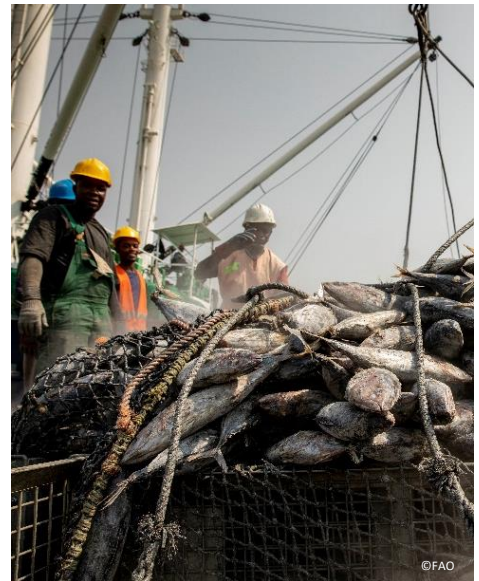




BOOSTING GLOBAL CAPACITY TO HELP PROTECT OUR OCEANS

Marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), which comprise 64 percent of the ocean's surface, contain ecosystems with marine resources and biodiversity of great ecological, socio-economic and cultural importance. However, the complex management of the rich marine resources and biodiversity of the ABNJ requires international cooperation. This has improved since the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was adopted in 1982. Nevertheless, challenges remain if the responsible and sustainable use of these important ecosystems is to be achieved.

The objective of the project was to promote effective global and regional coordination and to strengthen the capacities needed to achieve sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ. This was to be achieved by (i) strengthening and broadening cross-sectoral dialogue and policy coordination in ABNJ, (ii) increasing the capability of decision-makers (especially those from developing countries) to participate in policy-making processes for management and coordination of ABNJ activities and (iii) broadening the public understanding of threats to biodiversity, marine ecosystems and services related to the ABNJ.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project activities were divided into three broad categories, namely (i) cross-sectoral policy dialogue, (ii) capacity development and (iii) knowledge management and outreach.

As part of the policy dialogue component, the project organized cross-sectoral workshops, as well as high-level policy dialogues on ABNJ in direct connection with the negotiations for a new international treaty under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine Biological Diversity of the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction – referred to as the BBNJ process.

In order to strengthen the capacity of individuals and key stakeholders, the project supported the development of a Regional Leaders Program to enhance their understanding of cross sectoral governance of ABNJ, in particular, by training them on the ABNJ and related policy frameworks and placing emphasis on the BBNJ process. The project also produced two policy briefs, which were widely appreciated by the ABNJ policy community.

Furthermore, a media guide and a global media forum were developed to raise awareness of the ABNJ and the profile of the conservation and governance issues to be addressed.

KEY FACTS

Contribution

USD 1 000 000

Duration

January 2014 – December 2020

Resource Partner

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Partner

Global Ocean Forum

Beneficiaries

Decision and policy-makers, in particular those from developing countries, regional fisheries bodies and civil society, which will benefit from the continued provision of goods and services derived from ocean areas

IMPACT

The project played a key role in building and improving cross sectoral dialogue, engaging high-level decision-makers and fostering public outreach to improve the global capacity to effectively manage the ABNJ. It also made a tangible contribution to strengthening the capacities of regional leaders and emerging negotiators by engaging them in international policy processes and exposing them to the ongoing BBNJ negotiations.



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- Two cross-sectoral workshops were conducted, as well as nine high-level policy dialogues on ABNJ in direct connection with the BBNJ process and three side events on topics concerning ABNJ, such as oceans and climate change and oceans and sustainable development. The cross-sectoral workshops were attended by 134 participants and 297 individuals participated in the high-level policy dialogues.
- Two Communities of Practice (CoPs) were established – one on fisheries, biodiversity and climate (18 core group members and 57 members overall) and one on multisector area management (10 core group members and 51 members overall).
- Two highly appreciated policy briefs on capacity development for biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction were authored by the CoP participants.
- A Regional Leaders Fellowship Program was designed to strengthen the capacity of leaders from developing countries and small island developing states to better address issues and to participate more effectively in global and regional ABNJ processes. The two rounds of the Program (in 2015 and 2016) attracted 44 participants, a significant increase compared to the ten participants budgeted for.
- A program web site covering all four projects under the Common Oceans ABNJ Program was established and maintained by FAO.
- High-Level Dialogue and Global Media Forum entitled “Common Oceans – Why Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction are essential for people and planet” were organized. Both events took place during the High Seas International Conference at the Nausicaá Aquarium in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France in 2018 and attracted 85 participants.



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Project Title

Strengthening global capacity to effectively manage Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)

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