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## Office of Evaluation

### **Mid-term Evaluation of the “Strategies for Fisheries Bycatch Management Project” GCP/RAS/269/GFF**

*Final Report*

May 2014

## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Office of Evaluation (OED)

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## Table of Contents

<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background and purposes of the evaluation.....	1
1.2 Methodology of the evaluation.....	2
<b>2 Context of the project .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 Analysis of project concept and design .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Theory of change .....	6
3.2 Project design and the results framework; causal links between activities, outputs, outcomes and development objective.....	8
3.3 The validity of indicators, assumptions and risks. ....	11
<b>4 Analysis of the implementation process .....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Project/programme Management .....	12
4.2 Financial resources management.....	16
4.3 Efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional arrangements including Government’s participation .....	17
<b>5 Analysis of results and contribution to stated objectives .....</b>	<b>18</b>
5.1 Achievements at Outputs level .....	18
5.2 Achievements at Outcome level .....	25
5.3 Gender equality .....	26
5.4 Capacity development .....	27
5.5 The Human-Rights Based Approach.....	30
5.6 Partnerships and Alliances .....	30
<b>6 Analysis by evaluation criteria .....</b>	<b>32</b>
6.1 Relevance .....	32
6.2 Efficiency .....	33
6.3 Effectiveness.....	33
6.4 Sustainability .....	34
6.5 Impact.....	35
<b>7 Conclusions and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>37</b>
7.1 GEF rating .....	37
7.2 Conclusions .....	38
7.3 Recommendations .....	42
<b>8 Annexes to the evaluation report (in separate annex document) .....</b>	<b>45</b>

## Acronyms

APFIC	Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission
ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (the Philippines)
BH	Budget Holder
BRD	Bycatch Reduction Device
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCRF	Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
COFI	Committee on Fisheries
CPUE	Catch Per Unit Effort
CTI	The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Viet Nam)
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
EAFM	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management
FAORAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia and Pacific
FARMC	Fishery and Aquaculture resource Management Councils
FIRO	Fishing Operations and Technology Branch
FPMIS	Field Programme Management Information System
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesselshaft fur International Zusammanarbeit
HQ	Headquarters
IFFO	Marine Ingredients Organization
ISU	International Sustainability Unit
JTED	Juvenile and Trash Fish Excluding Device
LCG	Local Consultative Groups
LOA	Letter of Agreement
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
LTU	Lead Technical Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTE	Mid-term evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NTO	National Technical Officer
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
PC	Programme Committee
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PRC	Project regional Coordinator
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTA	Project Technical Advisor
REBYC-II CTI	Strategies for trawl fisheries bycatch management (GCP/RAS/269/GFF)
RFU	Regional Facilitation Unit
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre
SFP	Sustainable Fisheries Partnership
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (analysis)
TCI	FAO’s Investment Center
TCID	FAO Investment Centre GEF Unit
ToC	Table of Contents
TOR	Term of reference

TWG	Technical Working Groups
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USD	United States Dollar
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
RBM	Results-based Management

## Executive Summary

### *Background*

ES1. The four-year Project, “Strategies for trawl fisheries bycatch management” (REBYC-II CTI, GCP/RAS/269/GFF), began on 31 October 2011, and is scheduled to end on 31 October 2015. Real implementation, however, started in April 2012. The project covers five countries; Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, and is executed with SEAFDEC. It is funded by the GEF at the amount of USD 3 million, and to be co-financed to the order of USD 8 million by the participating countries, as well as the private sector, FAO, SEAFDEC (including its projects funded by Japan and Sweden), WWF, SFP, and IFFO.

ES2. Provision for an independent mid-term evaluation (MTE) is included in the Project Document. The purpose of the MTE was to determine progress towards achievement of objectives, outcomes and outputs, and to identify corrective actions as needed. The evaluation, which was carried out February – April 2014, assessed the project through internationally accepted evaluation criteria, i.e. relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Because of delays in the implementation of the project, the evaluation, in agreement with FAO stakeholders, focussed on assessing design and approach, its relevance in the context of bycatch issues in participating countries, and implementation efficiency. It also identified strategies for the implementation during the remaining project period.

ES3. The MTE was conducted by a two member team, an independent consultant as Team Leader and the OED Evaluation Manager as team member. The team spoke with FAO staff, government personnel, NGOs and beneficiaries, and conducted missions to FAO Headquarters, Thailand, including the FAO regional office, the Philippines and Viet Nam. Brief visits to pilot sites were carried out in the Philippines and Viet Nam. The evaluation used a variety of methods to gather data; reviewing documents, holding semi-structured interviews supported by check lists, surveying some stakeholders, and conducting direct observation on field visits. Debriefings were held at FAORAP in Bangkok and at FAO HQ in Rome.

### Key findings and conclusions

ES4. There is a general recognition internationally that poorly managed trawl fisheries contribute to unsustainable resource utilization and threaten marine biodiversity. There have been increasing concerns worldwide that unselective trawling results in capture of juveniles of commercially important species, as well as seabirds and mammals. To some extent, although decreasing, there are discards of unwanted catches, especially in shrimp fisheries. In this context management of bycatch and discards are important goals. However, other perspectives can also be applied on bycatch and discards. Catches from the small-scale sector are seldom discarded, and all catch holds a value and is used for commercial and household purposes. Hence there are issues of coastal livelihoods and food security to be considered as well when undertaking measures for bycatch reduction. The need for managing bycatch within a wider framework of trawl fisheries management, and by applying an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM), becomes clear.

ES5. The REBYC II CTI project, which has sought to adopt this approach, therefore rates high on **relevance** for the participating countries and the Coral Triangle and Southeast Asian region. The project is also an important part of FAO’s global commitment to sustainable fisheries and conservation of natural resources.

ES6. With regard to *efficiency*, the project faced extended delays in implementation. These were caused by delays in fielding the Regional Project Coordinator, because co-financing for the position did not materialize and FAO administrative procedures have been cumbersome.

ES7. Because of the delays experienced, *effectiveness* has been below expectations as well. However, at the time of the MTE the project had gained momentum and major activities have been initiated. As a result, performance on efficiency and effectiveness should improve over the remainder of the project. The project has initiated work on systems for data collection on catches, fishing effort and landings from trawl fisheries. However, the MTE noted with concern that little effort had so far been given the collection of socio-economic data in order to understand the role of trawl fisheries, the role of bycatch and implications of management measures on income, employment, livelihoods and food security. Additionally, gender has also not been adequately addressed, either in design or in implementation, and full use had not been made of capacity development opportunities. The mission also noted the needs for more direct engagement on technical assistance at the local level.

ES8. The MTE concluded that the project addressed major barriers to improved trawl fisheries management and that the theory of change underpinning the project was generally sound. However, there were flaws in the design, especially with regard to formulation of outputs and outcomes. The MTE rated the project, according to GEF rating criteria, as overall Marginally Unsatisfactory with the caveat that the project had good prospects of moving up to Marginally Satisfactory or even Satisfactory by its end.

ES9. It is too early to make any firm statements on the sustainability and potential impact of the project. Potential *sustainability* at national level varies among the countries, with good prospects in the Philippines. There are good indications of sustainability at the regional level because of the project’s integration in the regional institutional arrangements of SEAFDEC, APFIC, FAO and other institutions. The project has already had one unintended impact, the strengthening of SEAFDEC to take on a wider regional role in fisheries management.

ES10. Based on the project’s achievements up to date, and the most important outcomes for bycatch management to be realized, the MTE concludes that if the project focuses its human, technical and financial resources on certain outputs, it can make a substantial contribution over the remaining project period. The MTE thus proposes to the project team and government stakeholders, and for discussion at the upcoming Steering Committee meeting, that the work continues on ecological, spatial and catch data-collection, and on gathering and analysis socio-economic and gender-related information related to bycatch reduction. Furthermore, for the management plans being developed to be effective in addressing all the issues and providing solutions, they will need to be formulated in a manner that involves all stakeholders, including those that have not been customarily included. The output for developing institutional arrangements for management plan development and implementation is therefore prioritized as well. Once broader and good-quality management strategies and processes are in place, the MTE believes, they will have the potential to drive changes in areas under the other outputs, such as gear use, incentives for trawlers, and increased private-sector engagement.

ES11. To this end the evaluators proposed detailed priorities, which are presented in Table 5 in Section 7.2. The MTE recommends a limited extension of the project and formulation of a new project synthesising and implementing the lessons learned from REBYC-II CTI and an earlier REBYC initiative.



### Recommendations

ES12. The following recommendations are made with the intention to support the strategy as outlined above.

ES13. Shortcomings were identified in the project document with regard to inconsistencies in the Results Framework.

#### **Recommendation 1: to the FAO Fisheries Department on project formulation**

Enhance quality control in the preparation of project documents with a view to having them reviewed in-depth beyond Programme and Project review Committee requirements, before becoming a management instrument, with the emphasis given to consistency and logic in the Results Framework in line with RBM principles.

ES14. FAO initiated the project with an agreement “in principle” on co-financing of the PRC. The negotiations failed with serious consequences for project implementation. This raises the question about having financing for crucial project components secured before initiating a project.

#### **Recommendation 2: To the FAO Fisheries Department and TCID on project initiation**

Ensure that funding for core functions in a project are ensured before initiating activities

ES15. Project management suffered initially from the lack of a PRC. A part-time PRC was appointed in July 2013. However, a part-time basis is not sufficient to cater for management and technical needs of a regional, technically complex intervention. Furthermore, because of lack of travel funds, the LTO and PRC and consultants have not been able to travel to meet the needs for managerial and technical support in the participating countries.

#### **Recommendation 3: To the BH on budget revision**

Undertake a budget revision to secure funding for full-time services of the PRC to the project for the remainder of its duration, and allocate sufficient funds for increased travel by the PRC to the countries and for capacity –strengthening activities in them.

ES16. FAO’s administrative routines are cumbersome and not adequately understood in SEAFDEC and in the countries. This has led to delays in formulation and approval of LOA’s, LA’s etc. The delays have aggravated because the availability of funds for administrative support to the BH were not clear and recruiting a support staff in FAORAP has not been possible.

#### **Recommendation 4: To FAORAP and TCID on administrative support to the project**

Ensure that BH functions are adequately resourced with time, cost-recovery mechanisms and the funds available from the project’s GEF agency fee, which could be used to support a project assistant. FAORAP is also urged to recruit such a project assistant to be based in FAORAP and with full access to FAO systems.

ES17. FIRO (LTU) and FAO have lent critical support to the project, beyond what is expected and planned. This support has ensured that the project after a difficult start has gained momentum and is making progress towards the achievement of major outputs.

**Recommendation 5: To FIRO and FAORAP fisheries technical officers in technical support and backstopping to the project**

Continue to provide technical support and backstopping to the project, or the necessary resources for it, to ensure that momentum in implementation is maintained and that the main outputs are achieved by the project’s end.

ES18. Thus far the project’s capacity development has been at the regional rather than the national level. If the project is to use its unique opportunity to bring effective trawl bycatch management to the pilot sites and see their lessons shared nationally, it will need to direct more of its capacity-strengthening efforts to build solidly participatory institutional arrangements at local level and technical skills for EAFM-based management.

**Recommendation 6: To the project team and LTO on capacity development**

Furnish in-depth and longer-term technical training and facilitation of stakeholder engagement at site-level to the stakeholders for EAFM-based management plan development in order to better ensure that the plans are of quality, inclusive of all parties and shared at national level as a model for other sites.

ES19. The MTE concluded that the information-gathering and data collection that had been initiated did not cater for vital socio-economic indicators on the use of bycatch, the role of fisher folk in the utilization of bycatch, the role of bycatch for income and nutrition in poor households, and potential impact on these groups, including women in fisheries management plans with bycatch reduction elements.

**Recommendation 7: To the project team on socio-economic and gender analysis**

The project should urgently assess in-depth to what extent socio-economic, including gender, data-gathering has been initiated in each of the countries, and take action to ensure that adequate and relevant data is gathered and analysed to understand the potential impacts of bycatch reduction on different groups, and incorporate in fisheries management planning.

ES20. Partnerships with other initiatives and organizations, such as SEAFDEC projects funded by Japan and SIDA, SFP, OFFO and WWF, figure prominently in the project document, but have not been used adequately during project implementation. Outsourcing of whole or parts of outputs by allowing other partners to undertake them, would free resources in RFU for core functions. The results, achieved as part of co-financing arrangements would be reported towards relevant output.

**Recommendation 8: To the project on the role of partners**

Explore the possibility of having the project’s partner organizations, e.g. regional/international NGOs, regional initiatives and industry organizations, adopt outputs of the project, or parts of them, suited to these partners, to enable the project to focus on its areas of strength.

ES21. There is a need for a focus of the project’s activities during the remainder of its life. A prioritization should aim at emphasising outputs that are crucial for achieving the project development objective. The MTE has proposed priorities for consideration, and with these the project is likely to make a considerable contribution to bycatch reduction. This focus can be reached at the upcoming work planning process for the project in April – May 2014.

**Recommendation 9: To the project on strategy and work planning**

Review the priorities proposed by the MTE (Section 7.1), base the work planning for the remaining project period on these, and to seek PSC endorsement of a strictly prioritised work plan

ES22. The project, if it focuses, is predicted to produce fisheries management plans and recommendations for institutional and legal changes in the countries. However, it is unlikely that these will be implemented during the project period and more time would be needed.

**Recommendation 10: To the GEF Unit and the project on an extension of the project**

In consultation with FIRO and the RFU, extend the project up to the end of 2015 (by 3 months) to allow for the completion of crucial activities.

**Recommendation 11: To FIRO on formulation of a follow up project**

Initiate as early as possible and in consultation with the RFU, FAORAP and PSC, the formulation of a follow-up project with the aim of synthesizing the results from REBYC and REBYC-II CTI and implementing the fisheries management plans and the institutional and legal changes proposed.

## **1 Introduction**

### ***1.1 Background and purposes of the evaluation***

1. The four-year REBYC-II CTI Project, “Strategies for trawl fisheries bycatch management”, GCP/RAS/269/GFF, is a four-year project, which began on 31 October, 2011, and is scheduled to end on 31 October 2015. However, real implementation of the project, after an initial inception period, started in April 2012. The project, funded by the GEF, covers five countries in Southeast Asia; Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, the first three of which are members of the Coral Triangle Initiative<sup>1</sup> (CTI). The GEF allocation is USD 3 000 000 and the total co-financing approximately USD 8 million. Co-financing was to be provided by the participating governments, the private sector in the participating countries, FAO, Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Sustainable Fisheries Partnerships (SFP) and Marine Ingredients Organization (IFFO). The project was conceived as a follow-up to an earlier FAO/UNEP/GEF project, “Reduction of environmental impact from tropical shrimp trawling through the introduction of bycatch reduction technologies and change of management”, or REBYC, implemented between 2002 and 2008.

2. As per GEF requirements a mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the project was conducted, between 7 February and 20 April 2014, to determine progress towards the achievement of objectives, outcomes and outputs, and to identify corrective actions as needed. Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) for the evaluation were prepared by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) in close consultation with FAO’s GEF Coordination Unit, the Lead Technical Officer (LTO), Budget Holder, and Lead Technical Unit (LTU), the Fishing Operations and Technology Branch (FIRO).

3. The evaluation assessed the project through internationally accepted evaluation criteria, i.e. relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Because the project has experienced considerable delays the evaluation of the outcomes was limited. Instead the evaluation, in agreement with the various FAO stakeholders, focused on assessing the design and approach of the project, its relevance in the context of bycatch issues in participating countries, and implementation efficiency, in order to identify strategies for an efficient and effective implementation of the project during the remainder of its duration. The evaluation team also recognized that evidence of impact and sustainability may not yet be available given the mid-term stage of the project and the challenges it has faced.

4. The MTE was conducted by a two member team; an independent consultant as Team Leader and the OED Evaluation Manager as team member. For profiles of the team members, see Annex 1. The mission began with interviews in FAO Headquarters, followed by a two and a half week mission to Thailand, where FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAORAP) staff were also interviewed, the Philippines and Viet Nam. Brief visits to the pilot sites were conducted in the Philippines and Viet Nam. Debriefings on the draft findings and recommendations of the MTE were held at FAORAP, Bangkok, on 3 March, and at FAO HQ in Rome on 7 March 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> Coral Triangle Initiative: The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF) is a multilateral partnership of six countries formed in 2007 to address the urgent threats facing the coastal and marine resources of one of the most biologically diverse and ecologically rich regions on earth. CTI-CFF is managed through a Secretariat based in Jakarta, Indonesia. Three of the REBYC-II CTI countries are members of the CTI, namely Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Philippines

## **1.2 Methodology of the evaluation**

5. The evaluation followed the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards (Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, UNEG/FN/Standards, April 2005). The evaluation consulted internal and external stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, and triangulation of evidence and information gathered underpinned its validation and analysis.

6. As the MTE focused on evaluating the design, relevance and efficiency of the project, specific methodologies were used. To assess design, the evaluation examined whether the project possessed a sound theory of change, the components linked with one another logically, its objectives were feasible within the project duration, and the components were formulated to gather the information necessary for fisheries management planning. For evaluating the project’s relevance, the team examined the site and national level contexts with respect to the key fisheries and socio-economic issues present, the state of fisheries management in the countries, site-level data needs, and management capacity. Regarding efficiency, project delivery, resource availability and institutional arrangements within FAO and with partners were assessed. For gathering the data needed to analyze these more specific areas under each criterion, the evaluation used a variety of methods. These consisted of reviewing reports, holding semi-structured interviews with key informants, stakeholders and participants, supported by check lists, surveying some stakeholders and conducting direct observation during field visits. More specifically, the evaluation:

- Carried out a desk review of the project document, Project Inception Report, outputs, monitoring reports, PSC Reports and reports from other relevant meetings; Project Implementation Reports; quarterly and six-monthly progress reports, and other internal documents including consultant and financial reports;
- Reviewed the project website, annual work plans, publications and other materials;
- Interviewed FAO and RFU staff, namely the Project Regional Coordinator, Project Technical Advisor, the Executing Agency, SEAFDEC, Regional Administrative Officer; the Lead Technical Unit, Lead Technical Officer, Budget Holder, TCID staff, technical staff at FAORAP, and FAO Representation staff in the visited countries;
- Interviewed national government staff involved in project implementation including, the National Project Coordinators (NPCs), National Technical Officers (NTOs), National Working Group members, and members of the local Consultative Groups;
- Conducted a survey of the NPCs and NTOs with whom the team could not meet;
- Interviewed participating private sector companies, and regional and international organizational partners working on similar issues through in-person interviews in country or via telephone;
- Visited three of the five participating countries, namely Thailand, Viet Nam and The Philippines as the progress of the project has been greater in them and there was thus more evidence to examine. This was also intended to assist the evaluation team (ET) in its aim to identify and propose a workable strategy for the remaining project period.

7. As the project is GEF-funded, the evaluation rates the project according to the GEF’s six-point scale system: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Marginally Satisfactory (MS), Marginally Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly

Unsatisfactory (HU). Additionally, for accountability to FAO, the project is scored according to a similar OED framework.

8. There were limitations and constraints that the MTE experienced. First, time and resource constraints prevented a visit to all of the participating countries, and permitted only brief missions to the countries and their sites. Additionally, a regional workshop tentatively planned at the time of the evaluation, which would have allowed interviews with representatives from the other partner countries, was postponed. Thus it was not possible to interact in person with these partners. The limited time spent in the three countries the mission visited also implied a limited number of consultations with stakeholders, especially with stakeholders not directly engaged in project activities but who could offer views on them. Additionally, some meetings with stakeholders the MTE requested, mainly with the private sector, were not arranged or were cancelled.

## 2 Context of the project

9. The region covered by the project is largely the Coral Triangle of Southeast Asia, a highly diverse and large region, where fisheries are important for exports, livelihoods and food security. Growing populations and economic development has resulted in increasing efforts to produce fish to meet demand for local consumption and for export. This has resulted in overexploitation of valuable fish resources, declining Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE) and with impacts on profitability of fishing operations and income among fishing households. Migration and economic development are also increasing the demands for employment, housing, energy, food, water and other goods and services, which pose additional threats to the marine ecosystem, biodiversity and fish resources. While the project focused on five countries, the outcomes of the project and lessons learned are intended for wider use for the whole region and through various regional organizations. The project is based on an increasing recognition that bycatch in trawl fisheries is a threat to sustainable fisheries and biodiversity, and thereby also to livelihoods in coastal communities and food security.

10. There is no universal definition of bycatch. In FAO’s International Guidelines for Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards<sup>2</sup>, this is acknowledged and the guidelines limits themselves to describe characteristics for bycatch. In the case of multispecies fisheries, where selectivity is inherently poor, the guidelines describe bycatch as “... the part of the catch that should not have been caught *inter alia*, because of detrimental ecological and/or economic consequences”. Problems with bycatch are understood to relate to catching of species not targeted by the fishery, species which are protected, endangered or threatened, juvenile fish and organisms for which there are no intended use. The Project Document includes in bycatch “... all unwanted fish as well as low-value and trash fish that the fisher keeps and sells or consumes”. As is evident from this it is not always possible to determine exactly what part of a catch is bycatch; the concept of a “low value” part of the catch (which includes juveniles of commercially important species) may be easier to apply.

11. The trawl fisheries sector differs widely between the participating countries<sup>3</sup>. Trawling is carried out by large-scale trawlers as well as small-scale vessels with 10 – 15 hp outboard engines and with a variety of trawl gears. Indonesia banned trawling in 1980 but has subsequently opened up areas for trawl fishing (both shrimp and fish trawls) and there are

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<sup>2</sup> FAO International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards. Rome, FAO, 2011

<sup>3</sup> This paragraph draws on reports prepared by the participating countries for REBYC-II CTI at the initial stages of the project

approximately 19 500 units fishing with trawl and “trawl like” gear catching approximately 250 000 t/y. Papua New Guinea has a small, well-defined trawl fishery, with only 24 licensed vessels, of which some 15 are in operation. Papua New Guinea regards 90% of the total catches as bycatch. Some 10% of the bycatch is used by the industry and the balance either for local consumption or discarded. In Philippines the small-scale fisheries sector (classified as “municipal fisheries”) employ some 470 000 municipal fishing vessels. A sizeable portion of these are fishing with trawls. The commercial trawl sector employs 400 vessels. The number has declined because of overfishing rendering operations unprofitable. Both Thailand and Viet Nam have sizeable trawl fleets. Thailand fishes in the Gulf of Thailand and Andaman Sea, both of which are shared with other countries. There are some 5 000 trawlers using otter trawls, pair trawls and to a lesser extent beam trawls. Viet Nam reports 24 091 trawlers, of which 16 426 use otter trawls. The trawlers are fairly evenly spread along the coast. The trawl fisheries sector is important in the participating countries for food security, coastal livelihoods and incomes. Livelihoods impacts are related not only to fishing operations, but also boat-building and net-making and services linked to fishing operations, and through the supply chain with traders and processors to consumers, who use the products as food or as direct feed or through fish meal and oil for aquaculture.

12. Poorly managed trawl fisheries are contributing to unsustainable resource utilization and threaten marine biodiversity. There have been increasing concerns worldwide that unselective trawling results in the capture of juveniles of commercially important species as well as turtles and seabirds. Many trawl fisheries are poorly managed and reported on, especially with regards to bycatch and discarded portions of the catch. Their impact on fish resources, habitats and ecosystems is understood to be significant. In this context reductions of bycatch and discards are important goals. Furthermore, the encroachment of trawlers into reserved artisanal zones is a common problem in the Region. In many cases some regulations exist to limit conflicts generated by trawling, but these are poorly enforced.

13. However, other perspectives can also be applied on bycatch, or the low value portion of the catches. Catches from the small-scale sector are seldom discarded, and all catch is used and represents a value. It can be used as remuneration for trawler crews, viewed as a much needed protein source for poor consumer groups in coastal areas, and are an important source of feed for the growing aquaculture sector in the region.

14. This leads to the need for management of bycatch within the framework of trawl fisheries management, applying the Ecosystems approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM), to ensure that the impact of reduced bycatch on poor consumers and small-scale traders is understood and addressed. This project aims at doing this: address bycatch using EAFM and embed bycatch management in broader trawl fisheries management plans for the project sites.

15. The growing concern with bycatch and their negative impact globally have led to international initiatives. Global instruments which guide sustainable management of natural marine resource are the United Nations Convention Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and Convention on Biological Diversity. Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans are also important to maintain sustainable ecosystems and fish resources. In 1995 two important instruments were agreed, FAOs Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code), which is voluntary, and the associated technical guidelines and international action plans, and the UN Fish Stock Agreement. The latest international instrument is the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discard, which was endorsed by FAO’s Committee on Fisheries, COFI, in 2011.

16. In addition to the global there is also a regional context. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in which all participating countries in the project, except

Papua New Guinea are members, has through a strategic partnership with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC) enhanced its efforts to promote sustainable fisheries and marine ecosystems.

17. FAO’s Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific provides the secretariat for the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), which has taken an initiative to develop a regional vision for more effective management of the trawl sector. This regional vision would seek to balance the demand for fish for human consumption (e.g. fresh/frozen and surimi) and feeds for aquaculture, with the need to sustain ecosystem functions in the marine fishery and improve capture fishery quality. This should be achieved using EAFM. In 2013 APFIC a Regional Expert Workshop on Tropical Trawl Fishery Management to develop "Regional guidelines for the management of tropical trawl fisheries".

18. The project under evaluation is following up on a successful project, “Reduction of Environmental Impact from tropical Shrimp Trawling through the Introduction of Bycatch Reduction Technologies and Change of Management” (REBYC), of FAO, UNEP and the GEF, which was implemented from 2002 to 2008. That project focused on technical aspects of bycatch management. One of its important lessons was that solutions to the bycatch problem cannot be only technical in nature, and it has been used as a basis for the formulation of REBYC II, which addresses bycatch problems in a broader management context with EAFM.

19. There are also private initiatives on bycatch management. The Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), an international industry-based NGO, supports improved fisheries management by working on demands generated in the supply-chain, from consumers/retailers to fisheries operators. The Marine Ingredients Organization (IFFO) works to strengthen the global standing of the fish-meal and -oil industry, while ensuring sustainable future supplies worldwide. Both organizations have an interest in bycatch management. Also, environmental NGOs, like WWF, are engaging in bycatch management as a contribution to sustainable fisheries and protection of ecosystems. WWF is for example holding an International Smart Gear Competition, which seeks and supports innovative solutions to address fisheries bycatch.

20. Against the background of threats from unmanaged bycatch, especially in multi-species tropical trawl fisheries, the project document identifies a set of barriers to improved trawl fisheries bycatch management:

- Lack of or deficient legal and institutional structures and policies for effective management of bycatch and trawl fisheries;
- Ineffective resource management leading to unsustainable fishing operations;
- Insufficient data and information on bycatch and the impact of trawl fisheries on the marine environment and habitats;
- Limited awareness of sustainability issues and lack of knowledge on measures available to improve trawl fisheries bycatch management.

21. REBYC-II CTI was designed within this context of barriers to support the participating countries in the Coral Triangle and Southeast Asia to manage their trawl fisheries and to generate learning and experiences of importance for the wider region.



### **3 Analysis of project concept and design**

#### **3.1 Theory of change**

22. The Project document is comprehensive and detailed and the project’s context, aims and activities generally presented in a logical manner. The Global Environment Objective of the project is:

*“Responsible trawl fisheries that result in sustainable fisheries resources and healthy marine ecosystems in the Coral Triangle and Southeast Asian waters by reduced bycatch, discards and fishing impact and biodiversity and the environment”.*

23. The project Development Objective is:

*“Effective public and private partnership for improved trawl and bycatch management and practices that support fishery dependent incomes and sustainable livelihoods”.*

24. The Global Environmental Objective is dual but straightforward: “sustainable fisheries” and “healthy marine ecosystems” where sustainable fisheries could be seen as contributing to healthy marine ecosystems. The Project Development Objective, however, has several constituent parts; i) effective public and private partnerships; ii) improved trawl and bycatch management, and iii) fishery dependent incomes and sustainable livelihoods. These can be understood as a hierarchy with fishery dependent incomes and sustainable livelihoods at the top, to be achieved through better management, in turn supported by private-public partnerships. The project development objective is focussing on incomes and livelihoods. The part with relevance for the global environmental objective is the management of trawl fisheries which contributes to sustainable fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems.

25. The overall strategic approach is to implement FAO’s Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) and EAFM. This should, the project document states, be the base to develop the framework for effective management of bycatch.

26. The project was, according to the project document, designed to reduce the capture of bycatch species through technical and management measures; minimise the catch of juveniles of commercially important species, minimise discards where such take place; avoid capture of turtles, marine mammals, and other vulnerable species, and control of fishing practices that have a destructive impact on bottom habitats. While these strategic approaches are technical in nature, the approach taken by the project is more holistic, recognizing that bycatch issues cannot only be dealt with through technically means alone. This was an important lesson learned from the previous project. The importance of a broader, more holistic approach in the project focusing on trawl fisheries management was demonstrated during the field visits of the MTE. Discussions with government officials and other stakeholders on central and local level, all pointed to the overall problem of overcapacity in the fleets and excessive fishing effort. Thus bycatch issues are closely linked to overall management of the fisheries, including measures to control and eventually reduce fishing capacity and effort. Measures to address bycatch also have implications on other fisheries and on incomes and livelihoods. The Code and EAF allow the project to apply a more holistic approach and assess the interactions between different fisheries and impact on livelihoods.

27. The Project operates on different levels. On the national level it works at selected project sites, where the practical activities are implemented in partnership between the public and private sectors and civil society. These are then linked to the national level, where the fisheries authorities have the overall responsibility for implementation. At the regional level,

the project works through workshops and meetings on longer term strategies for bycatch management closely linked to other regional as well as global initiatives by international organizations, international NGOs and the private sector. The MTE concludes that the approach is feasible, provided sufficient time and resources are available for the often time-consuming processes to engage a wide variety of stakeholders at all levels.

28. The project has four inter-related components:

- Policy, legal and institutional framework
- Resource management and fishing operations
- Information management and communications, and
- Awareness and knowledge

29. The components and their focus are to contribute to the project development objective, and indirectly also to the Global Environment Objective (note that inconsistencies in the formulation of outcomes for the components are discussed in the next section). An adequate framework of policies and laws (including regulations for their implementation) as well as effective institutions are a prerequisite for trawl fisheries management, together with stringent resource management and control over fishing operations. To be effective these need to be underpinned by sufficient data and information on trawl fisheries, their interactions with other fisheries and socio-economic dimensions of the industries as well as capacity building among government institutions and other stakeholders and awareness building in public, private and civil society.

30. The project aims at substantial changes in governance, for which there is no legal basis in some of the participating countries. Institutional changes, changes in how institutions work (in this case to promote and rely on public-private partnerships and to apply EAFM), as well as reforms of the legal framework are inherently time-consuming processes. There is thus a flaw in the theory of change, which does not fully consider time constraints. A four-year project is unlikely in the best of situations to be able to result in such fundamental changes. A realistic aim is to demonstrate how the approaches can work on a local level and provide proposals, detailed and based on sound data and information, on how institutions and the legal framework need to change. It is also realistic to aim at enhanced awareness and a better understanding on how to work with a broader based management approach, not only focusing on technical measures.

31. The Project was initially planned for a GEF-contribution of USD 7 million and subsequently adjusted to a considerably lower actual contribution, USD 3 million. The MTE concluded that the adjustment of the budget was not followed by a proportionate adjustment of ambition. The budget is USD 750 000 per year and aimed to maintain a Regional Facilitation Unit (RFU), with a full-time Project Regional Coordinator (PRC)<sup>4</sup> budgeted for a USD 144 000 per year, and activities in five countries. While FAO is the GEF implementing agency for the project, the agency has contracted SEAFDEC to be an executing partner. The RFU is hence based in SEAFDEC. The PRC is supported by a Project Technical Advisor (PTA) in SEAFDEC, an administrative assistant and 11 person months (pm) of international consultants. Disregarding the allocation for evaluations it would allow 1 pm international consultants per country. To be effective the project would thus have to rely heavily on co-financing arrangements (about USD 8 million). The co-financing arrangements include

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<sup>4</sup> The costs for the PRC were initially planned to be cost-shared between the GEF-contribution and co-financing from GIZ. This did not materialize and, besides causing serious delays in project implementation, also lead to expensive ad-hoc solutions

Government contributions, mainly in kind, and private sector contributions, for example vessel time for surveys, contributions from SEAFDEC and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) as well as contributions to SEAFDEC from Japan and Sweden. The MTE concludes that the project is under-financed in relations to its aims ~~leading to and ambitions and~~ that the allocated human resources are insufficient to maintain a presence in the countries. The latter is a serious drawback because the fisheries governance systems advocated by the project are new to several of the participating countries.

### 3.2 *Project design and the results framework; causal links between activities, outputs, outcomes and development objective*

32. The results framework (Arrangements for Results Monitoring) in the Project document lists the expected outcomes, intermediate outcomes and outputs from the four components. The outputs were somewhat revised during the inception period and the versions used in this report are from the Inception report.

33. The project document defines the global environment objective, the project development objective, intermediate outcomes and outputs for each of the four components. In addition the Results Framework and Arrangements for Results Monitoring (appendix 1 of the Project document) defines outcomes for the components. The MTE noted this inconsistency in the document. The causal relations between activities, outputs, intermediate outcomes, outcomes and development objective are analysed based on Table 1 below. The table was compiled from the Project document.

**Table 1 Project Outcomes, outputs and activities**

Outcome	Intermediate outcome/s	Outputs (and targets at the end of the project)	Activities (as per project document)
Component 1: Agreed regional bycatch policy/strategy and national or area specific trawl fisheries bycatch management plans that are in line with the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards are adopted and supported by institutional arrangements and processes for public and private sector partnerships.	Regional bycatch priorities agreed and bycatch management plans for trawl fisheries in project areas are established and supported by appropriate legislation and institutional arrangements for public and private sector collaboration	1.1 The International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards recognized by all five project countries and regional bycatch priorities agreed by project partners and presented in published policy/strategy document.	1. Initial regional workshop 2. Consultations and draft priorities 3. Finalization of policy/strategy and regional workshop
		1.2 At least 3 national or area specific trawl fisheries bycatch management plans in the project areas agreed by stakeholders and adopted by relevant authorities.	1. Management needs assessment 2. Consultations and drafting of plans 3. Adoption of plans and implementation support
		1.3. Policy, legal and institutional frameworks relevant for trawl fisheries bycatch management reviewed and recommendations for adjustments developed with and agreed in principle by the competent national authorities.	1. Reviews of existing frameworks 2. Consultations and drafting of recommendations 3. National workshops
		1.4 Institutional	1. Establishment of

Outcome	Intermediate outcome/s	Outputs (and targets at the end of the project)	Activities (as per project document)
		arrangements (Management Councils) for collaborative trawl fisheries bycatch management established and functioning in accordance with agreed bycatch management plans (output 1.2) in project fisheries/areas in all countries.	Consultative Groups 2. review of institutional requirements and drafting of TOR, membership rules etc. for local Management Councils 3. Training and sensitization 4. Establishment of Management Councils
Component 2: Measures that manage bycatch and reduce discards, and thereby improve fisheries resources and ensure long-term economic sustainability of trawl fisheries, are implemented in combination with incentives in all project countries. In these fisheries (covered by improved bycatch management measures) bycatch has been reduced.	Management measures, including environmentally friendly fishing gears and practices that reduce bycatch, discards and the impact on biodiversity and the environment, are identified, developed and adapted in project areas.	2.1 More selective trawl gear and/or alternative (e.g. including actions in 2.2 and/or 2.3) fishing practices used by at least half of the trawlers in project areas	1. Assessment of existing gear and consultations on possible modifications 2. Sea trials, testing and training (including regional TOT for gear demonstrations) 3. National and regional workshops and study tours 4. Selection of gear and introduction
		2.2 Selection criteria and recommendations for demarcating fishing zones and areas for spatial-temporal closures are identified in at least 2 project areas /countries (see also output 3.1)	1. Identification of priorities and methods for surveys and mapping 2. Surveys and mapping 3. national and regional workshops and study tours 3. Preparation of final recommendations and implementation
	Incentives for trawl operators to reduce bycatch are defined in the project areas.	2.3 Inventory of selected trawl fleets in project areas drawn up and recommendations for fishing effort and capacity management strategy communicated to competent national authorities.	1. Review of existing systems, guidelines and related activities 2. Inventory of vessels in project areas 3. Drafting of recommendations on capacity management
		2.4 Agreement has been reached on appropriate incentive packages for all trawl fisheries in project areas.	1. Desk study on potential incentives 2. Regional workshop and drafting of recommendations 3. Introduction of incentive packages to Consultative Groups/Management Councils for inclusion in by-catch management plans
Component 3: Standardized data for key indicators, including on	Improved data on bycatch and potential fishing ground impact	3.1 Data and data collection methods for bycatch, discards and	1. Review of existing data collection systems 2. Data collection from

Outcome	Intermediate outcome/s	Outputs (and targets at the end of the project)	Activities (as per project document)
economic performance, are available in all project countries and inform trawl fisheries and bycatch management planning and implementation at national and regional levels.	information – collected through standardized methods across all project countries – are available from project areas and inform national/specific area trawl fisheries bycatch management plans.	seabed impact in project areas available and published in relevant national and regional information systems (see also output 2.2).	sample trawlers 3. National and regional workshops to evaluate results 4. Data collection from wider selection of trawlers 5. Documentation of methods and preparation of recommendations
		3.2 System set up for monitoring of bycatch reduction (volume) as a result of modified gear and improved management and its likely impact on incomes (bycatch value).	1. Identification of key indicators 2. Design of MAE system (combined with project MAE) 3. Preparation of report on likely trawl impacts
	The role of bycatch in trawl profitability is understood and measures identified for how to ensure long-term economic sustainability of trawl fisheries in the project areas.	3.3 Project website set up in Year 1 and developed into a regional information sharing mechanism for information on trawl fisheries bycatch management by end of project.	1. Setting up of project website 2. Maintenance of website
		3.4 Project IEC material available.	1. Preparation and distribution of initial material 2. Continuous production of relevant IEC
Component 4: Enhanced knowledge and understanding of responsible fishing by private sector/fishers, fisheries managers and decision-makers are supporting participatory management arrangements in all project countries.	Private sector/fishers, fisheries managers, local governments and other stakeholders have better knowledge on bycatch issues and participate in developing and implementing national/specific area	4.1 Fishers and other relevant stakeholders (fisheries managers, local government officials, etc.) in project areas have improved their knowledge on bycatch, sustainability issues and collaborative management through training, project information and/or participation in project activities.	1. Assessment of training needs 2. Training and study tours for fishers and other stakeholders
		4.2 Regional and national policy and decision-makers have been sensitized with regard to responsible trawl fisheries management through project information and workshops.	1. Regional workshops for policy- and decision makers 2. Preparation of recommendations
		4.3 Private sector/fisher ‘champions’, technical officers and extension workers (government and NGOs) have improved their knowledge on BRDs	1. Assessment of training needs 2. Training and workshops

Outcome	Intermediate outcome/s	Outputs (and targets at the end of the project)	Activities (as per project document)
		and other management measures through training (250 persons trained).	

34. Component 1 has four stated outputs and associated activities. The MTE concluded that the activities are relevant and feasible to achieve the expected outputs. However, the formulation of the intermediate outcome and outcome for the component is inadequate. The intermediate outcome is just the outputs written into one sentence and does not add a new results level.

35. Also Component 2 has four outputs. The causal relations are feasible, although the target in Output 1 is extremely ambitious. In the case of Output 2 it should be noted that the activities indicate a higher ambition than the output itself. They mention implementation of recommendations, while the Output is restricted to selection criteria and recommendations. The activities are generally feasible to reach the defined results. The first Intermediate outcome is relevant and on a higher level than the outputs. The second Intermediate outcome is identical to output 4 and does not add a new level of result. The Outcome for the component is not more than the Intermediate outcomes rewritten into one sentence.

36. The four outputs in Component 3 will be achieved through a standard approach. The MTE noted, with concern, that there is no mentioning of gathering of socio-economic data and information to feed into the preparation of management plans. The two last Outputs (website and information, education and communication material) are logically supported by activities. Two intermediate outcomes were defined for the Component. They follow logically from the activities and outputs, adding a new level of results. However, the formulation of the Outcome does not add a new level of results.

37. Component 4 is related to capacity development for fishers and other stakeholders in project sites, regional and national policy and decision-makers, and private sector “champions” and extension workers (NGOs and government). The associated activities are relevant to achieve the outputs. The Intermediate outcome for Component 4 adds besides capacity developed, also participation in development and implementation of area specific management plans. The second part of the Intermediate outcome relies on a successful implementation of Output 4 in Component 1. The Outcome for the component as formulated does not add a new level in the results hierarchy.

### 3.3 *The validity of indicators, assumptions and risks.*

38. Indicators are defined on outcome level for the global environment objective and the project development objective. They relate to bycatch priorities being agreed at the regional and national levels and being implemented. There are concrete targets for bycatch reduction. Indicators also cover availability of data on trawl fisheries and bycatch, and enhanced awareness of bycatch issues. On the project development objective level the indicators relate to institutional arrangements for trawl fisheries management (including private-public partnerships), information on profitability and economic sustainability of trawl fisheries. The indicators are comprehensive and relevant. They however, do not capture the basic strategic approach to apply EAFM.

39. The indicators for Component 1 are straightforward and related to the concrete outputs expected under the component. As demonstrated earlier there is no real intermediate

outcome or outcome for the component, just four outputs. The identified indicators capture the outputs adequately.

40. Indicators for Component 2 address gear modifications and management measures with concrete targets. There are no indicators for any of the components capturing the social dimension of trawl fisheries management, in terms of employment and/or livelihoods.

41. Component 3 addresses improved data on bycatch and impact on fishing grounds as well as the understanding of profitability of trawl operations. The indicators for intermediate outcome of the component are straightforward, possible to measure and feasible. The same is valid for Component 4 (awareness and knowledge).

42. The assumptions as defined in the Project document are relevant, the risks are logically formulated based on the assumptions and are in general ranked as medium-high. The risk mitigation measures are well defined and realistic.

43. A crucial co-financing contribution was “agreed in principle” as contribution to the costs for the PRC. Negotiations on this co-financing dragged on for an unacceptable long period, leaving the Project without the PRC for 18 months. There was no alternative plan and FAO had to resort to expensive ad hoc solutions with a short-term PRC. This contributed to the serious delays in project implementation and financial constraints for the further implementation. The co-financing of the PRC turned out to be a high risk and it could be argued that FAO should have had an alternative plan, should such a vital negotiation fail.

## **4 Analysis of the implementation process**

### **4.1 Project/programme Management**

44. Owing to the absence until July 2013 of a regular PRC, there was a significant gap in project management in the first half of the project. Hence planning, supervision, progress monitoring and adaptive management were all less than at the levels necessary, based on project reports and staff interviews. The LTO, based in HQ since REBYC II is part of a global initiative, has been the *de facto* manager and he as well as international consultants besides the interim PRC undertook additional missions to compensate for this.

45. Country stakeholders regarded highly the quality of the technical guidance the LTO provided in visits to the countries, but stated that the quantity of it was rather little and they expressed a wish to have the officer visit the countries more frequently. In addition to the constraints the LTO has experienced with regard to obtaining funding to travel, FAO travel restrictions have made it difficult to provide all the necessary technical advice and project guidance.

46. An interim PRC served briefly in the project and helped to fill an important gap in project management at the time. Since July 2013, a permanent though part-time PRC has been in place and is contracted till December 2014 (with the possibility of extension till project-end). The coordination this has provided has, according to country stakeholders and project documents, brought significant improvements in the management, communications and progress of the project. However, the position is less than full-time (160 days/year, which amounts to approximately two weeks/month) and this has meant that coordination and oversight of the project activities across the countries remains less than needed, and is resulting in slower progress in terms of achievements than is possible.

47. One consequence of the PRC funding issue is that the project saw a looser management arrangement and “project team”, where the MTE found that FAORAP fisheries

experts gave critical support in identifying and arranging additional funds for it. They have also been available to engage with the PRC and SEAFDEC on technical and other matters for project management. Without their efforts to find a solution for the funding of the PRC it is doubtful that REBYC II would have been able to achieve much. The Technical Advisor from SEAFDEC has similarly helped to fill the coordination and technical assistance role in important ways, through for example providing advice to the countries on BRD’s and engaging in the Fishmeal Dialogue in Thailand.

48. A deeper issue the MTE also found is that due to the allocation of responsibilities for GEF projects under FAO’s project management procedures, decision-making on use and approval of project resources and technical matters is not under a single Project Manager. It instead tends to be dispersed across all the participating entities and staff; the Budget Holder, LTO, TCID and PRC. In fact, it remains unclear who the “project manager” of REBYC II really is, and the lack of a designated manager and the need for approvals from several entities for all fund use has contributed to delays in implementation and confusion on the part of national government stakeholders.

#### Quality, realism and focus of work plans

49. Mirroring the fact that the project components were not entirely clear (Component 2) or integrated (Components 1 with 4), the annual work plans could have been more focused. However, based on the work plan documents, each plan at country level has had a good connection to the project framework. Unfortunately, due to the issue with the PRC position and the subsequent gap in planning, supervision and support at the regional level, and the lengthy period of time that FAO operational procedures took (discussed below) the work plans became unrealistic

#### Assessment of delivery, causes and consequences of delays and of any remedial measures taken, if any, and Effects on project implementation and effectiveness of the reduced availability of financial resources

50. Overall, the cost-effectiveness of the project up until the recent past has been modest, in that project expenditures and results have not matched well with the project’s duration up to the present. While the project was formally approved in July 2011, the actual EOD was in November of that year, and project activities commenced only in May 2012 after an Inception Workshop was conducted. In the 22 months of actual project execution, according to FPMIS, delivery has reached only USD 1 094 000 —roughly thirty percent of the total budget of USD 3 million. This was largely due to the project’s lack of resources to fund a full-time, permanent PRC to take the project forward, but also, as explained below, to lengthy LOA-related processes, and a lack of capacity in FAORAP and SEAFDEC to handle the nature and volume of all the operational tasks involved.

51. The GEF’s support for the PRC equalled USD 210 000, and co-funding in the amount of an additional 240,000 Euros from GIZ for the position had been expected. Yet the latter did not materialize leaving a significant shortfall in support. During this period, an international consultant was recruited as an interim PRC, but his being based in Europe rather than Asia, and the lower level of funding for the position has meant that the budgets for international consultants and travel have been drawn down to deficits. This is at a time, the MTE concludes, when the permanent PRC must increase his travel to the countries for providing the necessary support and supervision of activities, build stronger relationships with the NPCs, and other international experts need to be recruited to provide assistance on specific technical issues. At the same time, a significant portion of the travel and workshop budget allocated for SEAFDEC staff or any expert consultants it might have chosen to recruit



was unused. Overall, a total of USD 71 276 was spent under the total LOA budget of USD168 200, during the period 15 August 2012 to 24 November 2013<sup>5</sup>. This under-spending was due mainly to limited regional travel by SEAFDEC staff associated with the project and the postponement of one regional training course.

52. To remedy this situation, and owing to the high relevance of REBYC II's activities for FAO's fisheries agenda in Asia and the Pacific, the LTO and fisheries staff and senior management in RAP took initiative to optimize the available resources in RAP generated through the existing cost-recovery mechanisms from another regional GEF project, the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem, to address the funding shortage of the REBYC II PRC position.

53. The pace of the project has improved in recent months, but several other reasons explain why it was slow. One is the slow processing of Letters of Agreement (LOAs) with partner governments, of payments for activities implemented, and other operational procedures. This was the main issue that the participating governments raised to the MTE team regarding the project and it has affected their view of FAO as an efficient and committed partner.

54. Contributing to this problem has been the fact that the PRC, based at SEAFDEC, has had no access to FAO's systems to enable him to carry out tasks normally under the responsibility of regional coordinators of other projects and within their ability when they are based at FAORAP. This and the fact that the PRC is not full-time has meant that the Budget Holder/Operations Officer for the project has had an additional load of tasks to conduct for the project, which in turn has led to delays. Furthermore, as several stakeholders commented, the Budget Holder (BH) has been made responsible within FAORAP for a number of other outputs not traditionally under such a position. Adding to the situation is the lengthy process that is necessary for obtaining clearances on outputs before payments can be made, which has involved the PRC, LTO and BH. Finally, the shift within FAO to a new resource management information system (GRMS) led to further delays with operational tasks.

55. The partner governments have also shown a lack of understanding of FAO procedures and the more demanding ones of the GEF. Similarly, SEAFDEC's knowledge of these procedures could be improved as well to improve efficiency, and although it was designated as a partner in the project no training to the organization was provided on operational processes at the start. However, the BH has proposed a training of this sort for the involved government staff and SEAFDEC in May 2014 following the REBYC II work-planning meeting, and it is hoped that this will bring improvements.

56. These constraints are ones that FAO should have considered when planning the project, and it and the cumbersome and slow LOA, payment and travel arrangement processes will have to be addressed if the agency intends to work with more regional and national partners in the future in more complex projects supported by GEF or other donors.

57. Operational tasks could be more efficient if there were support for the BH's position, and funds for it could have been drawn from the GEF agency fees associated with the project. Yet there has been a perceived lack of clarity and communication regarding the support available for the BH, LTO and PRC from the GEF agency fees, which amounts to USD

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<sup>5</sup> The period for spending on the project under this LOA was extended from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013 - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2013, through agreement with FAORAP, until the new SEAFDEC FAO LOA was signed on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013.

300,000. A percentage of these resources are to support the BH and LTO, and travel of the latter was funded in some part from the fees. However, the allocated share was not known in advance. Additionally, how the GEF agency fees were actually utilized for the project is not known to the ET.<sup>6</sup> The allocations, the ET was informed, were 15 percent for the BH and 40 percent for the LTO. In mid-2013 TCID communicated to FAORAP the percentage of the fees and the estimated amount of support from the project budget and agency fees available to the BH, which was USD 9,000 based on total project delivery at that time. It is not clear whether these figures have been finalized, but they indicate that resources do exist to hire a person to support the BH. For FAORAP to access them, it notes, it is required to submit a request to TCID.

58. In addition to supporting the BH, it will be possible for the project to undertake a budget revision to re-allocate funds to those activities the PSC agrees on prioritizing, based in part on the MTE. This would ensure that the PRC has the resources necessary for him to travel sufficiently and engage more with country and pilot-site stakeholders.

Monitoring and feedback loop into improved management and operations, based on GEF tracking tools as well

59. The monitoring plan in the project document, including the indicators and baseline data that are largely qualitative owing to the project’s aims, are fairly clear and in most cases do allow for an assessment of the *quality* of the results delivered. However, since there is not a strong link between the outputs of the project and its broad outcome, the monitoring framework is unable to adequately or meaningfully track progress on the latter.

60. Furthermore, while the project monitoring framework is used for TCID’s project progress reporting to the GEF, the MTE has not found that it is a tool employed at the regional level or by the participating countries for understanding and recording progress. In its place a simpler matrix, based on the annual work plans, is used to document only the completion of outputs, products or activities. This framework does not capture the output’s quality and whether project expectations were met. The PRC has also had difficulty in receiving updated project monitoring reports on a timely basis, leaving it unknown for periods of time what outputs the countries have completed. Given this form of monitoring, and the lack of a steady, full-time presence of the PRC, there has been little lesson-learning and input from it to inform implementation.

Development and implementation of an exit strategy

61. The project at its start contained no explicit exit strategy. After seeing pilot-site trawl management plans developed based on the information on bycatch and other factors gathered for them and accompanied by incentive programs, the project did not envision how its outcomes, knowledge and processes would be sustained and shared with government at the national level or with other decentralized entities. Capacity development, particularly of the enabling environment in the countries in order to support this, as discussed below, would then be important for the project to emphasize. Only implicitly has there been an exit strategy with bycatch reduction being an important part of SEAFDEC and RAP’s regional work and each possessing regional networks (SEAFDEC its own and FAO APFIC’s membership).

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<sup>6</sup> The ET requested figures on the actual spending of the fees but these have not been provided. This is due in part to the fact that the data on fee use in FAO is not organized by project.

## 4.2 Financial resources management

62. FAO’s new Results-based Management financial reporting system does not show figures for the financial delivery on a project component broken down by participating country, but instead provides aggregated component figures. This is unfortunate as it does not permit a clear picture of cost-effectiveness for each country and where any country-specific issues may lie. However, SEAFDEC has tracked delivery by country manually and this information is in Table 2 below. The table reflects expenditures only as of November 2013 and therefore does not contain information on some more recent activities. However, it does show that expenditures correspond to the greater progress that has been made in the countries on Component 1, regarding the development of trawl fisheries management plans and legislative review.

**Table 2 Expenditures at SEAFDEC and Country Level (as at 30th November 2013)**

<b>SEAFDEC</b>	<b>Component 1</b>	<b>Component 2</b>	<b>Component 3</b>	<b>Component 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
5500 Salaries General Service	375.00	375.00	375.00	375.00	1,500.00
5900 Travel	24,957.69	24,957.69	24,957.69		74,873.07
5920 Training/WS	3,643.50	3,643.50			7,287.00
6000 Expendable Equipment	496.73	496.73	496.73	496.73	1,986.92
6300 GOE	1,924.00	1,924.00	1,924.00	1,924.00	7,696.00
<b>Sub-total</b>	31,396.92	31,396.92	27,753.42	2,795.73	<b>93,342.99</b>
<b>INDONESIA</b>					
5500 Salaries General Service					-
5900 Travel					-
5920 Training/WS		19,851.00			19,851.00
6000 Expendable Equipment		13,892.00			13,892.00
6300 GOE					
<b>Sub-total</b>	-	33,743.00	-	-	<b>33,743.00</b>
<b>PHILIPPINES BFAR</b>					
5500 Salaries General Service					-
5900 Travel	8,698.01	20,738.37	7,482.16	7,628.44	44,546.98
5920 Training/WS	9,771.11	3,567.81		5,050.46	18,389.37
6000 Expendable Equipment					-
6300 GOE	1,845.93	3,199.61	8,122.08	984.50	14,152.11
<b>Sub-total</b>	20,315.04	27,505.78	15,604.23	13,663.40	<b>77,088.45</b>
<b>PHILIPPINES SSU</b>					
5500 Salaries General Service		11,813.93	11,813.93		23,627.86
5900 Travel		9,421.61	9,421.61		18,843.22
5920 Training/WS		1,387.52	1,387.52		2,775.04
6000 Expendable Equipment					-
6300 GOE		1,538.27	1,538.27		3,076.54
<b>Total</b>	-	24,161.33	24,161.33	-	48,322.66
<b>THAILAND</b>					
5500 Salaries General Service					-
5900 Travel		1,264.00			1,264.00
5920 Training/WS	5,153.00	27,752.00		4,608.00	37,513.00
6000 Expendable Equipment		25,000.00			25,000.00

6300 GOE		6,333.00			6,333.00
<b>Sub-total</b>	5,153.00	60,349.00	-	4,608.00	<b>70,110.00</b>
<b>VIET NAM</b>					
5500 Salaries General Service	400.00		400.00	400.00	1,200.00
5900 Travel	3,400.00		2,730.00		6,130.00
5920 Training/WS	17,040.00		9,100.00	16,150.00	42,290.00
6000 Expendable Equipment			2,000.00		2,000.00
6300 GOE	3,872.00	3,000.00	3,675.00	527.50	11,074.50
<b>Sub-total</b>	24,712.00	3,000.00	17,905.00	17,077.50	<b>62,694.50</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>385,301.60</b>

63. The table also reflects that work has progressed to greater extent in the Philippines and Viet Nam, and they are also where data-gathering has taken place.

64. While the use of GEF funds and government in-kind support has been fairly clear, that of co-funding from the private sector in the countries and international organizations, namely SFP, IFFO and WWF, has not been possible for the MTE to uncover. The total co-financing, in cash and in-kind, from all other sources according to the Project Document is USD 8.21 million, which includes USD 300 000 from the Fisheries Department in FAO. Funds from FAO were used in part to support the LTO. Yet apart from the amounts from SEAFDEC (for the regional unit and activities at this level) and the governments (providing staff time), to what components the co-financing was to be directed is not clear from the Project Document. The progress reports and financial statements for REBYC II do not provide information on whether private sector and international organization support was in fact provided or for what activities it was used. It should be noted that co-financing organizations as SFP, IFFO and WWF have had very limited interactions with the project up to the time of the MTE. Their involvement in and support to outputs and outcomes, it is reported, will increase during the remainder of the project.

#### **4.3 Efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional arrangements including Government's participation**

65. The institutional set-up of the project is rather complex with, a National Project Coordinator (NPC) responsible for project implementation, supported by a National Technical Officer (NTO) from the same agency and a National Working Group, representing relevant stakeholders, at the national level. On local level, project teams are formed, Consultative Groups, from the local fisheries agencies and municipal authorities as appropriate and with representation from stakeholder groups. The MTE found that the local institutional set-up for the project was well in place in the Philippines. It also existed but generally weaker in Viet Nam.

66. At the regional level the RFU, hosted by SEAFDEC coordinates and manages (except financial management and technical clearances) the project activities, organizes Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings, workshops and regional training courses, and provides technical guidance and advice to national counterparts. The RFU also liaises with SEAFDEC and FAO (BH in FAORAP and LTO in FIRO, Rome). The RFU is manned by the PRC and PTA and an administrative staff. The Project Task Force (PTF) is composed by BH, LTO, TCI and technical staff from FAORAP and FAO HQ. The efficiency of the institutional set-up on project level is compromised by the need for approvals and technical clearance on several levels, also for minor issues (this is further addressed in section 4.1). The institutional

set-up is a well-trying way to organize a regional project and has proven to be effective for project implementation.

67. The administrative and technical support by FAO HQ and FAORAP is analysed in Section 4.1. and not addressed further in this section.

68. The PSC provides policy guidance and approves annual work plans. The PRC is the secretary of the committee. The PSC has so far met once (May 2013). It discussed and approved the annual work plan as per its TORs and also discussed the PRC situation, the MTE, and the role of partners as SFP and IFFO to foster private-public partnerships in the objectives of the project. It is expected that the PSC will play an increasingly proactive role over the project period. However, the MTE had limited access to information and opinions about the functioning of the PSC, because of the lack of contacts the mission had with NPCs.

69. In addition to the above institutions, partners of SEAFDEC have an important role in the project as co-financiers and for technical activities. These are projects within SEAFDEC funded by Japan and Sweden to which the Centre provides the link and forum for interaction. Other potential partners, as mentioned above, are WWF, SFP and IFFO. The interactions with these partners depend on an effective RFU. It was evident from interviews during the MTE that partners had expected more interactions and joint work with the project than had occurred. This was attributed partly to the delays in the start-up of project activities.

70. The MTE was unable to interact with NPCs during the country visits, but sent all of them a short questionnaire, to which four NPCs responded. All referred to slow approval processes, delays in approval of LOAs and TAs, and cumbersome procedures for transfer of funds. Two responses also referred to the institutional set-up indicating that there were too many layers of decision-making; national level, RFU/SEAFDEC, FAORAP and FAO HQ. This was confusing and not always clear who takes responsibility for which decision.

71. The participating Government have appointed NPCs and NWGs and show commitment to the project. The MTE also found that the project was addressing problems and issues, that were of concern and important for the participating countries. There was frustration nevertheless because of delays and hesitance whether the project may reach its objectives in light also of slow national processes for approvals and agreements on institutional and legal framework changes.

## **5 Analysis of results and contribution to stated objectives<sup>7</sup>**

### **5.1 Achievements at Outputs level**

72. This section assess the outputs against plans as presented in the project document and revised in the inception report, progress reporting provided to the MTE by RFU and verification through interviews and observations during field visits. The project is seriously delayed and progress up to the MTE has been modest. The MTE noted however, that a considerable number of activities had been initiated the last few months before the evaluation and that the project had gained momentum. It has predicted that good progress towards the outputs will be possible at the end of the project. Table 3 below summarizes the project's achievements by output.

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<sup>7</sup>The term ‘results’ includes outputs and outcomes

**Table 3 Progress against outputs at the time of the MTE**

Output	Target year 2	Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	Philippines	Thailand	Viet Nam
<b>Component 1</b>						
1.1 The International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards recognized by all five project countries and regional bycatch priorities agreed by project partners and	Draft priorities available	Ongoing (part. in APFIC WS on Trawl Guidelines September 2013)	Ongoing (part. in APFIC WS on Trawl Guidelines September 2013)	Ongoing (part. in APFIC WS on Trawl Guidelines September 2013)	Ongoing (part. n APFIC WS on Trawl Guidelines September 2013)	Ongoing (part. in APFIC WS on Trawl Guidelines September 2013)
1.2 At least 3 national or area specific trawl fisheries bycatch management plans in the project areas agreed by stakeholders and adopted by relevant authorities.	At least 2 draft trawl fisheries bycatch management plans		Ongoing	Technical Working Group established, action plan agreed	Ongoing	Ongoing
1.3 Policy, legal and institutional frameworks relevant for trawl fisheries bycatch management reviewed and recommendations for adjustments developed with and agreed in principle by the competent national authorities.	Policy, legal and institutional framework reviews completed in all countries	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Completed	Ongoing
1.4 Institutional arrangements (Management Councils) for collaborative trawl fisheries bycatch management established and functioning in accordance with agreed bycatch management plans (output 1.2) in project fisheries/	Rules, action plans, membership rules and other institutional definitions drafted for all project fisheries/areas	NWG established, LCG established,		LCG established	Completed	
<b>Component 2</b>						
2.1 More selective	Trials have led to				Stakeholder	Initiated

Output	Target year 2	Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	Philippines	Thailand	Viet Nam
trawl gear and/or alternative (e.g. including actions in 2.2 and/or 2.3) fishing practices used by at least half of the trawlers in project areas	selection of suitable gear modifications onboard test vessels				meetings initiated	
2.2 Selection criteria and recommendations for demarcating fishing zones and areas for spatial-temporal closures are identified in at least 2 project areas/countries	Maps of fishing effort distribution and location of sensitive areas are developed for at least two of the project areas/countries	Initiated		Surveys ongoing	Ongoing	TORs for consultant drafted
2.3 Inventory of selected trawl fleets in project areas drawn up and recommendations for fishing effort and capacity management strategy communicated to competent national authorities.	50% of all trawlers of selected fleets in project areas included in inventory. Draft recommendations for capacity management agreed with private sector/fishers and other stakeholders in half of the project fisheries/areas	Initiated		Initiated	Initiated	Initiated
2.4 Agreement has been reached on appropriate incentive packages for all trawl fisheries in project areas.	SWOT analysis and feasibility analysis completed for all project fisheries/areas					
<b>Component 3</b>						
3.1 Data and data collection methods for bycatch, discards and seabed impact in project areas available and published in relevant national and regional information systems	Data collected from sample trawlers		Ongoing	Ongoing		Ongoing
3.2 System set up for monitoring of	Design of monitoring	Initiated	Initiated			Initiated

Output	Target year 2	Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	Philippines	Thailand	Viet Nam
bycatch reduction (volume) as a result of modified gear and improved management and its likely impact on incomes (bycatch value).	system and data collection processes					
3.3 Project website set up in Year 1 and developed into a regional information sharing mechanism for information on trawl fisheries bycatch management by end of project.	Website functional and maintained	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
3.4 Project IEC material available.	IEC material produced and distributed	Initiated	Initiated	Initiated	Initiated	Initiated
<b>Component 4</b>						
4.1 Fishers and other relevant stakeholders (fisheries managers, local government officials, etc.) in project areas have improved their knowledge on bycatch, sustainability issues and collaborative management through training, project information and/or participation in project activities.	20 persons trained in each project country	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
4.2 Regional and national policy and decision-makers have been sensitized with regard to responsible trawl fisheries management through project information and workshops.	20 participants from the project region have been sensitized about trawl fisheries bycatch management and the project	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
4.3. Private sector/fisher “champions”,					Initiated	



Output	Target year 2	Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	Philippines	Thailand	Viet Nam
technical officers and extension workers (government and NGO) have improved their knowledge on BRDs and other management measures through training (250 persons trained)						

73. Activities are well under way in Component 1, although the targets for Year 2 have not been met. Output 1.1. is close to completion with priorities drafted as part of the APFIC process to establish regional trawl guidelines (Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission Regional Guidelines for the Management of Tropical Trawl Fisheries in the Asian Region), which will be completed during 2014.

74. Trawl fisheries bycatch management plans (Output 1.2) are also under way, with modifications between countries. Papua New Guinea has a management plan for its small trawler fleet, which with revisions will serve the purpose of the output. Viet Nam has chosen the path of formulating a Fisheries National Circular, which will govern trawl fisheries on national level, eventually complemented with a local trawl bycatch management plan. The other countries have not yet drafted their plans, but MTE expects that all countries will have management plans for the project sites prepared during the project period. It was obvious from the discussions held that a bycatch management plan to be effective would have to be broader than just focusing on bycatch. In multispecies fisheries as tropical trawl fisheries, there are uncertainties how to separate bycatch from the main catch, and especially where bycatch is more at the low-value end of the catch. Interviews with officials and during field visits also emphasized that the problems were overcapacity and excess fishing effort rather than bycatch in itself. And bycatch issues could effectively be addressed in this broader context. Applying EAFM also implies a broader approach in which socio-economic issues play an important role and that trawl fisheries’ interactions with other fisheries should be addressed. The MTE supports the broader, more holistic approach taken by the project.

75. Policy, legal and institutional framework reviews (as part of Output 1.3) should have been completed after year 2. Only one country, Thailand, reports that the review has been finalized. For the other countries the review is ongoing. The formulation of the output is somewhat vague. It states that at the end of the project, recommendations for adjustments of policy, legal and institutional frameworks should be “agreed in principle by the competent national authorities”. There is a good prospect that this will be achieved, if with competent authority is meant the fisheries administration. However, it is likely that the competent authority includes other ministries than those responsible for fisheries. For example, in Viet Nam the MTE was informed about a rather lengthy process, involving several authorities, which would be engaged in the approval process. If this is the case the “agreement in principle” may not be reached during the project period. RFU may wish to clarify this issue during its next PSC meeting.

76. Output 1.4. is well on the way to reach targets for year 2. Technical Working Groups (TWG) have been established and also Local Consultative Groups (LCG) in Indonesia,

Philippines and Thailand. Viet Nam reports uncertainties with the official status of the local working group. These groups are steps on the way to establish more formal institutional arrangements for “collaborative trawl fisheries bycatch management”, so called Management Councils. Philippines have established arrangements for consultative/participatory approaches to governance in a broader sense. The other countries have less developed systems. It will be important with a flexible approach to the institutional arrangements for management, building on existing structures as much as possible. To establish new officially recognized institutions will be time-consuming and may not be reached within the short period remaining for the project. The overriding concern is that the institutional arrangements should ensure active involvement of all stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society. The MTE was not convinced that a real stakeholder engagement as envisaged in the project was fully understood and appreciated in all countries.

77. Component 2 (resource management and fishing operations) have a variety of outputs ranging from trials leading to more selective trawls being used, recommendations for establishment of temporal/spatial closures, inventory of trawl fisheries, and incentive packages for more responsible trawl fisheries.

78. The target for year two in Output 1 is that practical trials should have led to selection of gear modifications in project [test fishing vesselsites](#), with the ultimate aim that at the end of the project at least half of the trawlers in project areas should use more selective or alternative [fishing practicesgear](#). The output was thus intended to provide inputs to the management plans. Little progress has been made towards this output. Thailand has held a stakeholder meeting and Viet Nam has also initiated activities, but no concrete trials. One lesson from REBYC, which successfully tested technical solutions to bycatch issues, was that the solutions are not only technical in nature. There is, however, a great interest in the national institutions, as well as in SEAFDEC, to work on technical aspects of bycatch. SEAFDEC has a long history of successful technical work in this field, and the main counterpart agencies in the participating countries are also technically oriented fisheries authorities. It is however, doubtful, because of delays and funding constraints, if any further work on the output will yield useful results during the project period.

79. Spatial-temporal closures will figure prominently in the management plans. Data and information to designate areas and periods are important for the project in all sites. No country has achieved the level expected after two years from this output: maps of fishing effort distribution and sensitive areas. Indonesia initiated activities in December 2013 for the identification of priorities for mapping. Papua New Guinea does not report any activity with regard to this output. Surveys have recently been initiated in the Philippines on critical habitats and fish larvae. In Thailand, TORs have been prepared for a survey on zoning and a stakeholder consultation has been carried out. Also in Viet Nam TORs have been drafted for surveys. Results from this output are essential for the preparation of management plans and this output should be given a high priority in the further work planning.

80. Also Output 2.3. will feed directly into the preparation of management plans, aiming at inventories of selected trawls fisheries and recommendations for fishing capacity and effort. Progress falls far short of the target for year 2; 50% of all trawlers in project areas included in inventories and recommendations for capacity management agreed. However, most of the participating countries have initiated activities. Indonesia initiated a review of existing vessel registration system in December 2013. Papua New Guinea and Thailand report no activity. A workshop has been held in Philippines on inventory of fishing boats and gears, and activities have been initiated in Viet Nam. It is possible to meet the target for this output during the project period, although results may emerge too late for the first versions of

the management plans. The expected results are essential and the output should be given high priority in the further work.

81. No country has reported any progress with regard to Output 2.4 although the target for year 2 was modest; SWOT analysis and feasibility analysis for incentive packages in all project sites. The skills and experiences needed to do this analysis is, however, not available within the national partner organizations and there is no foundation to expect good progress towards this complex output. The MTE found that partner organizations as SFP and IFFO had not been fully utilized for this purpose. These organizations could take a lead with regard to market-based incentives and their regular work could support this output. Other incentives would probably take too long to elaborate and agree on to be of value for the component.

82. Component 3, Information management and communication, has four outputs, two related to data gathering and dissemination, one to the project website and the last to IEC material. The project aims as stated before to apply EAFM, in which ecosystem and human well-being should be balanced. Data and information on bycatch and discards and monitoring of reduction of bycatch and impact on income are essential, if including other units than the actual trawlers. It is thus surprising that there is no target or output, mentioning socio-economic data and information in a broader sense to understand the impact of changes in bycatch management on income and livelihoods in coastal communities. The project document mentions in the narrative (Section 3.3. Project components and outputs) "establishment of socio-economic monitoring procedures..." Also, the outputs in this component fall far short of targets for year 2.

83. Output 3.1. has as a target for year 2 that data on bycatch, discards and seabed impact should be regularly collected from sample trawlers. Although, activities have been initiated and are ongoing, the target has not been reached. Viet Nam has taken a lead in this output. They have held a training workshop on protocols for data collection and a consultant has initiated work on protocols and forms for data collection. TORs for a consultant to develop, update and manage a database have been drafted. Papua New Guinea has initiated a review of its observer programme to develop forms and protocols for data gathering and identified a consultant for database management. Philippines has initiated surveys by Samar University, of trawlers with regular sampling of catches to determine catch composition and bycatch. Thailand and Indonesia report no activity under the Output. The target for year 2 has not been achieved, with most activities in the countries having been initiated the last few months before the MTE. However, progress has been made and the Output should be given high priority to ensure that adequate information and data are provided for future management planning.

84. Output 3.2 refers to monitoring systems for bycatch reduction and impact on income. Indonesia has initiated training of enumerators and Viet Nam has drafted TORs for a consultant to initiate the development of the MAE system. Philippines monitors catch data but have not initiated data collection on income. The participating countries have initiated work on the target for year 2, that monitoring systems and data collection processes should be designed, but it will still take 6 – 9 months before the target has been achieved. Also this output is essential for management planning and should be given high priority during the last two years.

85. Output 3.3 had as target for year 2 that a website should be established, which has been achieved. Thailand is establishing a national webpage for the project through the official website of Central Marine Fisheries Development Centre.

86. Component 4 refers to awareness and knowledge, it has three outputs related to training and awareness building for three distinct groups (fishers and other stakeholders in project areas, national level stakeholders, and private sector champions and government and NGOs. Capacity development is addressed in Section 5.4.

## **5.2 Achievements at Outcome level**

87. As has been stated in the report most activities have just been initiated and a detailed evaluation against outcomes is not fully possible at this stage. There are also limitations in the way the intermediate outcomes and outcomes have been formulated (see Section 3.2) The analysis here follows the Revised Results Framework as presented in the Inception Report. The framework states issues to be evaluated during the MTE.

88. For Component 1 the framework states that i) the level of agreement and interest to adopt regional bycatch policy/strategy and ii) progress towards trawls fisheries bycatch management plans should be reviewed, bottlenecks identified and remedial action proposed (the proposed actions follow in the sections on conclusions and recommendations). FAORAP has given considerable emphasis on tropical trawl fisheries within the framework of APFIC. In this work bycatch is important and there is a great interest in reviewing, debating and formulating policies/strategies and guidelines for trawl fisheries. Also SEAFDEC is dedicated to the approach. Other partner organizations as WWF, SFP and IFFO have an interest in the issues and commitment to the establishment of guidelines and priorities. On the national level there is growing concerns about declining CPUEs and changes in catch composition and effects on the profitability of the trawl sector, livelihoods in coastal communities and supply of fish as food (food security). For progress towards the preparation of trawl fisheries bycatch management plans, see Section 5.1.

89. Regarding Component 2 in the Results Framework there has not been progress enough to allow any review of coherence between management plans and recommended gear modifications/management measures and incentive packages. The immediate threat to the implementation of the trawl fisheries bycatch management plans is limited to support the process. The risk is that the plans are formulated, informed by relevant data-gathering, only when the project is to end. There may thus not be sufficient support for the fisheries authorities to complete the process. As stated in Section 5.1 there is also doubt whether it is useful to do any further work on gear modifications. The MTE proposes that the project shall focus its attention on the management plan formulation and the data gathering, which is needed. If management plans can be formulated (drafted) during 2014, there will be some time to support and promote their implementation.

90. For Component 3 the Results Framework states that MTE should review progress in data collection and the feasibility to make processes permanent. The MTE should also compare data and indicators across countries and evaluate their regional relevance and assess the relevance of existing communication material and channels. Also for this Component the lack of progress and achievements do not allow any meaningful review beyond output level (see Section 5.1). The MTE stressed above the need to give high priority to data-gathering and in doing so, ensure that essential data and information is gathered on gender disaggregated socio-economic aspects in a broader sense to inform management plans and to monitor the impact of implementation of plans, on income and livelihoods in coastal communities. It is also essential that monitoring mechanisms are embedded in the regular work of the fisheries and or municipal authorities on local level. This can be achieved if the institutional arrangements (Outcome 1) can be established during the project period.

91. Component 4 addresses capacity building and this aspect of the project is reviewed in detail in Section 5.4

### 5.3 Gender equality

92. The project design did not consider adequately the significant role that women play in the bycatch trade in many of the participating countries. Women are involved in the sector as traders, fishers, fisher-household members and in other roles. As stakeholders they were minimally if at all consulted in the formulation of the project. Technical specialists in FAO, however, have been aware of the role of women and have more recently sought to provide guidance to the countries on addressing the gender and socio-economic issues related to bycatch reduction. Some exposure to the need for gender analysis within socio-economic data-gathering, and the methodology to be used for socio-economic assessment was provided in presentations in two regional workshops, respectively, on data collection and co-management and trawl selective fishing gears and practices, though more in-depth training that includes providing practical experience on how to conduct such research has yet to come. From the presentations, it is also not fully apparent that the fisheries experts attending would have understood the rationale for socio-economic analysis.

93. A draft document, “Socio-economic and gender considerations in REBYC II CTI”, that was prepared and intended as a basis for the training is a solid conceptual foundation for the project’s actual work in this area. It refers to the guidance in the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards on addressing the human dimension through local stakeholder participation and organization, impact assessment, monitoring and communication (and points out that while the Guidelines do not explicitly mention gender assessing the impacts of management measures on livelihoods requires undertaking a gender analysis). It articulates what socioeconomic and gender issues might exist in each of the different stages of trawl fishing and in the sector, suggests several indicators, and outlines methodology for understanding the human dimension in local fisheries.

94. But further assistance at local level to support stakeholders through the process will be necessary to ensure quality analysis, data and eventually the local trawl management plan. Training on this has been planned for 2014, but its approach will have to be developed properly to make sure it is effective with regard to the longer-term purposes. This will be accompanied by dedicated time of an FAO expert on the gender and socioeconomic aspects of fisheries.

95. In fact, FAO since 2009 has had guidelines on the human dimension of the ecosystem approach to fisheries and the draft document developed for REBYC II was based on these guidelines.<sup>8</sup> The basis for the project to have addressed this issue better and earlier was there.

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<sup>8</sup> 2009. Human dimensions of the ecosystem approach to fisheries. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries, No. 4, Supplement 2, Add. 2. Rome, FAO. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1146e/i1146e00.pdf>. Furthermore, as the draft notes there were various guidance documents for addressing gender aspects: FAO resources on gender which can be accessed at <http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-resources/en/>; Mainstreaming gender at the GEF available at <http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/mainstreaming-gender-at-the-GEF.pdf>; Module 13 – Gender in Fisheries and Aquaculture in: The World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development. 2009. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook. Washington, D.C., The World Bank. Document available at <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/aj288e/aj288e00.pdf>; FAO. 2007. Gender policies for responsible fisheries – Policies to support gender equity and livelihoods in small-scale fisheries. New

96. In the Philippines, there are two women represented on the local council, specifically the Technical Working Group (TWG). One is a fish trader and the other a local government representative. Yet they do not appear to represent larger organized groups of women in the fisheries sector or municipality.

97. In Viet Nam, the MTE team found there to be much less representation of women, if any, at the pilot site or in the project. This is perhaps symptomatic of both, the low level of consultation of local institutions in the country, and the tendency, reflected even in the Philippines and in other fisheries projects, to engage only the immediate fisheries stakeholders, such as groups of fishers, and not those in the broader socio-economic context. Information gathered from other stakeholders during the MTE indicates that women are involved in the bycatch trade. However, they do not seem to be organized in a formal group and when the draft National Circular on trawl fisheries was submitted for comments to some stakeholder groups, no women’s group was mentioned as one of them. One possibility would be for the project to approach the Viet Nam Women’s Union for assistance in reaching women in the fisheries sector.

98. Developing trawl fisheries management plans to reduce bycatch will likely have some impact on women in their different roles. However, specifically what roles women play in the sector in each pilot-site area, and what the nature and magnitude of the effects will be is unknown. To mitigate any adverse impacts on women and to develop EAFM-based management plans, which are to include the human well-being dimension, greater attention and concerted steps will be required in the remaining life of the project to gather and analyze data on the involvement of women in the trade and the potential effects on them. Such studies and the formulation of any plan will need to be informed by the participation of women through organized stakeholder groups.

#### 5.4 Capacity development

99. Capacity development has been a core function of FAO, including in its new strategic framework, and involves strengthening capacity at three interconnected levels:

- **Individual**—training and knowledge-sharing, for example, to improve or change skills, behaviours and attitudes
- **Organizational**—measures to improve the functioning and performance of an organization, which would also have an effect on how individuals in the institution develop and use their capabilities
- **Enabling environment**—strengthening policy and legal frameworks, economic incentives and governance structures, to also support capacity development in the other dimensions

100. In terms of this framework, the project has aimed to address capacity at all levels. However, its regional workshop trainings, tend to focus more on strengthening capacity at the individual level. To some degree, this capacity development, if done effectively, could lead to enhancements also in institutional processes. And, the legislative review, studies on economic incentives and private sector cooperation, as partial as the latter two are in the

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Directions in Fisheries – A Series of Policy Briefs on Development Issues, No. 06. Rome, FAO. Available at <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/009/a0990e/a0990e00.pdf>; Haque, F. and Tietze, U. 1988. Women in fishing communities. A special target group of development projects. Guidelines. Rome, FAO. Available at <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/008/t0155e/t0155e00.pdf>

project, are aimed at capacity development at the broadest dimension. However, if the project seeks to introduce effective trawl and bycatch management at the pilot sites, which could then be replicated in the countries, it will need to attend much more to strengthening the capacity of local-level organizations and improving the institutional processes for participation and co-management. This can take place in part through training the individuals involved on good management practices, including information-gathering, stakeholder participation, and EAFM specifically.

101. Sharing lessons with national and higher-level sub-national levels on the local-level experience with trawl fisheries management plan development and its needs will also be important to have the higher levels of government provide the necessary enabling environment in terms of delegated authorities, instituted processes for stakeholder participation, resources, and the national government’s own capability and commitment to transfer the lessons learned to other sub-national levels.

102. Table 4 below lists the trainings and workshops, not including those for the inception report or and the project has conducted:

**Table 4 Capacity Development initiatives of REBYC II**

No.	Title	Duration and Date
1.	Regional Technical Workshop on Data Collection Trawl Fisheries Management Information and Data Requirements	3 ½ days, 8-11 May 2013
	Co-management & Trawl Selective Fishing Gears and Practices	7th – 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
	Basic Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management—Training of Trainers	upcoming, 8 days
	Mapping fisheries resources through GIS	upcoming in 2014
	Socio-economic surveys and trawl bycatch information collection	upcoming in 2014
	Project M&E	upcoming in 2014

103. The workshop documents, syllabi and presentations show that the exposure to the concepts and practices was rather brief, and training and information-sharing was done largely through a series of PowerPoint presentations rather than in-depth and hands-on exercises at site level that would have allowed participants to have better absorbed and applied the skills.

104. A training needs assessment was conducted in October 2013 to determine in which areas related to bycatch management capacity was most needed. The study though relied largely on the views of the NTOs and could have used other participatory means of identifying needs.

105. According to the current LOA with SEAFDEC (November 2013 to December 2014), 4 additional trainings will be done in 2014 (shown in the table above). Based on this LOA budget, nearly 50 percent will go to regional workshops, including a PSC meeting, and 34 percent to (additional) regional trainings. Yet all of these trainings are at the regional level and not the national and site level, where it ought to be. This along with the spending at the regional level for capacity development in 2013 seems to reflect how the regional role is viewed in the project. As mentioned earlier, a large portion of SEAFDEC’s budget for travel and workshops went unused while funds for the PRC were in deficit. National and site-level trainings may be conducted by national institutions, but they could be carried out by SEAFDEC as well given the resources it has. There appears to be an inherent notion that capacity strengthening for results at pilot-site level should and can be achieved through bringing national stakeholders to regional events, rather than through trainings in the

countries. An alternative was for SEAFDEC, in consultation with the PRC and LTO, and given the shortage of PRC funds, might have utilized its resources to provide more targeted national training. Since according to the current LOA SEAFDEC will receive a total of USD 190,600 it will have sizeable resources to support such capacity development in 2014.

106. In January 2014, a training workshop (not shown above) was provided on EAFM, but it included only one person from each country and this person was not the NTO. It was reported that there was little dissemination of the knowledge acquired within country after the training. An upcoming follow-up course on training of trainers on EAFM is intended to be more in-depth, consisting of 8 days and a more advanced pedagogical approach. As helpful as it may indeed be, what would also be needed is a longer-term capacity strengthening and stakeholder facilitation for management plan development at the site level and among the different stakeholders there.

107. In the Philippines, the local-level TWG—the Local Council—serves as a discussion forum for commercial and small fishers’ representatives, small traders, the partner university, NGOs, the Church, and local government and the provincial BFAR, and it will be the body that develops the management plan. The stakeholders, the MTE found, are currently thinking more about the technical issues regarding fisheries management, and there is room for consideration of the management, participation and socioeconomic, including gender, aspects of sustainable fisheries. The stakeholders acknowledge this need, and it is more pronounced in Viet Nam. National partners in the countries that were not visited also realize this gap. Building a process and capacity for management plan development and stakeholder consultation will be particularly important since the local fisheries context and the data that is gathered will keep changing.

108. In this respect, the enabling environment and organizational capacity for work in Kien Giang province in Viet Nam has been weak, as indicated elsewhere in this report. Along with the drafting of a National Circular regulating bycatch-related practices (in lieu of developing a site-level management plan), several country stakeholders have expressed the view that developing a local management plan would remain important. The MTE would agree with this. It has been stated that a Circular would be easily subject to change and therefore ought to be based on and complemented by ground-level knowledge and practices. There are also indications that DARD would support a management plan, with capacity development for local staff.

109. The project is now in a position to make a real contribution to fisheries management in some of the participating countries through capacity development. For some years, the region has not shown many true fisheries management plans to be in place. But if hands-on guidance were provided to the REBYC II country stakeholders, there is a real potential to develop examples of such plans not only for trawl management but for fisheries as a whole that are also EAFM-based, and to even shift institutional practices. In light of the human well-being dimension of EAFM, the socio-economic survey training would need to be more extensive to ensure the appropriate data is collected, analyzed and utilized to inform the management plan. The desire that the countries have expressed to have project staff and experts come to them more frequently would also be met through such capacity development. But in the 2014 SEAFDEC LOA, there are too few of visits to the countries where presence of the PRC or consultants is needed. The document shows only 5 trips for regional staff/consultants, amounting to a mere 7 percent of the budget.



## **5.5 The Human-Rights Based Approach**

110. Along with having given insufficient attention to the gender dimension of the bycatch issue, more broadly the project has yet to properly understand the socio-economics of the trawl fisheries sector and the impact bycatch reduction could have specifically on the access of poorer households to lower value bycatch fish for consumption. There is a general understanding among project participants that low-value fish is used by some households for consumption—and as a key source of protein. But there is no detailed knowledge of the dependence of households on the resource at the pilot sites and the project was thus conceived without any such knowledge. This is an important information gap to address since it is known at the pilot sites that marginalized and poorest segment of society enter into fishing.

111. However, based on discussions with local stakeholders, preliminary indications exist that it may be significant for some households, particularly small-scale fishers and other low-income families, and that less direct supply of bycatch to fishers/consumers and market access to it by other households could mean reduced food and protein intake. Together with gathering information on the reliance of women on bycatch (including as household consumers), from a Right to Food perspective it will be necessary for the project to focus as one of its priorities on understanding the use of bycatch for consumption is to employ EAFM for the development of fisheries management plans.

112. Regarding the socio-economic knowledge gap, there is similarly no data on the livelihoods dependent on the use of bycatch as direct feed for aquaculture, or on processing bycatch into goods (e.g. fish sauce, fishmeal), or those of trawl crew workers. All of the countries visited do though have started to recognize their understanding of the socio-economic dimension as weak.

113. In terms of fostering decent rural employment under the Right to Food principle, as the project has not adequately considered the socio-economic dimension of the trawl fisheries sector in its planning, it has given little thought to how improved rural development outside of the fisheries sector could provide livelihood alternatives to trawl fisher households or others dependent upon the bycatch trade.

## **5.6 Partnerships and Alliances**

114. The key partnership in the project has been that between FAO and SEAFDEC. Formalised through a series of LOAs with FAO, SEAFDEC is the host of the Regional Facilitation Unit (RFU) where the PRC sits, and is responsible for overall technical support and the delivery of regional outputs. The partnership has benefited the project substantially and in various ways. As a fisheries organization, SEAFDEC has had a comparative advantage in the region in the form of its convening power; it has eleven member countries in the region which meet annually and these have also endorsed REBYC II. The organization also offers FAO and the project services and expertise in various areas, training, media, in-kind aid and technical assistance, and it has four specialized centers as well that are distributed across the region. Having partnered with FAO in other projects in the past, it is familiar with the agency’s fisheries agenda.

115. In a more practical sense as well SEAFDEC has been instrumental in moving the project forward. Given its sizeable resources, it has been able to conduct project activities in advance of receiving funds from FAO’s slow system and has hence sustained the project. Given SEAFDEC’s strengths, FAO only stands to benefit further from the partnership in the future.

116. But SEAFDEC has also gained, and will benefit further, from involvement in REBYC II. Having primarily focused on technical research, the organization has also begun to develop its abilities in GEF project implementation. More significantly, the project has helped give SEAFDEC a new direction and capacities in fisheries management and policy in the region, and there is interest within the organization for this change. However, what is key for FAO to note in the future about its relationship with this important regional fisheries actor is that while SEAFDEC works well with FAORAP fisheries specialists it does not view FAO as an institution that treats it like a real partner. Instead it sees itself treated as a provider of specific contracted services. Given the strengths of the organization and the limitations on FAO’s influence in the region, FAO will need to rethink its approach to partnerships with SEAFDEC.

117. In addition to the work under REBYC II staff from the RFU also partook in several other activities that were aligned to the project’s objectives:

- Regular participation in the Fishmeal Dialogue with the Thailand DoF and the private sector
- Participation, through GEF-IW LEARN, in the Indonesian Sea Large Marine Ecosystem meeting, held in Bali, June 2013
- Attendance at the APFIC Trawl Management Guidelines Workshop in Phuket September– October 2013
- Involvement in ongoing SEAFDEC trawl fishing research trips and trawling energy consumption studies
- Presentation of project information at the Regional Symposium on the Ecosystem Approach to Manage and Conservation of Fisheries and Marine Diversity in Cochin India, October 2013.

118. Regarding the second major partnership that was to occur in the project, i.e. with the private sector, there has been on the whole only a modest degree of private-sector involvement (apart from fishers) in the project and especially at country level. In fact, precisely how and why the project was to engage the private sector was unclear in the Project Document. And, how efforts at the international level with the sector were to link with national-level private sector activities was not apparent. Only in Thailand has there been a link between international companies and local ones. There has there been some significant engagement with the sector in Thailand on the sourcing of sustainably-caught fish (i.e. reduced bycatch) for aquaculture fishmeal. This has occurred through the Fishmeal Dialogue, facilitated by the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), and with the large-scale company, Charoen Pokphand (CP), which has offered fishers a higher price for sustainable fish. The dialogue has also involved representation from trawlers and processors. Thailand and quite likely Viet Nam are the only countries that the 2015 EU requirement for sustainably sourced fisheries imports will affect, and this will be for shrimp. Other fisheries exports, such as fin-fish, are only regional, and these will not exert any pressure for more sustainable practices but rather result possibly in a divide among producers based on whether they can afford sustainability standards.

119. The LTO has also been in discussion with global private-sector stakeholders on fishmeal input-related issues, through the facilitation efforts of the International Sustainability Unit (ISU) of HRH Prince of Wales. The ISU is promoting the awareness of seafood retailers and processors regarding the impacts of trawl fisheries supplying the fishmeal sector in South East Asia. It has also encouraged a common vision and commitment to action to have fishmeal inputs for regional and international aquaculture exports be

confidently sourced from well-managed fisheries. REBYC II was introduced as an initiative that could play an important role in this process.

120. In Viet Nam and the Philippines, the private sector involved was considerably smaller in nature. In the former, a fish processing enterprise in Kien Giang province is involved. The MTE team was to meet with it but at late notice was informed that the company was unable to. In the Philippines, there appeared to be involvement of only a small-scale trader in the Technical Working Group, and the individual did not seem to represent others in the trade. It should be noted that during the planning stage the MTE requested that meetings be arranged with the private sector contributors to the project in the countries visited, but these were not provided.

## **6 Analysis by evaluation criteria**

### **6.1 Relevance**

121. The project design is based on the recognition that bycatch poses a serious problems to attain sustainable fisheries (in this case trawl fisheries), results in high mortality of juveniles of commercially valuable fish species and is a threat to biodiversity. At the same time the project document recognizes that there are at least short-term, potential implications for livelihoods and access to food if there was a drastic reduction of bycatch in some coastal communities. The project aims at supporting improved trawl fisheries bycatch management within this complex environment, using EAFM, which ensures a balance between human and ecosystem well-being.

122. Project countries have all ratified UNCLOS and CBD, and they have formed part of the agreement on CCRF and its associated technical guidelines and IOPAs, including the International Guidelines on bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards. This instrument was agreed after the project was conceived. The scope of the guidelines is to assist member states to implement CCRF and EAF. There is thus a wide international recognition of bycatch issues and the need to enhance bycatch management. However, it should be noted that national policies in the participating countries still advocate increased production from trawl fisheries and that they lack effective management of fishing effort and capacity.

123. The project is highly relevant to and consistent with GEF strategies and specifically aligned with the GEF International Waters Program, which aims “... to foster international, multi-state cooperation on priority trans boundary water concerns” and “...to catalyse trans boundary action addressing water concerns”. It is specifically relevant to GEFs Strategic Program 1 “Restoring and Sustaining Coastal and Marine Fish Stocks” by promoting regional cooperation on aquatic resources.

124. Within the framework of APFIC there is work going on to establish regional guidelines for trawl fisheries guidelines, which is closely linked to the project concept and approach. The Asia-Pacific economic Cooperation (APEC) Bali Plan of Action, to which the project countries are signatories, is intended to strengthen and improve fisheries management for sustainable use of natural marine resources. SEAFDEC has over the years, through its Training Department, made significant contributions to the development of bycatch reduction devices, especially the so called JTED (Juvenile and Trash excluding Device). SEAFDEC was heavily involved in the previous project, REBYC.

125. During the preparation of the project document there were extensive consultations with national authorities and stakeholders on national level on the relevance of an initiative addressing bycatch and discard, based on CCRF and EAF. Two of the countries, Indonesia

and Philippines, were part of the former REBYC project, which initiated the introduction of bycatch reduction devices (BRD). Both countries expressed an interest in continuing work on these issues, which were of national importance to establish sustainable fisheries. They expressed a need for further technical assistance to this end. Bycatch figures prominently in the Gulf of Papua Prawn Fisheries Management Plan in Papua New Guinea, although measures for bycatch reduction had not been implemented. Viet Nam bycatch are a core issue together with overcapacity and excess fishing effort. Thailand’s Master Plan for Fisheries Management includes calls for reduction of fishing effort and introduction of selective gear. All countries experience problems with overfishing with declining CPUEs and changing species and size composition in the catches.

126. Following the review above it can be concluded that the project, with its focus on bycatch issues within a broader context of trawl fisheries management and EAFM, is highly relevant internationally in supporting the implementation of important instruments for fisheries management and regionally through its links to regional organizations, ASEAN and SEAFDEC, APFIC, and by being fully integrated in FAORAP’s regional work plan. On national level the project is highly relevant to the countries’ policies, strategies and plans and in relation to their expressed needs to establish sustainable fisheries and protecting the marine ecosystems.

## **6.2 Efficiency**

127. The project initially faced serious delays, because of problems FAO faced to field the PRC. There were *ad-hoc* solutions, which helped the project to get off the ground (a short-term consultant taking on PRC functions, the LTO contributing more time than anticipated on project management, as well as technical and managerial support provided by FAORAP). However, the solutions were not sufficient to offset the problems. Further, FAO’s cumbersome administrative routines and management procedures have further delayed the implementation. It was evident from interviews with stakeholders that the administrative procedures were not fully understood in the participating countries. Several respondents in interviews expressed their concern with these procedures and attributed the slow implementation to them.

128. During the last few months before the MTE activities picked up and implementation gained momentum. Considerable progress was made in initiating project activities in the participating countries. Although outputs had not been achieved, there was good prospects that most of the initiated activities would lead to intended outputs, some within a short time, others before the end of the project.

129. By the time of the MTE about 30% of the budget had been used with outputs only partially achieved. The MTE concluded that the efficiency in implementation of the project was low. Neither financial nor human resources had been used efficiently to achieve the intended outputs. However, the MTE also concluded that there were significant improvements and that efficiency would increase sharply if the momentum can be maintained.

## **6.3 Effectiveness**

130. As is evident from previous sections, the project has not been implemented effectively. The activities which were planned have not been initiated in a timely manner and the expected outputs at the time of the MTE fall far short of expectations. However, the MTE noted considerable improvements the last few months. Effectiveness is certain to improve

over time as most outputs will be achieved by the end of the project period. One fundamental problem with the delays is that time consuming processes with regard to institutional changes in the participating countries, will be completed close to the end of the project. There will thus be an issue how effectively the change process in the countries have been completed, and how sustainable the institutional changes will be.

#### **6.4 Sustainability**

131. Considering that the evaluation is a mid-term one and that the pace of implementation began to improve only recently, it is too early to assess the likelihood that the project’s outcomes will be sustained. Furthermore, the MTE has information only on three of the countries.

132. In the Philippines there are the most promising signs of sustainability. Owing to the decentralized system of governance in the country, municipalities have the authority to make decisions on fisheries management, and stakeholder groups at that level have been involved in the process in many areas. The project thus has an enabling environment in the Philippines that has made its successes in the form of its participatory process for addressing fisheries sustainability possible. Indeed, the involvement of the TWG stakeholders existed before the project and Catbalogan was selected as the site for the purpose of building on this foundation.

133. At the bay level, Fishery and Aquaculture Resource Management Councils (FARMC) exist, composed of several municipalities and representatives of small fishers and other stakeholders in the sector, and a member of the relevant FARMC is on the project TWG. A bay-wide management fund also exists to support project-related activities after REBYC II ends. Finally, local governments in the area are applying principles of trawl fisheries co-management on their own, and the local government is represented in the group. Given the institutional context and the links the TWG has with other local decision-making bodies, it along with its process of dialogue and ongoing collective management of the local fisheries sector is likely to continue functioning after the project ends.

134. At the higher political level as well in the Philippines there is strong evidence of sustainability. There has been significant BFAR commitment to addressing trawl fisheries management beyond the REBYC II site, and the organization, already seen by FAO stakeholders as being a highly reliable partner that delivers effectively, is now led by a new and more active Director. Moreover, the experiences from Catbalogan have been communicated to higher levels in the institution through the NPC for applying the lessons to other areas, and BFAR is integrating bycatch measurement in national stock assessments. From a technical angle, the requirement in many municipalities, including the pilot site for JTED use since 2008 in order for commercial trawlers to fish in the 10km zone also adds support to the project to introduce BRD’s. Two broad challenges to achieving sustainable trawling are that non-fisheries rural development for alternative livelihoods is not being adequately considered in the TWG, and that wealthy boat owners or those involved in the political system, in all three countries visited, may have interests that do not support bycatch reduction.

135. In Viet Nam at this stage the indications of sustainability are not present. As mentioned earlier, in Viet Nam DARD in Kien Giang province and the sub-DECAFIREP have not been much involved in the project when, under the country’s decentralized political system, these entities would ultimately be tasked with assuring that any measures to reduce bycatch are being implemented and enforced. Nor is there evidence that stakeholder participation process is meaningful and likely to be continued. In addition, as D-Fish is currently proposing that a National Circular be developed with bycatch regulations for

provinces to follow rather than a provincial trawl fisheries management plan, the local-level processes for stakeholder engagement, information-gathering and fisheries management will not be well established. Though one option for helping to sustain and replicate the project's efforts would be to link it to a similar and larger initiative of the World Bank, the Coastal Resources Management Project that is pursuing fisheries co-management in several provinces.

136. In Thailand, the prospects for sustainability may be slightly better. According to the government, other similar efforts to achieve more sustainable trawl fisheries are taking place at other sites, reflecting a national interest in the matter, and the discussion platforms involving trawlers and around the Fishmeal Dialogue have been initiated before and outside of REBYC II. Some participants to the dialogues, however, have remarked that trawler representation is more formal in nature. Lastly, the activities have been more technology-oriented in Thailand as in REBYC I rather than with an approach to reach management solutions.

137. Among trawlers and their representatives with which the MTE consulted, a factor that would lead to the long-term sustainability of the project and government efforts is improved quality (and hence price) of catch that bycatch reduction could potentially bring (through the exclusion of juveniles and low-value fish). Much will hinge on this key incentive being demonstrated in the future.

138. At the regional level and in terms of institutional collaboration, the project's aims and (unintended) positive results will most likely be sustained in the future. SEAFDEC has voiced its interest in continuing to strengthen its capacity in fisheries management and policy, and can draw on its regional membership structure to address these issues. The essential goals of REBYC II, as mentioned earlier, also occupy an important place in FAO's long-term regional fisheries agenda. And, finally, the project is complemented by and linked to a number of other similar regional initiatives.

## **6.5 Impact**

139. It is too early, partly because of the serious delays in project implementation, to discuss with any certainty any foreseeable impact. However, certain issues regarding impact can be raised at this stage. Positive impacts are expected from the formulation of trawl fisheries bycatch management plans. These are formulated with EAFM and with a high degree of stakeholder participation. The management plans, if implemented, would have a positive impact on the sustainability of the local trawl fisheries and reduce the negative impact of these fisheries on other fisheries in the areas. If the approach to management planning is institutionalized in the participating countries and capacity developed, this would enhance the impact of any management planning. However, such structures are present only in the Philippines at the moment, and it is doubtful if these institutional changes will happen during the remaining time of the project.

140. Components 2 and 3 working on data gathering and systems for data gathering will assist in creating a better understanding of the trawl fisheries, their interaction with other fisheries and their importance for food security and livelihoods. Again, there is a question regarding the sustainability of data gathering methods and systems, when the project ends. The MTE advocates that no further work should be initiated on technical gear modifications and no impact is expected from that output.

141. The project will have an impact on capacity development. Even if the number of people formally trained in project sponsored trainings, the awareness building has already

had a limited impact. In project sites which were visited by the MTE, especially in the Philippines, but to a lesser extent also in Viet Nam, it was evident that concepts of sustainability and protection of biodiversity were discussed and understood by various stakeholder groups and that these concepts were directly linked to their fisheries operations and trade. There is potential for a longer-term impact, through multiplier effects, given the project's links with BOBLME, other Coral Triangle Initiative projects and APFIC.

142. There is a risk that strict implementation of bycatch reduction management measures may have a negative impact on small-scale fishers' and traders' livelihoods, at least in the short term. The EAFM should assist the countries to consider such effects in their management planning. However, the government authorities, responsible for the project, are technical in nature and do not necessarily have the skills or will give sufficient consideration to socio-economic issues. EAFM is still considered as a novelty poorly understood in the participating countries, especially on local level government. To remedy this it is important that the project during its remaining time actively promotes the gathering of socio-economic data and information gathering and provides capacity strengthening action to promote a comprehensive understanding of EAFM in practice as well as theory.

143. There is an unintended impact of the project (and other initiatives). It has assisted SEAFDEC to broaden its approach to more comprehensive management from a limited technical approach. This impact has the potential to enhance the possible impact of project results, by providing a regional forum, which can maintain support for trawl fisheries management planning.

## 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 GEF rating

144. In order to facilitate comparison with routine reporting to GEF and contribute to the GEF programme learning process (IWLearn), the MTE was asked to rate the success of the project based on a number of criteria against the GEF six-point scale system.<sup>9</sup> The rating and comment for each criterion are given in the table below. An overall rating is given at the bottom of the table.

**Table 5 GEF ratings assigned to the specific criteria**

Criteria	Rating	Comments
<i>Achievement of objectives</i>	MU	The project had a very slow start and major activities had been initiated only a few months before the MTE. Therefore the present achievement towards objectives is not satisfactory. However, the MTE noted that the project had gained momentum and made good progress. It has the potential to make good progress towards the objectives by NTE. Its potential contribution to the Global Environment Objective (sustainable fisheries resources and healthy ecosystems) is good as well as the Project Development objective as to “improved trawl and bycatch management”. The contribution to public and private sector partnership to achieve this is yet questionable
<i>Attainment of outputs and activities</i>	MU	Significant progress was made the few months before the MTE but the overall progress had not been satisfactory. The progress varied between components, with Component 1 most positive. There were worrying delays in the start-up of studies and surveys to gather data and information for management planning.
<i>Progress towards meeting GEF focal area priorities/objective</i>	MS	With respect to GEF IW Strategic Programme 1 (Restoring and sustaining coastal and marine fish stocks), the project fosters, through its integration into SEAFDEC and FAORAP’s regional programme, cooperation among the 5 participating countries as well as with the whole region. A comprehensive, ecosystem based approach to fisheries management (EAFM) underpins the project’s strategy. The project is also providing training in EAFM.
<i>Cost-effectiveness</i>	MU	The project had gained momentum at the time of the MTE and established administrative and technical processes which have the potential to considerably improve cost-effectiveness. During the last few months the work plans had been implemented increasingly more efficient. Cost-effectiveness has gained from the project sponsoring participation of country representatives in other organizations’/programs’, for example APFIC’s work on regional trawl fisheries guidelines
<i>Impact</i>	MU	The project has had an unintended positive impact on SEAFDEC assisting the institution in the transformation towards a holistic fisheries management centre. At the time of the MTE only the potential impact could be assessed. The trawl fisheries bycatch management plans have the potential to have a high impact in the countries underpinned with solid data, when the studies and surveys begin to yield information. Also capacity building has the potential, with revisions as proposed by the mission, to have a positive impact.
<i>Risk and risk management</i>	S	Risks are constantly monitored by RCU and reported. Mitigating measures are defined and acted upon. RCU may have downplayed some risks and has not flagged for considerable likelihood while trawl fisheries bycatch management plans will be prepared, time will prevent the institutional and legal changes to be implemented.
<i>Sustainability</i>	MS	The potential sustainability on regional level is satisfactory through the project’s integration in SEAFDEC and FAORAP’s regional programme. The potential sustainability on national level varies from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. The buy-in by the political level in participating countries is yet

<sup>9</sup> The scoring scale is as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Marginally Satisfactory (MS), Marginally Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)



Criteria	Rating	Comments
		limited.
<b>Stakeholder participation</b>	MU	The project has engaged a wide range of stakeholders on regional and national levels in consultations. The process to establish functioning institutional mechanisms on local and national level to engage stakeholders has met with varying degree of success. There has yet been limited involvement of regional stakeholder, such as industry-based and environmental NGOs
<b>Country ownership</b>	MS	The country ownership varied between the countries at the time of the MTE. However, the countries had appointed NPCs and NTOs and working groups for stakeholder consultations. Ownership is good on a technical level but higher political level ownership is yet uncertain.
<b>Implementation approach</b>	S	The approach chosen are to achieve outputs and outcomes through pilot activities at selected project sites for which results are intended to be used nationally. There is regional coordination of activities and integration of the project in regional mechanisms for cooperation. This has tentatively proven to a satisfactory approach..
<b>Financial planning</b>	MU	The planning has catered for initial delays in project execution and corrective actions have been taken. Forecasts for financial delivery to project end may prove over-optimistic. FAO took a crucial initiative to secure funding for the PRC-post, without which the whole project would have been jeopardized.
<b>Replicability</b>	MS	There are a number of activities, approaches and results with high replication/scaling-up potential. Among these are training and capacity building initiatives, regional collaborative arrangements, EAFM, survey and data gathering methods and approaches. Pilot site projects have high potential for replication, but implementation was still seriously behind plan.
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	S	The monitoring plan is qualitative and clear although lacking a link between outputs and the broader outcome. The monitoring framework is used by TCID but not on regional or national levels for enhanced understanding of progress and problems
<b>Overall</b>	MU	

145. The MTE concludes a rating of Marginally Unsatisfactory at the time of the evaluation. However, it also is of the opinion that the project has good prospects of moving up to Marginally Satisfactory or even Satisfactory at NTE, based on the improved performance during the last few months before the evaluation.

## 7.2 Conclusions

146. This section presents overall conclusions the MTE has drawn and does not repeat all detailed conclusions in previous sections. The project has faced serious delays in implementation and has fallen far short of expected results at the time of the MTE. Consequently, the evaluation concluded that both efficiency and effectiveness, so far had been low. However, the evaluation also found that implementation had improved considerably during the last few months and that the project was gaining momentum. FAO’s cumbersome administrative procedures and several levels of decision-making, however, are confusing for the participating countries and will lead to further delays. It concluded that the project, if focusing and concentrating its human and financial resources on key outputs, was likely to make considerable progress during the remaining project period. The conclusions in this section and recommendations in the next aim at assisting the project in taking the needed decisions on orientation and activities to achieve the main outcomes.

147. The institutional set-up of the project is feasible. SEAFDEC was the right choice of organization for implementation and an unintended impact of the project is that it has assisted SEAFDEC to take on a broader fisheries management role in the region. Through SEAFDEC’s strategic partnership with ASEAN and its governing bodies, as well as through

APFIC and through its integration into FAORAP’s work programme in the region, there are good prospects for sustainability and wider application of project results.

148. There is a general recognition internationally that bycatch and discard pose serious problems contributing to overfishing and being a threat to sustainable fisheries, biodiversity, coastal livelihoods and food security. The project, in addressing issues of bycatch management in a broader fisheries management context, applying EAFM, is highly relevant for the participating countries and the Coral Triangle and Southeast Asian region. The project is also an important part of FAO’s global commitment to sustainable fisheries and conservation of natural resources. It promotes the implementation of global instruments, such as UNCLOS, CCRF, its technical guidelines and IPOAs. It works for the implementation of the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards. It is also highly relevant for and consistent with GEF International Waters Programme. The MTE concludes that the project responds to needs for sustainable fisheries and a healthy ecosystems, of great importance for livelihoods in coastal communities, and for food security,

149. There is a serious lack of data and information about catches, fishing effort, and landings from trawl fisheries. The project works on establishing systems for monitoring and reporting. However, the MTE noted with concern that little effort had been given so far to crucial socio-economic data for fisheries management planning, in order to understand the role of trawl fisheries, the role of bycatch and implications of management measures on income, employment, livelihoods and food security.

150. The MTE concluded that gender had not been adequately addressed in the project, neither in design, nor in implementation. Also, full use had not been made of capacity development, where workshops and short training courses were unlikely to produce sustainable development. In addition, the MTE concluded there was need for more direct engagement of project staff in the project sites, to provide guidance and hands-on training.

151. The MTE concludes that the project addressed the main barriers to improved trawl fisheries management. The theory of change underpinning the project is basically sound. However, the design of the project disregards for the lengthy processes leading to institutional change and behaviour and revisions of legal frameworks. Thus, the project may lead to recommendations and plans for the institutionalization of inclusive trawl fisheries management including reform of the legal framework, but not implementation on national level, as aimed at in Outcome 1 and 2.

152. There are flaws in the design of the project, especially with regard to the formulation of outputs and outcomes. There are identical results on different levels and inconsistencies in the formulation of activities and outputs. There is for example, no explicit activities for the gathering of socio-economic data, while the text of the project document stresses the need for such information to ensure that impact on livelihoods, food security and the role of women are fully understood. The MTE concluded that there was not sufficient quality control in the project preparation process.

153. The project development objective stresses the role of effective public and private sector partnership. While progress had been made to some extent on local level to engage stakeholders in the analysis of problems and identification of priorities for management, there was limited progress in engaging the private sector on national and regional level. The project had not made full use of partnership (and co-financing) with private sector organizations, as SFP and IFFO, and environmental NGOs as WWF.

Focus of the project during the remaining time

154. Although the project lately has gained momentum, lost time cannot completely be made up during the remaining project period (15 – 18 months). There is thus a need to focus, both human and financial resources, on the most critical and achievable outputs. Based on a consideration of various factors, (1) the progress made on the different outputs thus far; (2) the greater value of certain outputs in the long-term and their ability to provide an impetus for achievements in other areas; and (3) the interrelationship among some of them, the evaluation team seeks to recommend a more feasible and relevant strategy for the project as it moves forward.

155. Essentially, this strategy consists of focusing on the development of quality EAFM-based trawl fisheries bycatch management plans at pilot site-level, which are making adequate progress in the project, in accordance with supportive national legislation and regulations for bycatch. The formulation of sound plans, and their implementation and revisions in the future, however, will depend upon the gathering and use of solid and relevant data. For this reason the ET supports continued work on the outputs for ecological, spatial and catch data-collection, and also advocates for the gathering and analysis of socio-economic and gender-related information related to bycatch reduction. Furthermore, for the management plans to be effective in addressing all the issues and providing solutions, they will need to be formulated in a manner that involves all stakeholders, including those that have not been customarily included. The output for developing institutional arrangements for management plan development and implementation is therefore prioritized as well. Once broader and good-quality management strategies and processes are in place, the ET believes, they will have the potential to drive changes in areas under the other outputs, such as gear use, incentives for trawlers, and increased private-sector engagement.

156. Focusing on a limited number of the outputs will be important, especially if capacity development for their achievement is also to be increased. While the pace of the project has now improved and it may be possible for most of the outputs to be achieved by the end of the project, a risk is that they will not be linked together and brought under the management plans sufficiently but rather exist as stand-alone deliverables.

157. Table 5 below lists the outputs according to a priority ranking. As it may aid in the discussion on priorities and annual work planning at the PSC meeting in May 2014.

**Table 6 Proposed priorities for the remaining project period, for consideration in the work planning May-June 2014**

<b>Component 1: Regional bycatch priorities agreed and bycatch management plans for trawl fisheries in project areas are established and supported by appropriate legislation and institutional arrangements for public and private sector collaboration</b>	<b>Priority (1= high, 3=low)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.1 The International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards recognized by all five project countries and regional bycatch priorities agreed by project partners and presented in published policy/strategy document.	2	The APFIC process will contribute to this and direct project involvement can be limited to supporting participation in the process
1.2 At least 3 national or area specific trawl fisheries bycatch management plans in the project areas agreed by stakeholders and adopted by relevant authorities.	1	This Output is at the core of the project and crucial to achieve the project development objective
1.3. Policy, legal and institutional frameworks relevant for trawl fisheries bycatch management reviewed and recommendations for adjustments developed with and	1	This objective is essential for participatory formulation of management plans and

agreed in principle by the competent national authorities.		sustainability
1.4 Institutional arrangements (Management Councils) for collaborative trawl fisheries bycatch management established and functioning in accordance with agreed bycatch management plans (output 1.2) in project fisheries/areas in all countries.	1	This objective is essential for participatory formulation of management plans and sustainability
<b>Component 2: Management measures, including environmentally friendly fishing gears and practices that reduce bycatch, discards and the impact on biodiversity and the environment, are identified, developed and adapted in project areas. Incentives for trawl operators to reduce bycatch are defined in the project areas.</b>		
2.1 More selective trawl gear and/or alternative (e.g. including actions in 2.2 and/or 2.3) fishing practices used by at least half of the trawlers in project areas	3	No further work directly by project. Investigate possibilities for WWF and SEAFDEC’s regular programme to contribute to the output
2.2 Selection criteria and recommendations for demarcating fishing zones and areas for spatial-temporal closures are identified in at least 2 project areas /countries (see also output 3.1)	2	Critical for management planning. Work ongoing
2.3 Inventory of selected trawl fleets in project areas drawn up and recommendations for fishing effort and capacity management strategy communicated to competent national authorities.	2	Critical for management planning. Work ongoing
2.4 Agreement has been reached on appropriate incentive packages for all trawl fisheries in project areas.	2	No further direct work by the project. Investigate the potential role of SFP, IFFO and other partners to contribute to this
<b>Component 3. Improved data on bycatch and potential fishing ground impact information – collected management plans – are available from project areas and inform national/specific area trawl fisheries bycatch management plans. The role of bycatch in trawl profitability is understood and measures identified for how to ensure long-term economic sustainability of trawl fisheries in the project areas.</b>		
3.1 Data and data collection methods for bycatch, discards and seabed impact in project areas available and published in relevant national and regional information systems (see also output 2.2).	1	Essential for the formulation of management
3.2 System set up for monitoring of bycatch reduction (volume) as a result of modified gear and improved management and its likely impact on incomes (bycatch value).	1	Essential for monitoring of implementation of management plans. It is important to include socio-economic information on the role of bycatch
3.3 Project website set up in Year 1 and developed into a regional information sharing mechanism for information on trawl fisheries bycatch management by end of project.	3	Website is established. Needs improvements and maintenance. SEAFDEC should be in a position to support this output
3.4 Project IEC material available.	2	To the extent needed for direct capacity development activities, Existing IEC material should be used (SEAFDEC, FAO and others)
<b>Component 4. Private sector/fishers, fisheries managers, local governments and other stakeholders have better knowledge on bycatch issues and participate in developing and implementing national/specific area</b>		

4.1 Fishers and other relevant stakeholders (fisheries managers, local government officials, etc.) in project areas have improved their knowledge on bycatch, sustainability issues and collaborative management through training, project information and/or participation in project activities.	1	Strengthening of capacity building on local level is essential to support the preparation of fisheries management plans
4.2 Regional and national policy and decision-makers have been sensitized with regard to responsible trawl fisheries management through project information and workshops.	2	Participation in project activities would achieve the output
4.3 Private sector/fisher ‘champions’, technical officers and extension workers (government and NGOs) have improved their knowledge on BRDs and other management measures through training (250 persons trained).	2	Participation in project activities would achieve the output

158. The MTE considered carefully the possibilities of a no-cost extension of the project to allow more time to conclude activities. However, it refrained from doing so, except a 3-months extension up to December 2015. Instead, the evaluation found that there is a strong case for a follow-up project (with funding from GEF and/or other sources) focusing on synthesizing results from REBYC and REBYC-II CTI and with links to other bycatch reduction projects under preparation, and support the implementation of fisheries management plans and institutional and legal changes as recommended by the project.

### 7.3 Recommendations

159. The following recommendations are made with the intention to support the strategy outlined in the Conclusions Section

160. Shortcomings were identified in the project document with regard to inconsistencies in the Results Framework.

#### **Recommendation 1: To the FAO Fisheries Department on project formulation**

Enhance quality control in the preparation of project documents with a view to having them reviewed in-depth, beyond Programme and Project Review Committee requirements, before becoming a management instrument for projects, with emphasis given to consistency and logic in the Results Framework in line with RBM principles.

161. FAO initiated the project with an agreement “in principle” on co-financing of the Project Regional Coordinator. The negotiations failed with serious consequences for project implementation. This raises the question about having financing for crucial project components secured before initiating a project.

#### **Recommendation 2: To the FAO Fisheries Department and TCID on project initiation**

Ensure that funding for core functions in a project are ensured before initiating activities.

162. Project management suffered initially from the lack of a PRC. A part-time PRC was appointed in July 2013. However, a part-time basis is not sufficient to cater for management and technical needs of a regional, technically complex intervention. Furthermore, because of lack of travel funds, the LTO and PRC and consultants have not been able to travel to meet the needs for managerial and technical support in the participating countries.

#### **Recommendation 3: To the BH on budget revision**

Undertake a budget revision to secure funding for full-time services of the PRC to the project for the remainder of its duration, and allocate sufficient funds for increased travel by

the PRC to the countries and for capacity-strengthening activities in them.

163. FAO’s administrative routines are cumbersome and not adequately understood in SEAFDEC and in the countries. This has led to delays in formulation and approval of LOA’s, LA’s etc. The delays have been aggravated because the availability of funds for administrative support to the BH were not clear and recruiting a support staff in FAORAP has not been possible.

**Recommendation 4: To FAORAP and TCID on administrative support to the project**

Ensure that BH functions are adequately resourced with time, cost-recovery mechanisms and the funds available from the project’s GEF agency fee, which could be used to support a project assistant. FAORAP is also urged to recruit such a project assistant to be based in FAORAP and with full access to FAO systems.

164. FIRO (LTU) and FAORAP have lent critical technical support to the project, beyond what is expected and planned. This support has ensured that the project after a difficult start has gained momentum and is making progress towards the achievement of major outputs.

**Recommendation 5: To FIRO and FAORAP fisheries technical officers on technical support and backstopping to the project**

Continue to provide technical support and backstopping to the project, or the necessary resources for it, to ensure that momentum in implementation is maintained and that the main outputs are achieved by the project’s end.

165. Thus far the project’s capacity development has been at the regional rather than the national level. If the project is to use its unique opportunity to bring effective trawl bycatch management to the pilot sites and see their lessons shared nationally, it will need to direct more of its capacity-strengthening efforts to build solidly participatory institutional arrangements at local level and technical skills for EAFM-based management.

**Recommendation 6: To the project team and LTO on capacity development**

Furnish in-depth and longer-term technical training and facilitation of stakeholder engagement at site-level to the stakeholders for EAFM-based management plan development in order to better ensure that the plans are of quality, inclusive of all parties and shared at national level as a model for other sites.

166. The MTE concluded that the information-gathering and data collection that had been initiated did not cater for vital socio-economic indicators on the use of bycatch, the role of fisher folk in the utilization of bycatch, the role of bycatch for income and nutrition in poor households, and potential impact on these groups, including women in fisheries management plans with bycatch reduction elements

**Recommendation 7: To the project team on socio-economic and gender analysis**

The project should urgently assess in-depth to what extent socio-economic, including gender, data-gathering has been initiated in each of the countries, and take action to ensure that adequate and relevant data is gathered and analyzed to understand the potential impacts of bycatch reduction on different groups, and incorporate in fisheries management planning.

167. Partnership with other initiatives and organizations, as with SEAFDEC projects funded by Japan and Sida, SFP, IFFO and WWF, figure prominently in the project document, but have not been used adequately during project implementation. Outsourcing of whole or

parts of outputs by allowing other partners to undertake them, would free resources in RFU for core functions. The results, achieved as part of co-financing arrangements, would be reported towards relevant output.

**Recommendation 8: To the project on the role of partners**

Explore the possibility of having the project’s partner organizations, e.g. regional/international NGOs, regional initiatives and industry organizations, adopt outputs of the project, or parts of them, suited to these partners, to enable the project to focus on its areas of strength.

168. There is a need for a focus of the project’s activities during the remainder of its life. A prioritization should aim at emphasising outputs that are crucial for achieving the project development objective. The MTE has proposed priorities for consideration, and with these the project is likely to make a considerable contribution to bycatch reduction. This focus can be reached at the upcoming annual work planning process for the project in April – June 2014.

**Recommendation 9: To the project on strategy and work planning**

Review the priorities proposed by the MTE (Section 7.1), base the work planning for the remaining project period on these, and to seek PSC endorsement of a strictly prioritised work plan

169. The project, if it focuses, is predicted to produce fisheries management plans and recommendations for institutional and legal changes in the countries. However, it is unlikely that these will be implemented during the project period and more time would be needed.

**Recommendation 10: To the GEF Unit and the project on an extension of the project**

In consultation with FIRO and the RFU, extend the project up to the end of 2015 (by 3 months) to allow for the completion of crucial activities.

**Recommendation 11: To FIRO on formulation of a follow up project**

Initiate as early as possible and in consultation with the RFU, FAORAP and PSC, the formulation of a follow-up project with the aim of synthesizing the results from REBYC and REBYC-II CTI and implementing the fisheries management plans and the institutional and legal changes proposed.

## **8 Annexes to the evaluation report (in separate annex document)**

Brief profile of evaluation team members

Evaluation Terms of Reference

Questionnaires

List of stakeholders interviewed

OED project scoring matrix