



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

UN 
environment



Report of the
Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Deep Seas Project
Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting

23–25 January 2019 • Saint Denis, Reunion

ABNJ Deep Seas Project

Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation of Deep-sea Living Marine
Resources and Ecosystems in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction



gef GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

FAO. 2019. *Report of the Fourth Project Steering Committee meeting, 23–25 January 2019, Saint Denis, Reunion – ABNJ Deep Seas Project*. Rome.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO.

© FAO, 2019



Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO licence (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO; <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo/legalcode>).

Under the terms of this licence, this work may be copied, redistributed and adapted for non-commercial purposes, provided that the work is appropriately cited. In any use of this work, there should be no suggestion that FAO endorses any specific organization, products or services. The use of the FAO logo is not permitted. If the work is adapted, then it must be licensed under the same or equivalent Creative Commons licence. If a translation of this work is created, it must include the following disclaimer along with the required citation: "This translation was not created by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). FAO is not responsible for the content or accuracy of this translation. The original [Language] edition shall be the authoritative edition."

Disputes arising under the licence that cannot be settled amicably will be resolved by mediation and arbitration as described in Article 8 of the licence except as otherwise provided herein. The applicable mediation rules will be the mediation rules of the World Intellectual Property Organization <http://www.wipo.int/amc/en/mediation/rules> and any arbitration will be conducted in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

Third-party materials. Users wishing to reuse material from this work that is attributed to a third party, such as tables, figures or images, are responsible for determining whether permission is needed for that reuse and for obtaining permission from the copyright holder. The risk of claims resulting from infringement of any third-party-owned component in the work rests solely with the user.

Sales, rights and licensing. FAO information products are available on the FAO website (www.fao.org/publications) and can be purchased through publications-sales@fao.org. Requests for commercial use should be submitted via: www.fao.org/contact-us/licence-request. Queries regarding rights and licensing should be submitted to: copyright@fao.org.

Report of the
Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Deep Seas Project
Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting
23–25 January 2019 • Saint Denis, Reunion

ABNJ Deep Seas Project
Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation of Deep-sea Living Marine
Resources and Ecosystems in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fourth meeting of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project Steering Committee (PSC4) was held in Saint-Denis, Reunion from 23–25 January 2019, with the cooperation of the SIOFA Secretariat. The meeting was attended by representatives of eight project partners, including six regional bodies. The list of participants is attached as Appendix 1.

The primary objectives of the PSC were to review the Project's progress, to agree on actions and activities to be undertaken prior to the project's closure and to discuss preparations for a new phase of the project.

FAO and WCMC briefed the PSC on activities that are underway (e.g. review of area based planning tools, legal step-wise training) and on upcoming activities (e.g. rights based management workshop, global deep sea meeting). FAO and WCMC also briefed the PSC on their 2019 work plan and its budgetary implications.

The PSC endorsed the 2019 work plan and requested a budget revision to take into account the unplanned activities in 2019 work plan (e.g. VME workshop, rights based management workshop, global deep sea meeting).

The PSC took note of the end of project closure requirements and preparations that were being made for a subsequent phase of the ABNJ deep sea project.

The PSC agreed to hold its final meeting in late 2019.

Contents

1. Opening of the meeting	1
2. Project progress report and project highlights.....	1
2.1. <i>Component 1</i>	1
2.1.1. Global DEEP SEA Meeting 2019	2
2.2. <i>Component 2</i>	2
2.2.2. CSIRO	2
2.2.3. Economic valuation of deep-sea ecosystems.....	2
2.2.4. Update to the Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas	3
2.2.5. SIOFA VME workshop	4
2.3. <i>Component 3</i>	4
2.3.6. Monitoring, control and surveillance in deep-sea RFMOs	4
2.3.7. Rights-based management.....	5
2.3.8. EMS for deep-sea bottom trawlers	5
2.3.9. Other activities of interest	5
2.4. <i>Component 4</i>	5
2.4.10. Review of area-based planning tools.....	6
2.4.11. Developing and testing a methodology for area-based planning.....	6
2.4.12. Case study review of regional area-based approaches.....	6
2.4.13. Connectivity	7
2.4.14. Capacity Assessment.....	8
2.4.15. Data Management Options	8
3. Budgeting and finances	9
3.1. <i>Budget status to date</i>	9
4. End-of-project closure requirements.....	9
5. Reviewing progress and the path forward	9
6. The Next Phase.....	10
7. Break-out sessions: partner priorities for the next phase.....	10
8. Any other business.....	11
9. Adoption of meeting conclusions.....	11
Appendix 1 Meeting participants	12
Appendix 2 Agenda.....	13

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ABP	Area-Based Planning	MPA	Marine Protected Area
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction	NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	NEAFC	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
CCAMLR	Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources	NPFC	North Pacific Fisheries Commission
CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
COFI	Committee on Fisheries	OPP	Ocean Partnerships Project
CCRF	Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	PIR	Project Implementation Review
CPPS	Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (Permanent Commission for the South Pacific)	PMU	Project Management Unit
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organization (Australia)	PPR	Project Progress Report
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries	PSC	Project Steering Committee
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Area	PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	RFMO/A	Regional Fisheries Management Organizations or Arrangements
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	RSN	Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean	RSP	Regional Seas Programme
GOBI	Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
GOF	Global Ocean Forum	SEAFO	South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation
ICFA	International Coalition of Fisheries Associations	SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
IGO	Inter Governmental Organization	SIODFA	Southern Indian Ocean Deep-sea Fishers Association
IMO	International Maritime Organization	SPRFMO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission	UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
ISA	International Seabed Authority	UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature	UNEP-WCMC	UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre
IUCN-FEG	IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management Fisheries Expert Group	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated	UNFSA	United Nations Fish Stock Agreement
LTO	Lead Technical Officer	VME	Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance	WOC	World Ocean Council
MDG	Millennium Development Goals	WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

1. Opening of the meeting

1. The fourth meeting of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project Steering Committee (PSC4) was held in Saint-Denis, Reunion from 23–25 January 2019, with the cooperation of the SIOFA Secretariat. The meeting was attended by representatives of eight project partners, including six regional bodies. The list of participants is attached as Appendix 1.
2. The meeting was opened by Mr William Emerson, Project Coordinator for the ABNJ Deep Seas Project at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Mr Emerson welcomed the participants on behalf of the FAO, and noted the importance of this project to showcase regional partnerships that will influence the ongoing discussions on Sustainable Development Goal 14.
3. After a round of introductions, the PSC elected Mr Darius Campbell (NEAFC) as Chair and adopted the Agenda of the meeting (Appendix 2).

2. Project progress report and project highlights

4. Mr William Emerson, Project Coordinator (FAO), presented the project update for Components 1-3. Mr Emerson reiterated that the slow progress of the overall project was largely due to administrative hurdles experienced from both UNEP and FAO during the transition phases of the Project Coordinator and Area-Based Planning Specialist. This delay resulted in a number of activities being cut or combined with others during the third meeting of the PSC (PSC3) in April 2018, and based on recommendations from the Mid-Term Review (MTR). The MTR covered the period from the start of the project (1 September 2014) to 1 January 2018. The PSC3 agreed to these changes in order to meet the final deadline for operational completion of the Project's activities (31 August 2019).
5. Ongoing work includes a review of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management in deep sea fisheries and a feasibility study on the use of electronic monitoring systems in deep sea trawlers. The project is also producing, or has produced, a number of technical reports. Namely, the *Review of International Legal and Policy Instruments related to Deep-sea Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the ABNJ* has been published, and this forms the basis for the development of the legal step-wise guide. The project has also published reports on *VME Processes and Practices in the High Seas*, two global reviews on the fisheries, biology, and management of alfoncino (*Beryx splendens*) and orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*), and a review of catch documentation schemes in deep-sea fisheries. Work is being finalized for a technical paper on climate change and deep-sea ecosystems, and on an update to the Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas. The Project also increased its visibility through participation in events such as the high level communications event at Nausicaa¹ and side events at the BBNJ PrepCom and inter-governmental conference.

2.1. Component 1

6. Component 1 is the most progressed in terms of activities completed. While a handful of reports have already been published, or are in the pipeline, key activities of interest were the training workshops for the legal component of the project. For this, the project partnered with legal consultants at the University of Strathclyde to develop a step-wise guide for the

¹ <https://www.nausicaa.fr/>

integration of international legal instruments related to deep-sea fisheries and biodiversity in the ABNJ into national legislation of selected pilot countries.

7. A pilot training workshop based on the Step-Wise Guide for the *Implementation of International Legal and Policy Instruments Related to Deep Sea Fisheries and Biodiversity* took place in October 2018. The purpose of the workshop was to equip participants with the tools required to implement relevant international instruments related to deep-sea fisheries in ABNJ. The workshop included legal and fisheries management modules. The Step-Wise Guide will be updated taking into account feedback received during the workshop.

2.1.1. *Global DEEP SEA Meeting 2019*

8. A three-day Global DEEP SEA Meeting is scheduled for 7–9 May 2019 in Rome. The Meeting will be a platform to present the Project's results, findings and lessons learned. The Meeting will focus on ABNJ governance and policy, ABNJ deep-sea research, and implementation of ABNJ governance and policy.

2.2. Component 2

2.2.2. *CSIRO*

9. Component 2 has seen slower progress due to the administrative delays of the project. A key achievement has been the initiation of a letter of agreement (LOA) between the Project and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Organisation (CSIRO) in Tasmania. In general, the LOA includes work for the following activities:
 - Collation of datasets for the Indian Ocean and South Pacific Ocean, including data on biological and ecological characteristics;
 - Providing supporting information for improving EBSA descriptions;
 - Analysis on risks and threats of major fishing gears for the three deep-sea RFMO/As;
 - Development of a data collection manual for the EBSA process; and
 - Communication of progress in the results of the EBSA process.
10. The followed outputs are envisioned from the LOA:
 - An analysis of the risk of different fishing gears to biodiversity for SEAFO, SIOFA, and SPRFMO;
 - A report on connectivity analysis for marine megafauna in the Western Indian Ocean and the South East Pacific;
 - A metadata list of available telemetry data (including a literature review of the identified databases); and
 - A manual for the collection and analysis of data to document processes used to improve EBSA descriptions.

2.2.3. *Economic valuation of deep-sea ecosystems*

11. The work on deep-sea ecosystem valuation is near completion, and the preliminary results, including the proposed methodology, were presented to the PSC4. In general, ecosystem

- services are the benefits that people receive from ecosystems and they can include: food, raw material, ornamental resources, pharmaceuticals, benefits related to continuous ecosystem functioning, and contributions to culture and well-being.
12. For this valuation work, nine ecosystem services were analysed: fish, precious corals, oil, minerals, recreation and leisure, pharmaceuticals, carbon sequestration, habitat for species, and scientific research.
 13. The study used a Total Economic Value (TEV) framework where an estimated value was assessed individually for each service that is then summed together to provide the overall value. The use-values include the direct-use value that is related to benefits received from the supply of provisioning services and cultural services, and the indirect-use value, which is indirectly received from the fact that regulating and supporting services maintain the ecosystem in equilibrium. The non-use values, for which the study primarily includes values from scientific research, include: the quasi-option value that is related to the benefit of delaying the exploitation of an ecosystem service for the future (the value is made available through the preservation of this ecosystem service); the altruistic value that is related to the benefits that others may receive from a given ecosystem service; the bequest value that is related to the benefits that future generations may receive from the ecosystem and ecosystem services; and the existence value, which is related to the benefits received from simply knowing that some ecosystem services, such as deep-sea marine biodiversity, exists, even if it is never utilized or directly experienced.
 14. Because there was very little data available for the ABNJ specifically in this study, a two-level analysis was carried out: where information was available for the ABNJ, that information was used in its own category (this was done for three ecosystem services: fish, carbon sequestration, and minerals). Where no ABNJ-specific information was found, general information was used that did not distinguish between the EEZs (at a depth below 200 m) and the ABNJ (e.g. this was done for corals because it could not be distinguished whether they were harvested in the ABNJ or the EEZ).
 15. The valuation methodology includes two tiers. Firstly, the quantity harvested at the global level was assessed (e.g. for fish, oil & gas, corals, etc.), and then multiplied by a reliable market-price for that product to find the overall estimated value that was representative of global-level prices. In some cases, however, it was not possible to use market-prices for the valuation (e.g. for scientific research), and so investment costs were used (e.g. the costs of conducting scientific surveys).

2.2.4. Update to the Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries in the High Seas

16. The first Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries was published in 2009 using information from 2003-2006. An update covers the remaining years to 2016 and was drafted following consultations with RFMO/As and other experts. The draft was reviewed in 2017, and re-drafting commenced to shorten the chapters and expand the recent information. The focus year for catches was changed from 2014 to 2016 and other information was brought to the current year when feasible.
17. The format is mainly by regional chapters with each covering 2016 catch summary, geographical description, ecosystems and resource species, fisheries management, and a description of high seas bottom fisheries. The current annual catch by bottom fisheries in the high seas was estimate at around 220 000 tonnes, being taken mainly from the southwest and northwest Atlantic. There are almost no bottom fisheries in the high seas tropical regions of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and in the Arctic. Most regions have well developed bottom fisheries management measures ensuring sustainable fisheries and ecosystem protection. In most areas, catches have declined markedly since their heyday to

reach low levels around the turn of the century and are now largely recovering. Global summary of high seas bottom fisheries. The report is important to highlight the current state of high seas bottom fisheries and present the wide variety of management measures.

2.2.5. SIOFA VME workshop

18. Mr Jon Lansley, Executive Secretary of SIOFA, presented on the upcoming first Protected Areas and Ecosystems Working Group (PAEWG) of SIOFA in Japan in March 2019, where FAO has been invited to present information on work undertaken by RFMOs globally on VMEs.
19. The first conservation and management measure (CMM) to be adopted in 2016 was for the *Interim Management of Bottom fishing* (CMM 2018/01), which is updated annually. Currently, CMMs are adopted and all SIOFA CMMs can be found on the website. SIOFA is progressing on the development of a SIOFA-wide bottom fishing impact assessment (BFIA) and a SIOFA-wide bottom fishing footprint, which are in accordance with CMM 2018/01 are both due to be completed in 2020. Country specific BFIA is available on the SIOFA website and national fishing footprints are well defined within these documents.
20. In 2019, the Scientific Committee is due to provide recommendations on:
 - a. Criteria for what determines evidence of an encounter with a VME, in particular threshold levels and indicator species; and
 - b. The most appropriate response to a VME encounter, including *inter alia* closing particular areas to a particular gear type or types.
21. Currently, there is implementation conducted at the national level with each Contracting Party (CP) in applying their own threshold levels for encounters with VMEs, taking into account guidance provided in the FAO Deep-sea Fisheries Guidelines. CMM 2018/01 requires CPs to take a standard response to a VME encounter, moving within one or two nautical miles depending on gear type. Annex 1 of CMM 2018/01 already provides Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of Notifications of Encounters with VMEs. Annex II provides the coordinates for five Interim Protected Areas adopted in 2018. These include Walter's Shoal and Atlantis Bank.

2.3. Component 3

2.3.6. Monitoring, control and surveillance in deep-sea RFMOs

22. In 2018, a consultant was engaged to conduct a global review of successful practices in MCS and existing MCS systems. The consultant provided a report that summarized the international framework for monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), compliance, and enforcement in deep-sea fisheries in the ABNJ. The report also provided an overview of the RFMO/As with a conservation and management mandate for deep-sea species and summarizes the MCS systems and processes implemented by them. The report highlighted the need for the development of an MCS strategy, best-practice data management, capacity building, and compliance evaluation to effectively implement MCS. The last part of the document describes and discusses the IUU vessel listing measures and procedures of the deep-sea RFMO/As, other relevant IUU initiatives and recommendations to improve the IUU listing measures and procedures of the deep-sea RFMO/As.
23. From 10–12 December 2018, a workshop was held in Johannesburg, South Africa to review the international frameworks for MCS to detect, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing, the SIOFA and SEAFO reporting obligations, and MCS measures implemented by participating countries. The workshop also identified issues in respect of their existing MCS

measures and compliance with SIOFA and SEAFO obligations and ways to address these issues, and discussed ways to strengthen MCS and compliance and examine successful MCS initiatives through two breakout groups for SIOFA and SEAFO member countries.

24. A consultant is engaged to produce Action Plans for SIOFA and SEAFO that considers options for strengthened MCS and compliance that will be shared with the Secretariats and member countries.

2.3.7. Rights-based management

25. A rights-based management workshop is scheduled for 10–12 April 2019 in Rome. The purpose of the workshop will be to identify rights-based management options for deep-sea fisheries. The workshop will include a review of the benefits and challenges related to the implementation of this approach for deep-sea fisheries.

2.3.8. EMS for deep-sea bottom trawlers

26. The Project has recently engaged a consultant to conduct a feasibility study on the use of electronic monitoring systems (EMS) for deep-sea fisheries in the SIOFA area. The feasibility study will:
 - a. Identify the operational measures and financial requirements necessary to implement EMS technology in deep-sea fisheries trawlers; and
 - b. Provide a technical assessment of economic considerations and technical feasibility of implementing EMS.
27. The feasibility study will include:
 - a. A review of the legal framework for the Cook Islands for the use of EMS as an MCS tool (including for VME identification);
 - b. Overview of existing MCS technologies;
 - c. Identification of basic infrastructure necessary to support MCS on deep-sea trawlers;
 - d. Human resources required to support EMS;
 - e. A cost-benefit analysis of EMS; and
 - f. Cost-recovery methodologies to secure long-term sustainability of EMS.

2.3.9. Other activities of interest

28. The Project convened a short, ad-hoc meeting for the deep-sea RFMOs in the margins of COFI in July 2018. The general consensus from that meeting was that this provided a unique platform for these RFMO/As to meet and discuss common issues, and a similar meeting was held in the margins of the PSC4, during which the deep-sea RFMO/As discussed the upcoming BBNJ negotiations.

2.4. Component 4

29. Ms Nina Bhola, Component 4 manager, presented an overview of the project over the past year, highlighting the various products that have been developed. UNEP-WCMC has aimed to increase the project visibility via ensuring products have been disseminated through a number of platforms – including the FAO Common Oceans and UNEP-WCMC websites – and shared during stakeholder workshops within the two pilot regions (the Western Indian Ocean and the South East Pacific).

The following outputs under Component 4 have been completed in the last year:

2.4.10. Review of area-based planning tools

30. UNEP-WCMC examined area-based planning tools and identified key features that enable them to be used for area-based planning in support of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in ABNJ. Ultimately, the review aims to identify how area-based planning tools could be used to support cross-sectoral planning. The tools examined include those that already exist within national jurisdiction and those occurring in ABNJ. The results of this review are being used to guide the development of a dedicated area-based planning methodology for ABNJ. This review has been published and has been presented at a number of different knowledge sharing workshops in both the Western Indian Ocean and the South East Pacific region, with the aim of “testing” the area-based planning methodology. The report was launched during a side event at the first Intergovernmental Conference for the development of a new implementing agreement for BBNJ. The report highlights the primary challenge in undertaking cross-sectoral planning in ABNJ is the lack of a comprehensive legal framework beyond the current sectoral governance frameworks.

2.4.11. Developing and testing a methodology for area-based planning

31. Work is currently underway to explore the potential for cross-sectoral area-based planning in ABNJ. The rationale being that area-based planning in ABNJ is sector-specific and approaches are only applicable to their respective sectors. In the future, as activities in ABNJ increase, it is unclear how existing planning and management approaches and tools will interact. Cross-sectoral planning approaches, such as Marine Spatial Planning, could be used as an overarching framework under which to bring together existing planning and management approaches to achieve a common goal.
32. The methodology consists of key elements of marine spatial planning, each with potential activities that could be undertaken as part of that element, i.e. what could be done. In order to explore how it could be done, and who would be involved (i.e. the relevant stakeholders) the methodology will be “tested” in subsequent workshops in both the pilot regions. The project is currently developing a series of interactive sessions and feedback will be used to refine the methodology.

2.4.12. Case study review of regional area-based approaches

33. On behalf of UNEP-WCMC and Seascope Consultants Ltd, Mr David Johnson presented on case study experiences in area-based planning in ABNJ. This element of Component 4 considered where cross-sectoral area-based planning, to support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, is already occurring in ABNJ. The work also aimed to identify key lessons-learned which may be relevant to area-based planning in the two pilot regions.
34. The case studies selected for this review were the Eastern Central Pacific, Mediterranean, North-East Atlantic and Southern Ocean. They were chosen following a scoping study to reflect a variety of geographic locations, governance models and application of area-based planning methodology. An analytical framework grouped information collected into themes of area-based planning tools; governance; data and information; and communication, cooperation and collaboration. Results highlighted issues with scale and focus; different sector specific tools; complementarity of different approaches; regional

interpretation and priorities; and data aspects. The case studies present tangible, real world, experiences of what is already being done.

35. A more detailed illustration was provided from within the northeast Atlantic case study. The Hatton-Rockall plateau is an elevated bank delimited by steep-sided flanks and high habitat heterogeneity between 200–3 000 m depths. Biodiversity present includes cold-water coral formations, rocky reefs and carbonate mounds, sponge aggregations, burrowing fauna on sedimented slopes, and chemosynthetic life forms at gas hydrates. Activities present include pelagic and demersal fishing, oil and gas exploration and scientific exploration. Blue growth potential is present for renewable energy, biotechnology and aquaculture industries. Governance arrangements and the existing mosaic of spatial management and protection measures reflect the complex make up of such sites. The EU ATLAS Horizon 2020 is collating new information on Atlantic deep-water ecosystems (including the Hatton Rockall plateau), distribution of vulnerable habitats and potential VMEs. In particular, ATLAS has looked at implications of a decline in strength of the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation and the North Atlantic subpolar gyre over the last 1 500 years. An ICES weighting algorithm shows the likelihood of VMEs and confidence in the predicted presence of VMEs. Constraint mapping may be an important tool to consider Blue Growth scenarios.

2.4.13. Connectivity

36. The Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS) undertook two connectivity studies on oceanographic connectivity and on the role of connectivity in providing economic benefits to the coastal nations from the fisheries sector. These studies were undertaken in each of the Member Countries of CPPS, namely Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile.
37. A review was undertaken on connectivity in the deep-sea, describing how it is measured in the deep ocean. The review examined how connectivity can be incorporated in marine spatial planning process for the deep sea and identifies gaps in our knowledge.
38. Duke University developed regionally specific case studies demonstrating the way data and technology can show connectivity and migration patterns for humpback and blue whales, collected with telemetry, genetics, and mark-recapture for the South East Pacific. For the Western Indian Ocean case studies were developed to illustrate the migratory behaviour and management implications of green sea turtles.
39. Technical brief on the critical role of connectivity in global ocean sustainability is being developed in collaboration with Duke University. This technical brief aims to provide evidence based on the above studies for the relevance of connectivity in the contest of biodiversity beyond natural jurisdiction. It explains how connectivity can be considered in the negotiations on area-based tools, environmental impact assessment and technology transfer and capacity building – all of which are topics of discussion that will be held at the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) for the new Implementing Agreement scheduled for March 2019.

2.4.14. Capacity Assessment

40. Capacity assessments were undertaken for the two pilot regions²³. The re-assessments are planned for 2019 and the change in capacity over the course of the project will be evaluated.
41. The capacity assessment for area-based planning in the ABNJ of the Nairobi Convention area summarizes the existing capacity of the Nairobi Convention Secretariat and member countries of the Nairobi Convention to undertake area-based planning in ABNJ.
42. The capacity assessment for area-based planning in the ABNJ of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) summarizes the existing capacity of the CPPS Secretariat and member countries to undertake area-based planning in ABNJ of the South-East Pacific Ocean pilot area.

2.4.15. Data Management Options

43. In order to understand how the two pilot regions can access and share data, an assessment was done of options for data storage and sharing. The assessment included global and regional data platforms and other options.
 - *A review of data storage and sharing options for the South-East Pacific to support area-based planning in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction*
http://wcmc.io/ABNJ_portalpaper_cpp
 - *A review of data storage and sharing options for the Western Indian Ocean to support area-based planning in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.*
http://wcmc.io/ABNJ_portalpaper_WIO
44. Activities planned for Component 4 include:
 - Organizing and hosting two webinars for each of the pilot regions in two languages. These webinars will be on the importance of data and information in planning.
 - Finalizing the proposed methodology for cross-sectoral planning in ABNJ. This will involve applying the approach to different governance options and undertaking a “testing session” during the planned workshops for 2019.
 - Two planned workshops schedule for March 2019 and June 2019 in the South East Pacific and the Western Indian Ocean. Both of these workshops will be held together with the HIGH SEAS STRONG project.
45. UNEP-WCMC, together with Duke University and the CPPS Secretariat, will be hosting a side event at the 2nd session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument on conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ (IGC-2).

² https://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/dataset_file_fields/files/000/000/542/original/Capacity_Assessment_-_Nairobi_Convention_-_final.pdf?1536767821

³ https://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/dataset_file_fields/files/000/000/542/original/Capacity_Assessment_-_Nairobi_Convention_-_final.pdf?1536767821

3. Budgeting and finances

3.1. Budget status to date

46. The PSC was provided with an update of the Project's expenditure through December 2018 and planned expenditures through the project's closure. The PSC agreed to a budget revision to account for unplanned project activities (VME workshop, rights based management workshop, global deep sea meeting, ecosystem risk assessment workshop). The Project's partners agreed to provide an update of their co-financing contributions through December 2018.

4. End-of-project closure requirements

47. The PSC was updated on the end-of-project closure requirements and timing. The project will close operationally on 31 August 2019 and administratively on 31 December 2019. The Project's end-of-project requirements include a GEF Terminal Evaluation and a Terminal Report.
48. The end of project closure will trigger technical, operational and administrative actions. Their main purpose is to inform all parties, including the funding agency, of the projects achievements. Most actions will start 3 months before the end date of the project. The operational closure of the project will be triggered when the last input is provided. All project activities will have ended and all assignments will have been delivered. A terminal report will be finalised and submitted to the administration. The project's operational closure will be on 31 August 2019. The project's financial closure follows the operational closure. It will require a review of the project implementation status, including narrative and financial reports, and a review of budget expenditures and commitments.

5. Reviewing progress and the path forward

49. The PSC reviewed the project's progress to date, and in particular "lessons learned" from the project. It was noted that the project had delivered quality content and analysis with good stakeholder engagement. It was also noted that the project was overly complex and that the project's visibility and communication needed improvement. The overlap, and opportunities from better coordination, between the ABNJ deep sea and tuna projects was also noted.
50. The PSC took note of the outcome of a Theory of Change workshop organized by the Common Oceans/ABNJ Programme in December 2018. The purpose of the Workshop was to review lessons learned from the current Common Ocean Programme, to develop an overall framework for a new ABNJ Programme, to provide input for a draft concept paper for discussion with GEF, and to engage stakeholders in the process of developing a new programme and related projects.

Breakout groups

51. The PSC separated into two breakout groups to brainstorm lessons learned from the project and the path forward. Generally, four categories were considered with the following sub-points:
- a. Good governance
 - i. Decent working conditions (anti-slavery) – IUU

- ii. Implementation of legal instruments
 - iii. Ecosystem impacts assessments
 - iv. Data sharing/flow -> open data portal (subject to confidentiality requirements)
 - v. RFMO committees, CMMs, rules of procedure, good practices
 - vi. Multi-sectoral governance: compatibility between sectors (
- b. Multi-sectoral
 - c. Ecosystem approach
 - d. Compliance

6. The Next Phase

52. The PSC was briefed on the GEF7 strategic directions, and in particular *IW-SO2: Improving governance in ABNJ (global, regional, national opportunities)*. For the Project's next phase GEF has allocated funds under the International Waters (IW) Focal Area, including for the improvement of conservation in ANBJ. There will be scope to formulate another Common Oceans/ABNJ Programme and projects under this entry point.

7. Break-out sessions: partner priorities for the next phase

53. The PSC discussed priorities for the project's next phase in break-out sessions. This was a wide ranging brainstorming session to identify activities for consideration in the project's next phase.
54. The breakout groups considered potential areas for activities that fit under the core themes identified for the Programme level at the first Theory of Change workshop in December 2018:
- a. Good governance in ABNJ (focused more on fisheries governance);
 - b. Multi-sectoral coordination to achieve ecosystem outcomes in the ABNJ (coordination with other sectors feeding into the discussions);
 - c. Member States have the capacity to implement the ecosystem approach under conditions of additional vulnerability and change brought about by climate change; and
 - d. Improved compliance by RFMO Member States and overall reduction in IUU fishing activities in the ABNJ.
55. Generally, the breakout groups considered the following stream of activity areas:
- a. More explicit linkages to SDG 14;
 - b. A "deep-sea fisheries version" of ISSF – where a reoccurring fora is provided for scientists to meet and discuss issues of common interest;
 - c. Joint data and science groups for the Pacific RFMOs;
 - d. Ensuring Member States have the knowledge and capacity (scientific and political) to implement the ecosystem approach under climate change;
 - e. Monitoring stock status;
 - f. Improved research on hydrography and other physical drivers to better understand stock movement;
 - g. Improved methods/approaches to adapt to uncertainty;
 - h. Decision-making for uncertainty;
 - i. Interdisciplinary research and collaboration;
 - j. Improved methods for catch monitoring; and
 - k. Harmonizing data and approaches for ecosystem impact assessments.

8. Any other business

56. The PSC discussed opportunities for closer cooperation between the deep sea RFMO/As.

9. Adoption of meeting conclusions

57. The meeting conclusions were adopted at 17:00 on 25 January 2019.

Appendix 1 Meeting participants



©FAO/Jessica Fuller

List of Participants

CPPS

Méntor Villagómez
Secretary General,
Comisión Permanente del Pacifico Sur

CSIRO

Piers Dunstan
Team Leader CSIRO Oceans and Atmosphere Flagship
Castray Esplanade Hobart Tasmania Australia

GOBI Secretariat

David Johnson
Coordinator
c/o Seascope Consultants Ltd
Jermyns House, Romsey
United Kingdom

GRID-ARENDAL

Miles MacMillan-Lawler
Programme Leader Marine Spatial Planning,
GRID-Arendal

FAO

Jackie Alder
FishCode Director
ABNJ Programme Coordinator

William Emerson
ABNJ Deep Seas Project Coordinator

Jessica Fuller
Fisheries and biodiversity consultant

Hassan Moustahfid
Senior Fisheries Officer

Dale Squires
RBM consultant

Tony Thompson
Fisheries consultant

NAFO

Fred Kingston
Executive Secretary
Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

NEAFC

Darius Campbell
Secretary,
North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

NPFC

Dae-Yeon Moon
Executive Secretary
North Pacific Fisheries Commission

SEAFO

Lizette Voges
Executive Secretary
South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization

SIOFA

Jon Lansley
Executive Secretary
Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

UNEP-WCMC

Ruth Fletcher – REMOTE CONNECTION
Area-based planning specialist/Senior programme officer

Nina Bhola
Project manager/Programme officer

Appendix 2 Agenda

Wednesday, 23 January

1. Opening of the meeting	09:00–09:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Opening remarks 1.2 Introductions 1.3 Election of a Chairperson 1.4 Adoption of the agenda 1.5 Housekeeping matters 	
2. Project progress report	09:30–10:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Components 1-3 2.2 Component 4 	
<i>Coffee break</i>	10:30–11:00
3. Project highlights	11:00–12:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Legal step-wise guide training 3.2 Ecosystem services and linkages to SponGES 3.3 Rights-based management 3.4 Update Worldwide Review of Bottom Fisheries 3.5 SIOFA work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem workshop - Electronic Monitoring Systems for deep-sea bottom trawlers 3.6 CSIRO work on Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas and Component 2 3.7 Review of area-based planning tools (C4) 3.8 Case study review of regional area-based approaches (C4) 3.9 Testing a methodology for area-based planning (C4) 3.10 Global DEEP-SEA Symposium 	
<i>Lunch</i>	12:30–13:30
4. Budgeting and finances	13:30–14:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Budget status to date 4.2 Budget plans for remainder of the project 	
5. 2019 Project Workplan	14:00–15:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Presentation 5.2 Discussion 	
<i>Coffee break</i>	15:00–15:30
6. End-of-project closure requirements	15:30–17:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsibilities - Timeline - Reporting expectations 	

Thursday, 24 January

7. Reviewing progress and the path forward	09:00–10:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 What went well (success stories) 7.2 The opportunity ahead (priorities from the partners perspective) 	
<i>Coffee break</i>	10:30–11:00
8. The Next Phase	11:00–12:30

8.1 <i>Summary of the December ABNJ Theory of Change Workshop</i>	
8.2 <i>Presentation on ABNJ Programme Phase II</i> - <i>Core themes</i> - <i>Requirements</i>	
Lunch	12:30–13:30
9. Break-out session: partner priorities for the next phase Requirements	13:30–15:00
9.1 <i>Summary of Agenda 7</i> 9.2 <i>Identification of core themes for Phase II DSP</i> 9.3 <i>Key partners</i> 9.4 <i>Identification of possible activities/upcoming partnerships and projects, etc.</i>	
Coffee break	15:00–15:30
10. Agenda 9 continued	15:30–17:00
10.1 <i>Break out session presentation and discussion</i>	

Friday, 25 January

11. Recap of Agendas 9-10	09:30–10:30
11.1 <i>FAO presentation on Day 2 discussions</i> 11.2 <i>The way forward: actions for the next phase</i>	
Coffee break	10:30–11:00
12. Agenda 13 continued	11:00–12:30
12.1 <i>Discussion and final remarks</i> 12.2 <i>Adoption of the meeting conclusions</i>	
13. Adjourn	12:30

The Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation of Deep Sea Living Resources in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Project (ABNJ Deep Seas Project for short) is a five year project supported by the Global Environment Facility, and implemented jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the United Nations Environment Programme. The UNEP project component is executed through the UNEP World Conservation and Monitoring Centre.

The Project is designed to enhance sustainability in the use of deep-sea living resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ through the systematic application of an ecosystem approach. It brings together over 20 partners who work on deep-sea fisheries and conservation issues in the ABNJ globally. The partnership includes regional organizations responsible for the management of deep-sea fisheries, Regional Seas Programmes, the fishing industry and international organizations. The Project aims to:

- strengthen policy and legal frameworks for sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ deep seas;
- reduce adverse impacts on VMEs and enhanced conservation and management of components of EBSAs;
- improve planning and adaptive management for deep sea fisheries in ABNJ; and
- develop and test methods for area-based planning.

The ABNJ Deep Seas Project started in September 2015 and is one of four projects under the GEF Common Oceans Programme. More information is available from www.commonoceans.org



Some rights reserved. This work is available under a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence

