



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



Project update SIOFA

ABNJ Deep-sea Fisheries under the Ecosystem Approach Project

**Common Oceans – Sustainable Utilization and Conservation of Biodiversity
in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction**



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

Cooperation between SIOFA and the ABNJ DSF Project (2022-2027)

The second ABNJ Common Oceans programme follows on from the first Common Oceans Programme (2014-2019), with some similarities and some differences. It will operate through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) GEF-7 mechanism receiving funding from their International Waters priority area. The Concept Notes for the Common Oceans programme and five projects were approved by GEF Council in June 2020. The projects are:

- Sustainable management of tuna fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the areas beyond national jurisdiction
- Deep-sea Fisheries under the Ecosystem Approach (DSF project)
- Building and Enhancing Sectoral and Cross-Sectoral Capacity to Support Sustainable Resource Use and Biodiversity Conservation in Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
- Strengthening the stewardship of an economically and biologically significant high seas area – the Sargasso Sea
- Global Coordination Project for the Common Oceans ABNJ Program (GCP Project)

The programme and project are currently being developed with an anticipated submission date to GEF of July 2021 and a start date planned for January 2022.

The DSF Project has three components (and a 4th on Communication that will be undertaken in collaboration with GCP project. The Theory of Change (attached) outlines the DSF project. A summary of the DSF Project's components and outcomes is given in the table below. Component 2 outcomes 2.2 and 2.3 are most relevant to SIOFA Scientific Committee (SC), but other components are also relevant to SIOFA but perhaps more to the Commission and Compliance committees.

Theory of Change	Explanation of relevance to SIOFA SC
<u>Component 1 Outcome 1.1</u> Legal and MCS	Not covered in the SIOFA SC workplan. Aspects are relevant to the work of the Commission in SIOFA.
<u>Component 2 Outcome 2.1</u> Effective decision making, improved advice and reduced impacts.	This outcome will include work on 1) the science-management interface, 2) uptake of new technologies and 3) on management systems rewarding compliance. This is partly relevant to SC, but these aspects are not included in their programme of work.
<u>Component 2 Outcome 2.2</u> Improved advice supporting the management of fish stocks.	This outcome deals with productivity models, stock assessments and the supply (value) chain. The first two are relevant to the SC. Climate change is in the remit of the SC workplan, but does not seem to have activities associated with it as given in its annexes.
<u>Component 2 Outcome 2.3</u> DSF impacts on sharks and VMEs.	This outcome is mainly related to deepwater sharks and VMEs. (Seabirds will be linked in with the tuna project who will likely handle this aspect.)
<u>Component 3 Outcome 3.1</u> Cross-sectoral, marine spatial planning and BBNJ.	This outcome concerns interactions between fisheries and other sectors, including how it could affect fish stocks and fishing (the biodiversity protection side is well established in Outcome 2.3). This also links in with Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and BBNJ.

The SIOFA Scientific Council developed their workplan during their 4th meeting held in Yokohama in 2019¹. This is elaborated in the annexes to the report, and includes basic budgets associated with the work. Much of this work is relevant to Component 2 of the ABNJ DSF project, as detailed in the table below. The planned project work for Components 1 and 3 needs to be developed with the Commission and Compliance Committees.

SIOFA SC 2019 report annex and topic	Anticipated link to ABNJ DSF Project (Outputs from the Theory of Change)
G. SIOFA Scientific Committee Work Plan Updated at SC4	This lists the general themes of the MoP approved SC workplan that runs on a 3-5 year plan. Details for current workplan given in appendix.
I: VME habitat mapping workflow. A data collection / mapping exercise. Includes biological data collection on VMEs and environmental data (physical and oceanographic).	<u>Output 2.1.2:</u> Identifying new and innovative approaches and technologies <u>Output 2.2.1:</u> Data collection by fishing vessels (research and commercial) to help understand oceanography and climate change. <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> Identification of VMEs during fishing operations (thresholds, new technologies (identified under output 2.1.2), and other tools). Including an FAO Tech Pub on methodologies for identifying VMEs. <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> R/V Nansen cruise.
K: SIOFA bioregionalisation workplan	<u>Output 2.3.2:</u> HSM and SDM models for VME habitats. Would use information generated out of Annex I line.
L. SIOFA Interim standard protocol for future protected areas designation.	This protocol is very broad, and with the possible exception of CCAMLR goes beyond what is normally within the remit of the RFMOs. It is a mix of EBSAs, MPAs, VMEs, and other area protection. The ABNJ Project would confine its activities in these directions to preventing significant adverse impact on VMES. The following outputs would have some relevance, but better fit under other workplans. <u>Output 1.1.2:</u> Gaps in national legislation identified and filled. <u>Output 2.3.1:</u> Deepwater sharks. <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> VMEs. <u>Output 3.1.2:</u> Cross-sectoral impacts (under this output, we want to produce an FAO Tech Report on MSP by RFMOs).
M-Q. Specific area designations.	These area descriptions follow the concept of EBSA and networked MPAs. They include monitoring and research which is of interest to the project as a way to monitor the health of the system and responses to impacts (Bottom fisheries, Climate change, etc). In general, the DSF project will focus on identifying and mitigating impacts. <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> VMEs Activity 3: Monitoring VME health
R & S: Bottom Fishing Impact Assessments (BFIA) Gap Analysis and summary update	<u>Output 2.2.2:</u> Low-yielding and data-poor stocks assessed and managed <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> Mapping DSF by gear type <u>Output 3.1.2:</u> Development of impact assessments for wider stakeholder review – DSF and other sectors
T: Cumulative BFIA workplan for trawl and longline	<u>Output 2.3.1:</u> Impacts on deepwater sharks <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> Impacts on VMEs <u>Output 2.3.2:</u> Mapping DSF by gear type <u>Output 3.1.2:</u> Cross-sectoral interactions
V: Alfonsino stock assessment workplan	<u>Output 2.2.2:</u> Data-poor stock assessment
X: Reference Points and Harvest Strategies work plan (orange roughy + alfonsino + Patagonian toothfish)	<u>Output 2.2.2:</u> Data-poor stock assessment
W: Theme 6: Climate Change	<u>Output 2.2.1:</u> Stock productivity models (using environmental input data)

The above provides activities of the ABNJ DSF Project and SIOFA SC that are of common interest. Most of these activities would be undertaken using funding from SIOFA and would serve to represent SIOFA’s partnership contribution (co-financing) to the ABNJ DSF Project. Some activities could be more directly supported by the project, and would form part of the project’s direct outputs. Much of this would take the form of promoting and integrating SIOFA’s work into that of the other ocean regions and the wider stakeholder community. The ABNJ DSF Project will also be able to fund certain aspects of the work (within the limits of the GEF rules), especially work that is common to other ocean regions. The ABNJ DSF Project will be able to synthesis the work undertaken by DSF RFMOs project partners and ensure these acquire greater exposure than otherwise possible. The ABNJ DSF Project is wishing to form stronger links with commercial vessels, GEF-eligible countries and the wider stakeholder community, to ensure that DSF is, and is seen to be, sustainable, environmental friendly, and part of a network of cooperating resource sectors that protect the high seas of the world’s oceans whilst providing essential products serving economic and social needs.

Draft timeline

Date	Activity or milestone
Jun 2020	Concept Note accepted by GEF
Jun-Jul 2020	Draft ABNJ DSF Project activities, following the Theory of Change and in line with suggestions made by RFMOs, developed by FAO
Aug 2020	Inception workshop with DSF Project partners – consolidating partnerships, activities and co-financing. Scoping to identify wider stakeholder involvement to ensure project’s work is relevant and communicated to wider audience. Identification of collaborative areas among the four projects within the Common Oceans programme.
Sep-Dec 2020	Participative development of partner activities following Theory of Change. Identification of project funds, consultancies and activities to support partners and achieve project outputs and outcomes.
Jan-Jun 2020	Completion of DSF Project Document

Annex

Theory of Change for DSF Project

