



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

The EAF-Nansen Programme (2017-2021)

Supporting the Application of the Ecosystem

- *Approach to Fisheries Management considering
Climate and Pollution Impacts*



Oceans, seas, and coastal areas provide a vital source of food, employment, recreation, trade, and economic well-being for millions of people around the world.

The overall objective of the EAF-Nansen Programme is that *“sustainable fisheries improve food and nutrition security for people in partner countries”*. In this new phase, the Programme continues to support regional and country-specific efforts to reduce poverty, improve food security, and achieve sustainable fisheries management systems.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1 Fishery research institutions provide relevant and timely scientific advice for management.

2 Fisheries are managed by the relevant institutions according to the ecosystem approach to fisheries.

3 Fisheries research and management institutions have the appropriate capacity to sustainably manage fisheries.

The R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*

The new research vessel (R/V) *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* is one of the most advanced research vessels in the world. As its predecessors, it bears the name of the Norwegian explorer, scientist and humanitarian who, in the late 1800s, made important discoveries in several aspects of marine research, particularly physical oceanography. Dr Fridtjof Nansen himself, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922 for his work as a League of Nations High Commissioner.

The R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* is a vitally important platform for improving knowledge on marine resources and ecosystems in support of fisheries management in countries and regions that are not in a position to own and/or operate their own research vessel. The new vessel can accommodate 15 crew and 30 scientists. It has six laboratories, an acoustic centre, a scientific hangar and its own auditorium and scientific library.

Having a cooperation agreement between the owner, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), and FAO allows the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR) to operate the research vessel with the UN flag.

The EAF-Nansen Programme

The EAF-Nansen Programme is built around three areas of work that contribute to sustainable fisheries and the improvement of food and nutrition security for people in partner countries.

Fishery research for management

The programme will help fishery research institutions provide relevant and timely scientific advice for management by:

- carrying out surveys and making available resulting data and information;
- generating new knowledge on marine ecosystems and fisheries resources and their dynamics;
- providing technical support for the analysis of survey data and other fishery and environmental information, addressing key knowledge gaps in relation to resources and ecosystems;
- supporting resource and ecosystem assessments and formulation of scientific advice for management at national and regional levels.

Evidence-based fisheries management

The programme will support fisheries management institutions to sustainably manage fisheries guided by the principles of an ecosystem approach. It will provide technical support and develop capacity for:

- the establishment, improvement, and implementation of fisheries management cycles;
- the development and implementation of regional and national fisheries policy and legal frameworks;
- the development/revision and implementation of fisheries management frameworks and plans;
- the access to and better use of knowledge in the decision-making process;
- the improvement of systems for collection, management, and reporting of fisheries-related data; and
- socio-ecological assessments of vulnerability of coastal communities to climate variability and change.

Special focus will be given to the sustainable management of fisheries on shared stocks and related issues.

Capacity to sustainably manage fisheries

The programme will support the development of human and organizational capacity of fisheries management and research institutions in partner countries and regional organizations to sustainably manage fisheries by:

- supporting targeted training of staff from partner institutions on relevant aspects of fisheries management and research;
- promoting and facilitating the exchange and sharing of information and knowledge among beneficiary countries and with relevant regional and global institutions;
- supporting fisheries research and management institutions with mainstreaming gender aspects in the programme activities; and
- promoting and facilitating the linkages of partner institutions with global and regional networks and mechanisms for capacity development and training.



The ecosystem approach to fisheries

The ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) entails a comprehensive and risk-based management planning process, addressing both the human (social and economic) and ecological (resources and ecosystems) dimensions of sustainability. Analysis of governance (e.g. legal and institutional aspects) is also part of the planning process. By explicitly taking into consideration possible impacts of external pressures, such as climate change, this framework is also proving its usefulness in developing adaptation strategies in the context of climate change.

The main purpose of the ecosystem approach to fisheries is *"to plan, develop, and manage fisheries in a manner that addresses the multiple needs of societies, without jeopardizing the options for future generations to benefit from the full range of goods and services provided by marine ecosystems"*. EAF recognizes that healthy and productive ecosystems are essential for maintaining or increasing the quality and value of fisheries production, and that humans are an integral part of the ecosystem whose interests in fisheries and marine ecosystems must be addressed.

The EAF-Nansen Programme will continue to provide technical support to coastal countries in Africa and the Bay of Bengal for the development of national and regional frameworks that promote and facilitate the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries by strengthening the fisheries management cycle and improving the knowledge base in partner countries.

Regional collaboration for fisheries management of shared stocks

Many of the most productive fish stocks around Africa are transboundary and coastal countries are responsible for the sustainable management of these



Photo courtesy of Merete Kvalisund (IMR)

resources. This requires collaboration among the countries concerned both in research and in management.

The EAF-Nansen Programme offers opportunities for countries and regional organizations to work together to achieve sustainable fisheries management for their shared stocks, for the benefit of all stakeholders. This includes facilitating dialogue among decision-makers on policy and legal issues, management approaches and measures, and the necessary data and knowledge for sustainable management decisions.

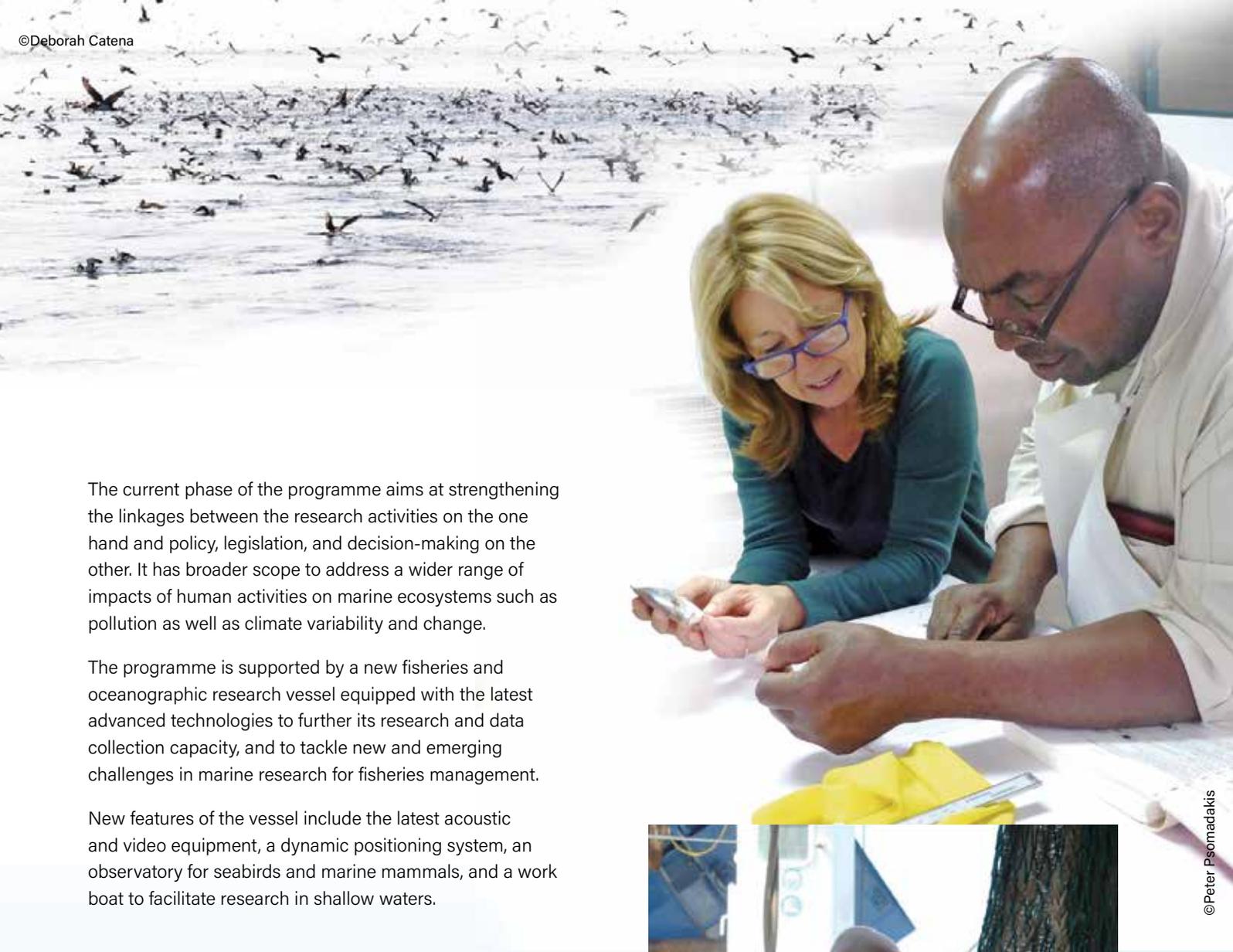


Photo courtesy of IMR, Bergen, Norway

From the EAF-Nansen Project (2006-2016) to the EAF-Nansen Programme (2017-2021)

Throughout its earlier phases, the Nansen Programme has always been based on the paradigm of knowledge-based decision-making. In its previous phase, the programme spearheaded the application of the ecosystem approach to fisheries in Africa by assisting beneficiary countries to gain a better understanding of the concept, improving knowledge on marine ecosystems necessary for the practical implementation of EAF in those countries. Important regional and national baselines for EAF implementation were established.





The current phase of the programme aims at strengthening the linkages between the research activities on the one hand and policy, legislation, and decision-making on the other. It has broader scope to address a wider range of impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems such as pollution as well as climate variability and change.

The programme is supported by a new fisheries and oceanographic research vessel equipped with the latest advanced technologies to further its research and data collection capacity, and to tackle new and emerging challenges in marine research for fisheries management.

New features of the vessel include the latest acoustic and video equipment, a dynamic positioning system, an observatory for seabirds and marine mammals, and a work boat to facilitate research in shallow waters.



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Key features of the programme:

- Increased opportunities for strengthening fisheries management capacity at the national and regional levels.
- Strengthening the implementation of the ecosystem approach at national level drawing on scientific research to guide decision-making for fisheries management and generating awareness on emerging issues.
- Increased focus on setting up fisheries management cycles in partner countries.
- Close collaboration and consultation with regional bodies in applying the knowledge generated by the programme.
- Increased effort on supporting fisheries management of shared stocks.
- Supporting countries in integrating fisheries into broader, multi-sectoral, governance frameworks.

- Greater emphasis on science to address tactical and strategic fisheries management issues.
- A science plan that encompasses work on impacts of external factors (e.g. pollution such as microplastics, and climate change) on resources and ecosystems.



Photo courtesy of IMR, Bergen, Norway

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The EAF-Nansen Programme builds on work from previous phases of the Nansen Programme to meet the next, and perhaps greatest, challenge of addressing the multiple impacts of human activities on fishery resources and the marine environment. With particular focus on fishing, climate change and pollution, the goal is to contribute to sustainably maintaining the oceans as an immensely productive resource of food, nutrition, and livelihoods for future generations. The programme is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in close collaboration with the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR), and funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad).



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Norad



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) implements the EAF-Nansen Programme, and hosts the Programme Coordination Unit that includes both FAO and IMR staff.

FAO is uniquely placed to facilitate the collaborative work of the programme through its extensive involvement with national fisheries research and management bodies, and with regional fisheries organizations.

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) provides the funding for the EAF-Nansen Programme and owns the R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*. The Programme is an integral part of Norway's Fish for Development Programme.

Support to fisheries management and research in developing countries has been an important theme in Norwegian development cooperation since the 1950s, as demonstrated through the longterm commitment to the Nansen Programme.

Supporting sustainable ocean management globally is a priority in Norway's foreign and development policy and a contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

The Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR) operates the R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*, and provides scientific services to the EAF-Nansen Programme. These include the scientific work associated with the surveys, research work under the Science Plan, and training of participants from partner countries during surveys with the R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*.

Norwegian marine and fisheries research dates back to the early 1800s leading to the establishment of the IMR and the first custom-built research vessel in 1900.

IMR has been involved in development cooperation in fisheries research for more than 65 years, including countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia.



For more information:

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