (SPA/BD Protocol) in the Mediterranean. Particularly relevant to the proposed project, is the recently launched th “Post-2020 SAP BIO” process (Decision IG.24/7, Barcelona Convention COP 21, Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019), to align the SAP with the Sustainable Development Goals, harmonized with the CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework through the optic of the Mediterranean context.

FAO related projects: the FAO, through its Blue Growth Initiative, currently runs several projects in the Mediterranean region aiming at integrating the role of fisheries and aquaculture in blue economy policies. These projects include four regional projects ad hoc to specific Mediterranean sub-regions (AdriaMed, CopeMed, EastMed and MedSudMed), the BlueHope project, focusing on Algeria, Tunisia and Turkey, and several technical cooperation projects at the country level of varying budgets. FAO’s indicative contribution to the proposed project totals USD 3,000,000.

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). It also funds projects for the development of fisheries and aquaculture in Mediterranean countries (e.g. the recently launched project “Appui à la gestion durable des ressources halieutiques et aquacoles en Tunisie” totaling a EUR 5.6 million budget). Additional funds in support to the fishery sector are available through DG NEAR, which actively promote regional cooperation in neighboring countries via the implementation of projects complementing national assistance programmes and 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).

LIFE Programme: LIFE is the EU’s funding instrument for the environment and climate action created in 1992. The current funding period 2014-2020 has a budget of EUR 3.4 billion. Its objective is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental and climate policy and legislation by co-financing projects with European added value. LIFE co-finances projects in the environmental sector in particular in the areas of air, chemicals, green and circular economy, industrial accidents, marine and coastal management, noise, soil, waste, water, and the urban environment. The programme provides action grants for pilot and demonstration projects to develop, test and demonstrate policy or management approaches. It also covers the development and demonstration of innovative technologies, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EU environmental policy and law, as well as best practices and solutions. In this remit, the project LIFE ELIFE (Elasmobranchs Low-Impact Fishing Experience) was launched in October 2019, totaling a 3,360,445.00 EUR budget, with a view to improve the conservation of elasmobranch species (sharks and rays) which have been under growing pressure by promoting best conservation practices in the Mediterranean Sea, including in bottom trawl and longline fisheries.

Conservation International related projects: under the GEF IW focal area the “Long-term Financial Mechanism to Enhance Mediterranean MPA Management Effectiveness” pursued the establishment of a Conservation Trust Fund to enhance the management effectiveness of Mediterranean MPAs through improving their long-term financial sustainability in the following pilot countries: Albania, Morocco and Tunisia. The GEF Project Financing amounted to USD 908,275 and was executed by the Association for Sustainable Financing of Mediterranean MPAs (M2PA).

World Bank related projects: among the projects implemented by the World Bank in the Mediterranean region the following are worth mentioning: 1) Adriatic Sea Environmental Pollution Control Project (I) and 2) MED Integrated Coastal Zone Management-Mediterranean Coast. These projects have been implemented mainly at the country level. In addition, a loan agreement between Montenegro and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Institutional Development and Agriculture Strengthening Project, “MIDAS-2”) was signed in 2018, amounting to roughly USD 35 million. The MIDAS-2 project includes four components, one of which being the modernization of the fisheries sector of Montenegro, aiming to finance public sector investment to enhancing the productive capacity of the sector with investments in basic infrastructure and equipment and providing fishermen with regulated safe, and sanitary landing facilities and access to port.

MAVA Foundation related projects: created in 1994, this foundation has become a champion of global conservation with a broad approach embracing sustainable economy, green finance and responsible resources. MAVA has been supporting in particular projects in the Mediterranean region focusing on freshwater, coastal and island wetlands, seagrass, high trophic level fish, cultural landscapes and priority commercial species in order to make fishing more sustainable by limiting impacts on stocks and habitats. In 2018, the total amount of MAVA funded projects in the Mediterranean region was roughly EUR 3.8 million. Moving towards ending grant-making in 2022, MAVA is putting greater emphasis on funding project portfolios – delivered by groups of partners working together, and collaboratively funded by donor consortia.

International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) related projects: the CIHEAM is a Mediterranean intergovernmental organization composed of 13 Member States (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey) established in 1962, which operates through 4 separate institutes. As a key player in multilateral cooperation in the fields of sustainable agriculture and fisheries, food systems, coastal and rural development, its mission

revolves around various objectives which it strives to achieve vocational activities, networked research, cooperation and political dialogue. The CIHEAM acts as implementing agency for several project, of relevance to the baseline scenario. For instance, the ongoing MedAID project (Mediterranean Aquaculture Integrated Development) aims at increasing the overall competitiveness and sustainability of the Mediterranean marine fish-farming sector, throughout the whole value chain and is worth EUR 7 million.

The expected GEF intervention will allow the proposed project to take stock of and build on lessons learnt so far and further the results of projects executed or ongoing in the Mediterranean region, as relevant to the sustainable management of fisheries. It will also take advantage of the formal framework of cooperation between the GFCM and the MAP, thereby concretely operationalizing their memorandum of understanding and complementing respective efforts deployed by both. 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.

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[1] More info on the MedFish4ever Declaration is available here: <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/medfish4ever/en/>

[2] In 2004, the first ministerial declaration for Mediterranean fisheries was adopted in Venice. This is when Mediterranean countries put forth for the first time their political commitment to Mediterranean fisheries.

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

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

3.a The proposed alternative scenario. This project will address the problem of the over-exploitation of Mediterranean fisheries deepened by limited coordination and integration of regional initiatives. In this regard, the vicious circle between lack capacity at country level, the depletion of living marine resources and the execution of initiatives in sectoral silos, eventually will have to be broken. To this end, the Executing Agencies can significantly contribute to this process by meeting the targets under the Core Indicators being addressed. The thrust of the proposed project is to overcome this problem at the regional level in close coordination with the countries by reversing the trend in the loss of marine biodiversity.

The innovative GFCM-MAP partnership, working across all components, will identify, test and evaluate mechanisms to programme actions jointly and mutually contribute to shared outputs and improved fisheries and biodiversity outcomes. This will provide models and approaches for regional agencies to move from current coordination and information sharing, to integration of work and the consequent widening of their relationship to more efficiently and effectively deliver in the context of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. This enhanced relationship, initially at the regional level, will also provide the foundation for similar relationship building at the national level, as part in particular of the implementation of NAPs described below.

Previous GEF interventions in the Mediterranean Sea have been pivotal to support the TDA and its SAP-BIO but, though some fisheries related issues were clearly identified, the support to invest in the fishery sector could not be fully seized thus far. The mobilized investment in capacity building under the proposed project will strengthen fisheries management, including via increased focus on the ecosystem approach and small-scale fisheries, while also curbing IUU fishing through improved monitoring control and surveillance and access to technology. The engagement of the MAP in fisheries-related activities will facilitate a fully integrated ecosystem management process by the GFCM that would enhance fisheries and biodiversity outcomes since resources and efforts from both agencies can be leveraged at regional level and, through NAPs, at national levels too. However, as noted above, fisheries have yet to be adequately taken into account in the context of NAPs developed. This gap will be addressed by the proposed project which would capitalize on the results expected from the execution of activities regional in scope under components 1, 2 and 3, to finally integrate fisheries into the NAP+ to be piloted in one country,<sup>[1]</sup> benefitting from the integration of work between the GFCM and the MAP and against the background of the MedProgramme.

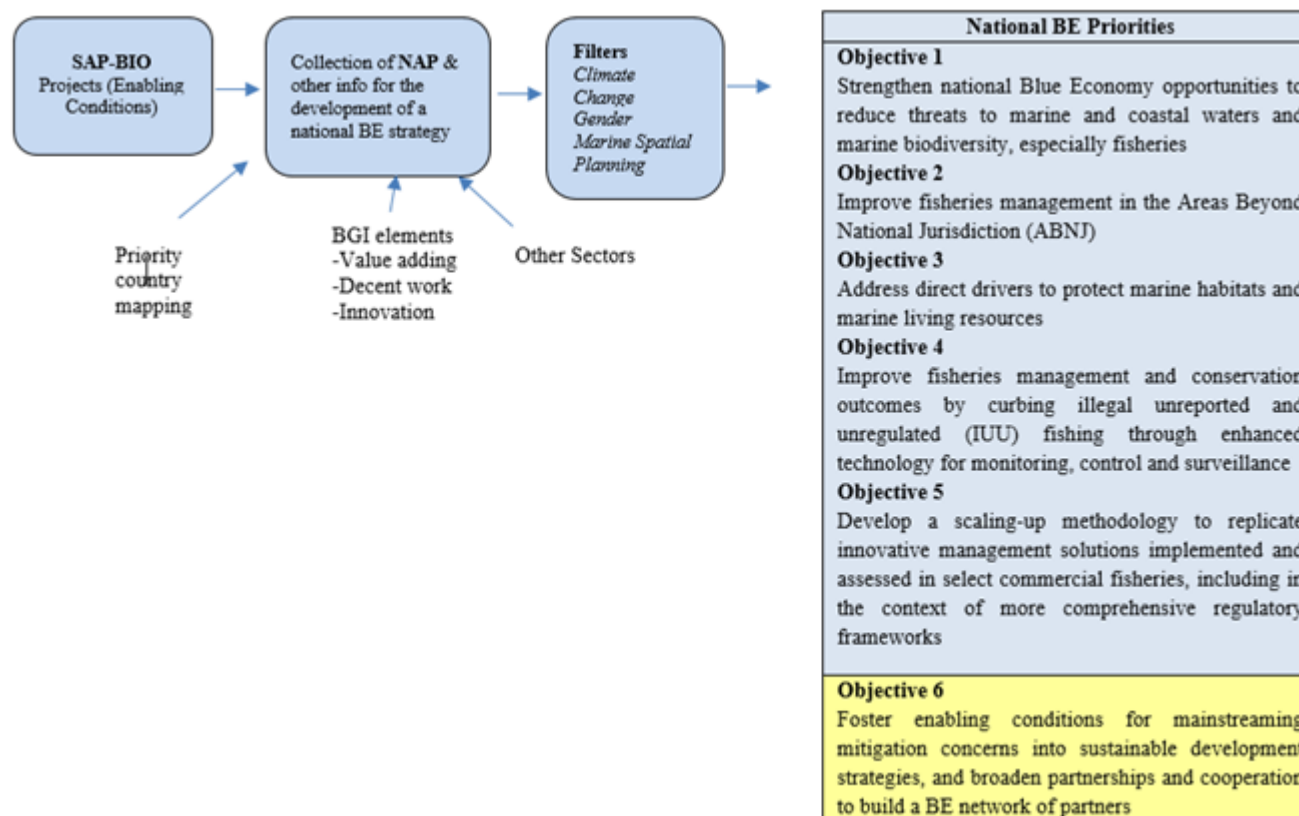
The pilot NAP+, based on a blue economy strategy, will take advantage of this unique partnership as the integrator of regional fisheries and environmental programmes, which has been missing at the regional and national levels. A NAP+ can facilitate investment in the various sectors through integrated or joint national actions in a coherent and holistic framework that engages private and public investments. This approach will enable the pilot country to pursue selected outcomes at national level and to mainstream the increased sustainability and profitability of fisheries by down-scaling objectives linked to fisheries (to be driven by the GFCM) and to marine environment/biodiversity (to be driven by the MAP) from the regional to the national level (diagram in Box 1 refers). At the PIF stage, six of such objectives have been identified, as relating to the relevant regional activities. They stem from national blue economy priorities yet to be adequately addressed in the NAP context, consistent with previous findings in the SAP-BIO as well as with GFCM policies on fisheries and aquaculture. Progress expected in the execution of regional activities under the different components of the proposed project will therefore inform the incorporation into the NAP of the interrelated identified objectives.<sup>[2]</sup> As a result, the “+” would steer the enhanced contribution by sustainable and profitable fisheries at the regional level into a national blue economy strategy. This is where the experience garnered thus far by the MAP with the elaboration of NAPs would correlate to the work expected from the GFCM in spearheading the piloting of the NAP+ in connection with regional activities on fisheries under the proposed project. Consistent with the memorandum of understanding in place, lessons learnt from this RSC would be therefore capitalized upon by its sister RFMO.

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<sup>[1]</sup> This would be Montenegro for the time being, without prejudice to the possibility that pilots NAP+ are tested in other countries.

<sup>[2]</sup> Component 1 activities of the proposed project are expected to inform the integration into the NAP of Objectives 2 and 5 listed in Box 1; Component 2 activities of the proposed project are expected to inform the integration into the NAP of Objectives 2 and 4 listed in Box 1; Component 3 activities of the proposed project are expected to inform the integration into the NAP of Objectives 1 and 3 listed in Box 1. Finally, all Components in the proposed project are together expected to inform the integration into the NAP of Objective 6 in Box 1.

#### **Box 1 - Framework for NAP+ (potential national blue economy strategy)**



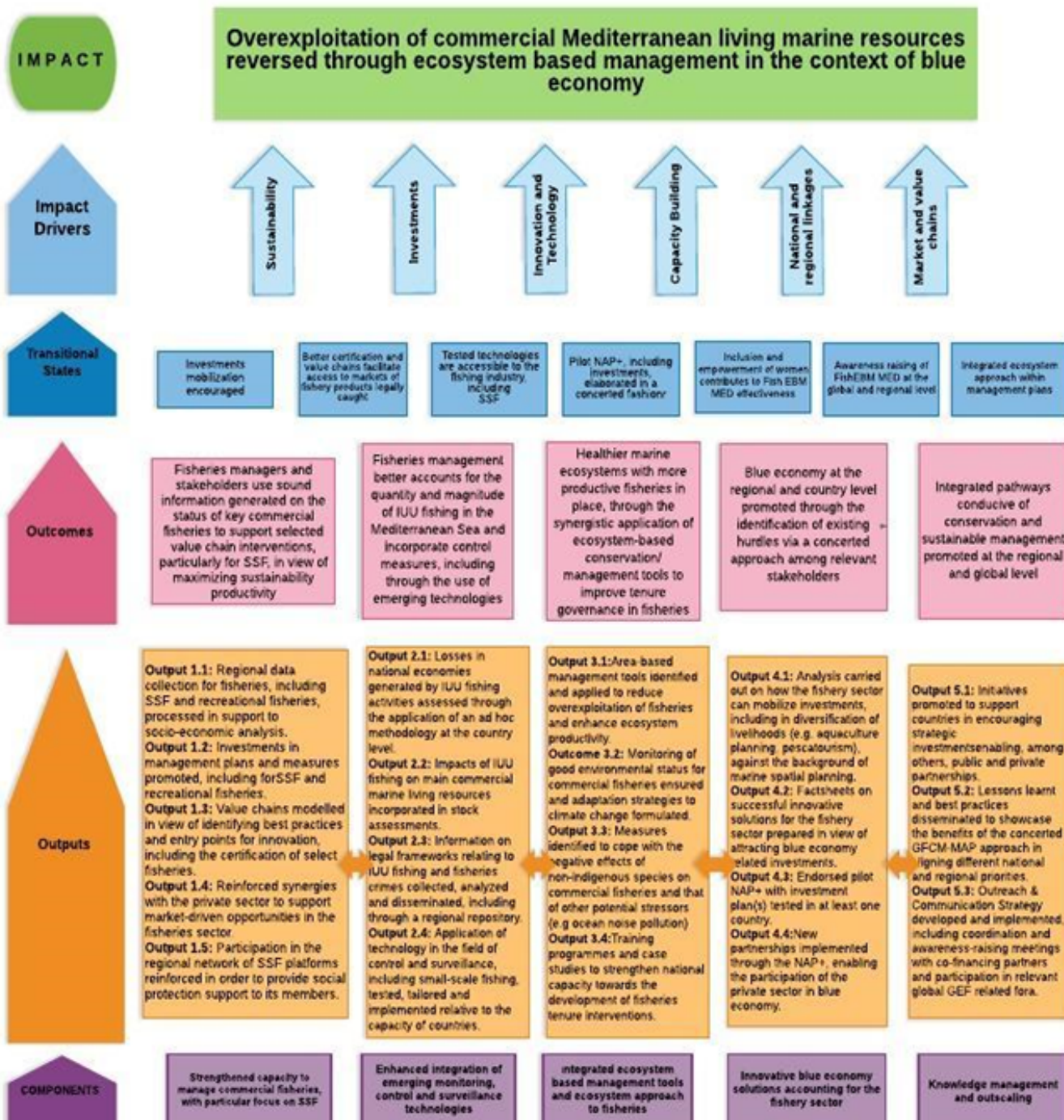
The experience stemming from correlating the national activities, as captured in the NAP+, and the multi-country activities of the proposed project is expected to facilitate the replication of best practices in other GEF Mediterranean eligible counties and the consequent scaling up of methodologies needed to catalyze transformational change, thanks to the positive influence of the GFCM-MAP partnership (component 5).

The transformational change to resilient, productive and sustainable fisheries affected by various adverse impacts, will impact on the vicious circle described above by bringing about more focus on the development of value chains, controls, management plans and other tangible measures that have the potential to mobilize investments and break the cycle of dependence from external support, that is still prominent at the national level in the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries. This calls for an execution of the project driven by the GFCM and the MAP under the alternative scenario because the lack of capacity at the country level to properly oversee implementation of foreseen activities would greatly hamper transformational change. With that said, as previously mentioned, the long-term objective would be to build sufficient national capacity to facilitate ever-increasing autonomy at the national level and eventually break the cycle of dependency. Under the proposed alternative scenario, it will be possible to fully understand the economic potential of the Mediterranean fishery sector and to dwell upon an improved knowledge of the social relevance of fisheries. This will unlock public and private investments so that the intervention by the GEF will accelerate progress towards the long-term objective of autonomy at the country level.

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 in these sectors because it prioritized social and economic benefits rather than single-user interests. Under the proposed alternative scenario, the proposed project will adhere to the FAO's Blue Growth Initiative as it emphasizes the need for growth in the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries particularly in the fishery sector. From the GEF perspective, following the inclusion of the blue economy in the Programming Directing for the 7<sup>th</sup> Cycle, this can be regarded as a 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 interventions while capturing the specificities of the fishery sector.

The logical framework of the proposed project is rooted in the Theory of Change diagram available below in figure 9 and as a separate PDF file in the Roadmap section of the Portal. 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 reflects lessons learned from the MedProgramme and prioritizes investments in the fishery sector where the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries need a transformational change. The underlying rationale of the Theory of Change of the proposed project is that the coastal populations along the southern and eastern Mediterranean shores will benefit from improved sustainable fisheries, more stable livelihoods, enhanced capacity, gender equality, an environment-fisheries mutually supportive relationship and enhanced adaptation to climatic change and variability.

**Figure 9 - ToC – the proposed alternative scenario (a high quality image is available as a separate PDF document)**





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

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

Work under this component will 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 and based on data collected by countries which they are expected to use to inform the formulation of scientific advice by the GFCM (Output 1.1 refers). These Outputs will enable the assessment of the socio-economic contribution of fisheries to the regional economy and, most notably, that of GEF eligible Mediterranean countries as the component will focus in particular on the sustainability of the approximately 200,000 tons of fish caught annually by SSF, upon which approximately 134,300 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 southern and eastern Mediterranean to access northern Mediterranean 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 (e.g. the invasive species of blue crab), or others. In this regard, Outputs 1.3 and 1.4 will target select value chains that concern GEF eligible Mediterranean countries to maximize economic returns and social benefits, while minimizing detrimental effects on natural habitats and aquatic resources. Special attention will be paid to small and medium-sized businesses, because of their potential to deliver economic and social benefits, particularly those for women and youth. Efforts will be made to 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 made to strengthen SSF producer organizations in order to enhance their bargaining power vis-à-vis potential buyers and input suppliers and to reinforce social protection systems in view of addressing the risks and vulnerabilities associated with SSF, 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 Mediterranean 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.<sup>[1]</sup>

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

Work under this component will deliver the assessment of the quantity and magnitude of IUU fishing in the Mediterranean Sea and the responsiveness of existing control measures by fostering the use of emerging technologies. Project activities will apply in the GEF eligible Mediterranean 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 Mediterranean 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 Mediterranean 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 regard, the component will rely, among others, on the involvement of the private sector, most notably the industry concerned with developing technology for monitoring, control and surveillance purposes. Output 2.5 will enable to grasp the negative consequences of by-catch, discards and abandoned fishing gear which are also to be regarded as components of sound national plan of action to fight against IUU fishing, consistent with the IPOA-IUU and the RPOA-IUU.<sup>[2]</sup>

## **Component 3. Integrated ecosystem based management tools and ecosystem approach to biodiversity protection and sustainable 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 MAP, this component will facilitate the implementation of ecosystem-based management tools in the context of protection and sustainable use of living marine resources for over 1,700,000 square kilometers of the Mediterranean Sea (59% of the surface area). To this end, the identification of most appropriate area-based management tools, including emerging tools such as OECSs, will lead to their application, particularly in the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries (Output 3.1). Having regard to the relevance of the SAP-BIO to the proposed project, and previous work by the GFCM in supporting the MAP 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 Mediterranean fisheries. By the same token, Output 3.3. will focus on non-indigenous species and how they are reportedly impacting Mediterranean fisheries. Bearing in mind the environmental complexity of the Mediterranean 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 Mediterranean countries. The focus on area-based management tools, including those applied by the GFCM and the MAP, 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).[3]

#### **Component 4. Innovative blue economy solutions accounting for the fishery sector.**

This component will promote innovative blue economy solutions at the regional and country level. This will be done by building upon and complementing regional initiatives and programmes in order to leverage public and private investments.

Under Output 4.1, an analysis will be conducted involving representatives of stakeholders familiar with both the GFCM and the MAP fora to identify barriers to the adoption of blue economy solutions. This analysis will generate concrete proposals and recommendations for policy makers, donors, and potential private sector investors to catalyze investments in the fishery sector. The aim will be to promote diversification opportunities building upon previous and ongoing work on marine spatial planning in the Mediterranean Sea including zoning for aquaculture and related investments. This work will contribute to overall environmental security and the sustainability and resilience of coastal livelihoods around the Mediterranean. In addition, this will contribute to the mainstreaming biodiversity, resilience and adaptation into the respective NAP.

Also, under this output activities linked to the new Foresight MED 2050 Study will explore different scenarios to assist decision-makers. Work under this output, will enable stakeholders view the fishery sector and other marine uses with a blue economy “lens” and enable the elaboration of at least one pilot NAP+ plan.[1] This plan will take stock of national priorities consistent with regional actions, where the fishery sector would be a key vehicle for private and public investments. The pilot NAP+ will require collection of data related to the impacts of non-indigenous species and pollution on marine fisheries and biodiversity so as to ensure the elaboration of appropriate policy responses to enable the sustainable use of marine ecosystem services and future blue economy investments.[2]

Under Output 4.2, work will test knowledge generated by the proposed project against plausible real-life scenarios and facilitate the understanding of how regional actions carried out, including those under Components 1-3, relate to national priorities relevant to a blue economy strategy, and what the role of the fishery sector can be (industrial, semi-industrial, small-scale, recreational), including opportunities for diversification. Finally, under Output 4.3, work will, based upon the results of the pilot NAP+, will create new blue economy related private sector partnerships and investments.

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[1] As already indicated, one pilot NAP+ will be tested in Montenegro building upon previous work with the MAP on updated NAPs and consistent with the SAP-BIO.

[2] The status of fishery and biodiversity will have to be assessed in line with the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme under the Barcelona Convention and, respectively, the following Ecological Objectives: EO1 (biodiversity), EO2 (NIS), EO3 (fisheries), EO5 (eutrophication), EO9 (contaminants), EO10 (marine litter )and EO 11 (underwater noise).

#### **Component 5. Knowledge management and outscaling.**

This component will deliver the scaling-up of effective integrated pathways conducive of conservation and sustainable management at the regional and global level. To this end, expected results will be fully and continuously integrated within the MedProgramme Knowledge Management Strategy (KM Strategy) and its knowledge sharing platform. Under this component, a two-tier approach will be followed. First, having regard to both regional activities, outputs and lessons learnt via the pilot NAP+, the proposed project will identify best practices of transformational change (output 5.1 refers). Specific focus will be placed on active coordination at the national level involving co-financing partners and relevant initiatives, public and private partnerships and sources of mobilized investments. The proposed project, which will advance public-private partnerships, will also raise awareness in the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries on the need to develop favorable administrative and legal frameworks, such as national laws. These frameworks will encourage public-private partnerships and greater investment in the fishery and other related sectors. These practices will be then disseminated to showcase the benefits of the concerted GFCM-MAP approach in aligning different national and regional priorities (Output 5.2 refers). The FAO, via its Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariat Network comprising 50 of such bodies, will inform other RFMOs about the benefits accrued by the GFCM through the proposed project. Similarly, MAP will use its dissemination channels to share information on the benefits of this partnership approach. This will ultimately contribute to make other RFMOs and RSCs aware of the importance of fostering a mutually supportive fisheries- environment relationship. The results under the previous components will be underpinned by a communication and outreach strategy (Output 5.3 refers) that will disseminate information globally. To this end, 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 Mediterranean region, but also beyond.

#### **4) alignment with GEF focal areas:**

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

- IW Objective 1 “Strengthening Blue Economy opportunities”;
- IW Objective 2 “Improve management in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)”
- BD Objective 1 “Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes”
- BD Objective 2 “Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species”.

**5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTE, and co-financing:**

GEFTE funds will provide incremental value across a range of proposed interventions to reduce the over-exploitation of fisheries and enable GEF eligible Mediterranean countries to progress in breaking the cycle of dependency from external support. The incremental cost reasoning of the proposed project is simple in that it will expand the scope of baseline projects and assist GEF eligible Mediterranean countries to progress in the transition from dependence to autonomy thanks to the GFCM and the MAP. 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, 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 over-exploitation in the Mediterranean 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 of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean.

Indicative total co-financing mobilized for the proposed project amounts to USD 29.2 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-	Project components	PMC (\$)	Total of co-
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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 biodiversity protection and sustainable fisheries	4 Innovative blue economy solutions accounting for the fishery sector	5 Knowledge management and outscaling		financing (\$)
<b>GFCM</b>	2 000 000	2 000 000	1 000 000	700 000	200 000	1 100 000	7 000 000
<b>MAP</b>			1 000 000	600 000	300 000	100 000	2 000 000
<b>FAO</b>				3 000 000			3 000 000
<b>EU</b>	1.500 000	1 000 000	1 000 000	500 000			4 000 000
<b>Albania</b>	500 000	200 000	300 000				1 000 000
<b>Algeria</b>	500 000	250 000	500 000	250 000			1 500 000
<b>Lebanon</b>	600 000	200 000	200 000				1 000 000
<b>Libya</b>	200 000	150 000	150 000				500 000
<b>Montenegro</b>	500 000	400 000	250 000	350 000			1 500 000
<b>Morocco</b>	1 000 000	300 000	400 000	300 000			2 000 000

Tunisia	1 200 000	700 000	600 000				2 500 000
Turkey	1 000 000	500 000	200 000	300 000			2 000 000
MAVA		300 000	400 000		500 000		1 200 000
TOTAL	9 000 000	6 000 000	6 000 000	6 000 000	1 000 000	1 200 000	29 200 000

**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) first and foremost by moving to more sustainable exploitation patterns the priority species of commercial Mediterranean stocks identified under Core Indicator 8. Progress is expected also under Core Indicator 2 as well as the relevant other Core Indicators expected to be targeted (i.e. Core Indicator 7 and Core Indicator 11). Interventions will be prioritized relative to the potential of national capacity to strengthen fisheries management via mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. The proposed project will also represent an important contribution to sustain food systems and ecosystem services for the local communities in the Mediterranean region which rely on the steady supply of fishery products. Bearing in mind the synergies that the GFCM and the MAP will promote together with the proposed project, the 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 complement and add too efforts under the MedProgramme to 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 will innovate through:

- Facilitating the introduction of certification of fisheries;
- Introducing 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 Mediterranean 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;
- the development and demonstration of the feasibility of NAP+ with investment plans;
- developing strategies towards securing funding in support of small-scale fishers;
- the enabled involvement of scientific institutes 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] More precise indicators under the various outputs of component one (e.g. number of value chains, extent of socio-economic advice, percentage of fisheries covered, number of participants in SSF network) 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.

[2] 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.

[3] More precise indicators under the various outputs of component 3 (e.g. number of area-based management tools, number of measures to address different stressors, extent of fisheries tenure at the country level) 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.

[4] As already indicated, one pilot NAP+ will be tested in Montenegro building upon previous work with the MAP on updated NAPs and consistent with the SAP-BIO.

[5] 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.



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[1] Ibid.

[2] 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.

[3] Sauzade, D. & Rousset, N. 2013. *Greening the Mediterranean fisheries: tentative assessment of the economic leeway*. Plan Bleu, Valbonne, France. Available at: <https://planbleu.org/sites/default/files/publications/greeningmediterraneanfisheries.pdf>

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

[5] More info on the MedFish4ever Declaration is available here: <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/medfish4ever/en/>

[6] In 2004, the first ministerial declaration for Mediterranean fisheries was adopted in Venice. This is when Mediterranean countries put forth for the first time their political commitment to Mediterranean fisheries.

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

[8] This would be Montenegro for the time being, without prejudice to the possibility that pilot NAP+ are tested in other countries.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] 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. 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.

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[1] Ibid.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/ssf2018>

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

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

#### **1b. Project Map and Coordinates**

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

Annex A refers.

#### **2. Stakeholders**

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

**Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities** No

**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, including in particular national delegates, international organizations, NGOs and various stakeholders. This was possible due to the institutional nature of the GFCM and the MAP which both rely on broad stakeholder participation, including but not limited to that of national authorities from the Mediterranean countries (as represented by different focal points from Ministry of Agriculture/Fisheries and Ministry of Environment). At their last annual CoP sessions, the GFCM and the MAP Secretariats reported to their 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 CoP sessions in the context of the various working groups and workshops regularly organized by the Executing Agencies, as well as the meetings of their bureaux, their subsidiary bodies, their standing committees and their 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.

The proposed project in its next phases will bring about a unique opportunity to promote a concerted environment-fisheries approach to contribute to the sustainability and profitability of fisheries since about 100 international organizations and NGOs are among the partners of the GFCM and the MAP and actively participate in their work, partaking their initiatives. It should be stressed that, in the context of the MAP, various stakeholders also participated in the formulation of the SAP-BIO which is relevant for the proposed project. During the PPG phase activities will be developed in full coordination between the GFCM and the MAP, including through 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 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 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 workplans of the Executing Agencies 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 several other RFMOs, in particular NEAFC and ICCAT that have entered into a memorandum of understanding with GFCM to ensure they are constantly engaged. Among others, the proposed project could be instrumental to foster collaboration on the gathering of scientific information of interest to these RFMOs, in connection for instance with negative interactions between fisheries and vulnerable species related issues (e.g. killer whales preying on tunas). During the implementation phase, a participatory approach will be used across activities to take advantage of the environment-fisheries synergy. 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 Table 3 (not exhaustive), with reference to particularly relevant project outputs:

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 and liaison with other countries at an international level (including in the GFCM context) for a level international playing-field.	Output 1.2 Output 1.4 Output 2.3 Output 2.4 Output 3.1 Output 3.3 Output 4.1  Output 4.2  Output 4.3

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 5.1 Output 5.2
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 institutions 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; as well as piloting initiatives at the local level and disseminating results among their networks.	Output 1.2 Output 1.3 Output 1.5 Output 4.1
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

**Table 3- Stakeholder roles (expected)**

### **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 GFCM and the MAP 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 through 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. Furthermore, the proposed project includes coastal communities and small-scale fisheries where women play a role at all stages along the value chain and therefore a gender assessment and analysis will be part of the PPG phase and, based on the result of these exercises, 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 current project will be developed and execute in full coordination and synergy with the ongoing Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security (9607). The MedProgramme is implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy and relevant work plans developed for all its 7 Child projects. The Metaprogramme's gender mainstreaming strategy aims to: 1) Providing an overarching and harmonized Gender approach to the entire programme and associate projects (being the current proposal one of them); 2) supporting and building capacity of the projects of the Programme through gender-responsive actions within the specific context of each project; 3) monitoring implementation advancements and consistency, as well as cohesion and complementarity of gender focus across the entire portfolio; and 4) benefitting, over the long term, the implementing and execution agencies, by serving as an entry point and testing ground for mainstreaming gender in their programme of work. The proposed project will adhere to the MedProgramme Gender Mainstreaming Strategy which supports a transformative approach, positing a gender equality vision that questions established categories and implements positive action measures towards gender-responsive actions in the Mediterranean region. Gender mainstreaming will not be regarded as an end (goal), rather, a means (process) to an end (greater gender equality). This approach reflects also the normative standards by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), which stipulates 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 Agencies opened to all participants. As far as the GFCM is concerned, 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 mandates of the Executing Agencies, 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 adopted by the Implementing Agencies as relating to relationships with the private sector. As need be, the GEF eligible Mediterranean 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 Mediterranean region, the primary risks to the smooth execution of the proposed project are political stability, in that some of the countries have been experiencing social turmoil of late years, and major pollution incidents, either from land-based sources or from ships, or oil and gas platforms. A climate change risk screening has been conducted during PIF preparation phase, and is included in the Roadmap section of the Portal. The climate risk screening informed the design of the outcomes, which are directly linked to adaptation of fishery resources to climate change impacts. All risks assessed at the identification phase are summarized in Table 4, including potential political and environmental threats, are related to complexities stemming from implementing project management in the Mediterranean region and draw on the combined knowledge of this region by the GFCM and the MAP.

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 Agencies 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). Lessons will be learnt and implemented in light of the experience garnered by the MAP to date in the execution of GEF interventions at the regional level.
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 over use of living marine resources, including between neighboring countries, among fishers, in coastal communities and with other sectors are exacerbated by the over-exploitation of these resources and the different uses of marine spaces. To mitigate these conflicts, the proposed project will invest in involving all relevant stakeholders in the development of management measures and ultimately reduce the opportunities for conflicts.



Bureaucratic obstacles in the implementation of certain activities	Operational	The risk is only in part under the proposed project control. Within the context of the expected NAP+ pilot in particular, synergies and coordination between different national authorities involved (i.e. Ministries of Agriculture/Fisheries and Ministries of Environment) will have to be ensured by the Executing Agencies. As part of a continuous dialogue with the Implementing Agencies, and to limit administrative bureaucracy related to, inter alia, contracting of consultants, procurement procedures, travels, etc., the proposed project will seek to find appropriate solutions and/or agree on derogations from certain practices and internal regulations.
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 the cornerstone of the intervention logic under all components therefore the proposed project will invest considerable resources in capacity building of national authorities. The proposed project implementation will involve a wide range of partners that can support the Executing Agencies 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-indigenous species which will in turn empower countries to mitigate negative consequences. Furthermore, the project will maximize the outcomes of scientific work already ongoing in fisheries and adopt approaches that are being considered by the FAO to facilitate a transition towards climate change adaptation. 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 bans have been in place and meetings have been cancelled due to the spreading out of the virus. Should the situation continue, or should similar situations take place, the risk will be mitigated by trying to carry out relevant activities via alternative working methods (e.g. video-conferences, telecommuting, recourse to national human resources in the countries, etc.). Any mitigation measure will have to be discussed with and cleared by the respective Implementing Agencies.
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 two GEF implementing agencies (the FAO and the UNEP) which possess a comparative advantage in light of their constant support to countries, thanks to their experience in food systems and restoration of ecosystem services. The FAO, as the leading GEF Implementing Agency for the proposed project, will play a close coordination and liaison role with the other Implementing Agency, Executing Agencies 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 both GEF Implementing Agencies heavily rely on regional bodies they have set up in their own institutional remit to advance progress in the implementation of their policies among groups of neighboring countries, these are regional fishery bodies (the FAO) and regional seas conventions (the UNEP), the proposed project will be executed by the GFCM and the MAP. Both Executing Agencies are not funded through the regular budgets of the Implementing Agencies and are managed via separate budget which are autonomous and made of the contributions of their Member States. These budgets are devoted to the

implementation of work-plans adopted at the CoPs of the Executing Agencies and complemented by additional activities that can be supported by extra-budgetary resources for the execution of select interventions. In connection with the proposed project, the CoPs of the Executing Agencies determined it would be opportune to pursue further cooperation with the GEF for the benefit of the Mediterranean region. The GFCM, as leading Executing Agency, will be in charge of coordinating the implementation of the activities under the proposed project and ensure coordination with the MAP to ensure synergies with on-going GEF projects executed by the MAP, most notably the MedProgramme, and with investments and initiatives funded by other donors in the Mediterranean. The GFCM and the MAP will manage the proposed project funds and will be supervised by the FAO and the UNEP to make sure that all fiduciary standards are being met. GFCM's leading role in project execution will be costed within the PMC. In their capacities as Executing Agencies, the GFCM and the MAP 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 Agencies, 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 two national focal points from each country (one for fisheries and one for environment), the Implementing Agencies, the Executing Agencies, 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, including the approval of the yearly project work programs. 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 to increase uptake of lessons and build synergies. From the early stage of the project implementation, particular attention will be placed to enabling conditions for integrated solutions. At the first PSC, special attention will be devoted to the opportunities for integration and, subsequently, due attention will be devoted to integration opportunities at every following PSC meeting.

## **7. Consistency with National Priorities**

### **Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments 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 in the context of the Barcelona Convention and its adopted protocols and of the GFCM Agreement and its binding recommendations. In addition, the proposed project is fully consistent with relevant international and regional instruments, including but not limited to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and others pertaining to prevention, mitigation and responses to pollution (e.g. MARPOL), spills, dumping at sea from ships, the FAO Code of

Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the FAO Compliance Agreement and the FAO Port State Measures Agreement. It is worth recalling that countries have published and implemented first generation National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) focusing on protection and conservation of marine fauna and flora, expansion of protected areas, improving the policy and legislative environments, harmonization at national and regional levels and, improving monitoring and assessment of biodiversity. In addition to its reported contribution to achieving SDG 14 targets (section 5 refers), the proposed project will also contribute to the implementation of the Aichi Targets, in particular the following: 2 (integration of biodiversity values into national and local development plans), 6 (sustainable management of fisheries stocks), 8 (pollution reduction) and 11 (conservation of especially important coastal and marine areas). Ultimately, the proposed project aims at bringing about in the GEF eligible Mediterranean Sea countries better alignment of existing national strategies on fisheries and aquaculture<sup>[1]</sup> 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
<i>Albania</i> National Fishery Strategy 2016 - 2021 (adopted via Decision of Council of Minister (DCM) No. 701, date 12.10.2016).	2004 Declaration he Ministerial Conference for the Sustainable Development of Fisheries in the Mediterranean;  2017 MedFish4Ever 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	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;
<i>Algeria</i> Plan AQUAPECHE 2020 (adopted in 2014 for a 5 year implementation period).		
<i>Lebanon</i> Ministry of Agriculture Strategy 2015 – 2019.  <i>P.S. A new Roadmap in support of Fisheries &amp; Aquaculture in Lebanon is currently being developed by the Ministry of Agriculture.</i>		
<i>Libya</i> Under preparation.		
<i>Morocco</i> - Stratégie et Plan d’Actions National pour la Diversité Biologique du Maroc, 2016-2020 ; - Stratégie Nationale de Développement Durable 2030.		

<i>Montenegro</i> <sup>[2]</sup> Fisheries strategy of Montenegro 2015-2020 with an Action plan for transposition, implementation and enforcement of EU <i>acquis</i>	aquaculture.	Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework.
<i>Tunisia</i> Stratégie nationale pour le développement de la pêche et de l'aquaculture en Tunisie à l'horizon 2020.		
<i>Turkey</i> 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).		

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

[1] Unlike the national Action Plans (NAPs), which have been adopted, revised and amended by the GEF eligible Mediterranean countries as part of the TDA/SAP process, the national strategies on fisheries and aquaculture (referenced in the above table) are limited in number, while not being truly multi-sectoral in scope. Given that the primary focus of the proposed project is fisheries, the NAPs are not mentioned in the above table. However, during the PPG phase a country (i.e. Montenegro) is expected to develop a pilot NAP+ which will integrate fisheries and aquaculture activities into its existing NAP. The updated NAP+ will contribute to a holistic environment-fisheries planning process, and will enable the mainstreaming of GFCM fisheries priorities as part of a broader cross-sectoral NAP+ framework.

[2] Montenegro, which has committed part of its STAR Allocation under the proposed project, is actively involved in the implementation of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol) of the Barcelona Convention under its NAP. The activities included in the proposed project will contribute directly to the objective of the SPA/BD Protocol while at the same time, thanks to the pilot NAP+, including updated national fisheries and aquaculture investment plans within the existing national NAP framework and incorporating other “national level” transboundary priorities which are relevant to the proposed project.

## 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 (governments, civil society, etc.) and to beneficiaries. In particular, lessons learned from the piloted NAP+ will be disseminated to elicit similar initiatives in the Mediterranean region and beyond. Appropriate channels of communication (technical guidelines, radio, video, posters, brochures etc.) will be used to target specific stakeholders. Supervision and monitoring missions will be organized during the proposed project implementation. Any information collected will feed into activities for knowledge management, identify and share good practices, identify problems and constraints, and promote the continuous improvement of the proposed project and its contribution to the implementation of national and regional objectives on the sustainability and profitability of fisheries and environmental protection. Moreover, alignment with the MedProgramme Knowledge Management Strategy (KM Strategy), will be ensured by the proposed project. The MedProgramme KM Strategy aims to maximize the MedProgramme impacts 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 sharing, capacity building, and regional stakeholder engagement; iii) supporting the objectives of the Barcelona Convention and the GFCM Agreement 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
Rrezart Fshazi	Head of Sector, OFP Albania	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	3/13/2020
Mustafa Soliman	OFP Libya	Environment General Authority	3/15/2020
Rachid Firadi	Director of Partnerships, Communication and Cooperation	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment	3/13/2020
Sabria Bnoumi	OFP Tunisia	Ministry of Environment	3/16/2020
Igor Gradjevic	OFP Montenegro	Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism	3/22/2020
Dimyanos Kattar	OFP Lebanon	Ministry of Environment	3/23/2020
Samira Hamidi	OFP Algeria, General Inspector of the Environment	Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy	4/12/2020
Akif Ozkaldi	OFP Turkey	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

**PROGRAM/PROJECT MAP AND GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES**

