



PIPELINE PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

Project Title: Sustainable management of fisheries, marine living resources and their habitats in the Bay of Bengal region for the benefit of coastal states and communities: Support to SEAFDEC Member Countries

Prospect Funding Agency: FAO/GEF

Lead Department: Training Department

Proposed Budget: 2,000,000 - 3,000,000 USD for SEAFDEC member countries (to be finalized after detailed project planning)

Duration: 5 years with a tentative start date of June 2020

Background/Introduction:

The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) is an ~USD10 Million investment by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to implement fisheries and critical habitats actions identified in the Bay of Bengal Strategic Action Programme that was endorsed by the 8 BOB coastal countries in 2015. SEAFDEC has been invited to become a project partner to implement actions for its member countries (i.e. Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia). The budget for this implementation will be USD2 Million with a possible increase in budget associated with a mid-term review of activities. A description of the project is provided in Annex 1.

Opportunities:

SEAFDEC will facilitate the implementation of actions that address:

1. Sustainable Management of Fisheries

SEAFDEC will develop regional capacities and provide technical advice for the management planning for Indo-Pacific Mackerel, Anchovy and advice for Neritic Tuna. This will include EAFM plans, developing co-management arrangements, combatting IUU and providing training in EAFM and MCS.

2. Restoration and conservation of critical marine habitats and conservation of biodiversity

SEAFDEC will assist with its experience in marine spatial planning and its role in benefiting fisheries stock management. This will include incorporation of restoration of critical marine habitats in EAFM plans.

3. Improved Livelihoods and enhanced resilience of the BOBLME

SEAFDEC will assist in the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF-Guidelines), as well as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

4. Regional mechanisms for planning, coordination and monitoring of the BOBLME

SEAFDEC will support a BOBLME wide monitoring and coordination systems, in particular existing sub-regional mechanisms (such as MCS networks).

Expected Outcomes from the SEAFDEC involvement:

- Implementation of EAFM plans for targeted transboundary fish stocks (e.g. Hilsa, Indo-Pacific Mackerel, Anchovy).
- Reduced potential for IUU catch and continuance of established MCS networks.
- Enhanced resilience and reduced vulnerability of marine systems to natural and climate hazards.
- Strengthened institutional mechanisms at regional and national levels for planning, coordination and monitoring of fisheries and ocean ecosystems.

Timeline:

The project documentation for approval by the GEF will be submitted in December 2019 with a tentative project commencement scheduled for June 2020. Year 1 of the project will be dedicated to the project inception to allow for detailed country level planning of activities.

Bay of Bengal LME

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1. Background/Introduction

The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) is one of the largest LMEs globally and covers 6.2 million km² with depths ranging between 2 000 and over 4 000 m for most of its central area. The continental shelf around its perimeter is mostly narrow. About 66 percent of the BOBLME lies within the exclusive economic zone's (EEZ) of BOBLME countries - Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and the remainder being the high seas area. The BOBLME is rich in natural resources, including extensive mineral and energy resources; marine living resources that support major fisheries; and forest and land resources. The LME is the site of three important critical habitats - mangroves (12 percent of world mangrove resources); coral reefs (8 percent of the world's coral reefs) and seagrass. The BOBLME is an area of high biodiversity, with a large number of endangered and vulnerable species. The LME and its natural resources are of considerable social and economic importance to the bordering countries, with activities such as fishing, aquaculture, tourism and shipping contributing to food security, employment and national economies.

The first phase of the BOBLME project supported participating countries in the development and agreement of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and Strategic Action Plan (SAP). The TDA identified three priority transboundary concerns, including their more proximate causes: overexploitation of marine living resources, degradation of critical habitats and pollution and water quality. SEAFDEC was a strong partner during the first phase of the BOBLME in particular supporting its member countries through technical advice and capacity building for EAFM and combatting IUU.

A program framework document (PFD) was developed by FAO and ADB to address the priority issues identified by countries in the SAP. The PFD was endorsed by all BOBLME countries and by the GEF in May 2018.

This PFD includes the FAO project entitled "*Sustainable management of fisheries, marine living resources and their habitats in the Bay of Bengal region for the benefit of coastal states and communities*". The project is in the design phase with submission to the GEF planned for November 2019.

FAO has initiated dialogue with SEAFDEC and also Bay of Bengal Program-Intergovernmental Organization (BOBP-IGO) and IUCN to develop partnership agreements for a substantial part of implementation.

For SEAFDEC the areas of focus will be with areas of its mandate and for its shared BOBLME/SEAFDEC countries.

2. Goal/overall Objectives

The project objective is (for SEAFDEC countries) “*To contribute to sustainable management of fisheries, marine living resources and their habitats in the Bay of Bengal region for the benefit of coastal states and communities*”.

3. Project Description

The project objective is to support sustainable management of fisheries, marine living resources and their habitats in the Bay of Bengal region, to reduce environmental stress and improve environmental status for the benefit of coastal states and communities.

This will be achieved through five interlinked Project components based on the BOBLME SAP themes, and with an added component to strengthen the institutional arrangements for regional partnerships coordination and collaboration, ecosystem-based monitoring and assessment. The GEF support to the implementation of the SAP is expected to leverage significant amounts of investments from the BOBLME countries, from both national and sub-national levels, multilateral and bilateral development partners.

SEAFDEC will be a sub regional implementation hub for the project.

National implementation in countries requesting this will be through a “Seascape Focus Area Approach” to ensure efficient and coordinated implementation. This approach will deliver all components in one area and ensure linking through regional action planning to national implementation at Fishery/community level.

The project includes the following tentative proposals which have emerged from consultations in SEAFDEC-BOBLME member countries (Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia). These will be confirmed during the inception work planning. The project will work through multi Four countries in which Focus Areas or sub national activities are to be implemented. Advisory and coordination committees will be formed at an appropriate level and supported by local experts to advise on implementation of the project. Wherever possible the project will work through and strengthen existing mechanisms.

Component 1: Sustainable Management of Fisheries

The sustainability of fisheries and livelihoods in the BOBLME depends to a large extent on marine living resources. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing has been shown to contribute to the overexploitation of fish stocks in the BOBLME and is a clear hindrance to the management and recovery of fish populations and ecosystems that are already overexploited. A systematic application of the ecosystem approaches to fisheries management (EAFM) and the reduction of threats from IUU fishing, as well as application of participatory and inclusive approaches is therefore essential for the improvement of ecosystem health and livelihoods in the BOBLME. This component thus has two major outcomes:

Outcome 1.1: The ecosystem approach to fisheries management institutionalized at national level

Regional level: Regional capacity development, technical advice and fisheries management planning for Indian Mackerel, Anchovy and advice for Neritic Tuna (in collaboration with IOTC).

National level

- Output 1.1.1 At least, 2 EAFM plans implemented in each SEAFDEC country.
 - Species and fisheries include Indian Mackerel, Anchovy and Neritic Tuna. EAFM plans to be developed and implemented.
 - Hilsha (national and regional) for Myanmar.
 - Planning at Andaman Sea and Sub regional level and National level.
 - For Indonesia FMP areas 571 and 572

- Output 1.1.2. National and regional platforms established or strengthened to involve grassroots stakeholders in management decision-making:
 - Development of multi-stakeholder management groups to contribute to EAFM implementation.
 - Promotion of Co-Management and strengthening the operationalization of management bodies in FMA 571 and 572
- Output 1.1.3 EAFM training embedded in national and regional training institutions
 - Capacity building for training partners in countries where this is still required
 - Support to strengthening EAFM capacity development in countries where EAFM already under implementation.
 - EAFM Training (Training of Trainer, Training for planners, training for implementers, Training for evaluators)
 - Development of EAFM Plans: For Indonesia review FMP for area 571 and 572 (can include the latest issues and or commodities that are of regional); strengthening fisheries and conservation area data
 - Promotion of Co-Management and strengthening the operationalization of management bodies in FMA 571 dan 572

Outcome 1.2: IUU catch in the BOBLME reduced:

- Output 1.2.1 BOBLME countries join and implement a Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) on IUU fishing
 - BOBLME working group to develop roadmap for BOBLME RPOA-IUU. Strengthening of RPOA-IUU and sub-regional mechanisms
- Output 1.2.2. National POAs-IUU and national IUU MCS systems and Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) strengthened
 - Indonesia has NPOA-IUU.
 - Lessons shared between SEAFDEC countries on MCS and VMS.
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- Output 1.2.3 Tools for promoting best practices, such as MCS, PSM and traceability, and policies and national actions to combat IUU fishing developed and implemented in national pilot/investment projects
 - Strengthening of Andaman MCS network
 - Indonesia has NPOA-IUU and endorsed PSMA.
- Output 1.2.4. Regional Capacity Development Program on port inspections, MCS and traceability implemented
 - Capacity needs assessment
 - Capacity development plan
 - Training on MCS, Port Inspections

Component 2: Restoration and conservation of critical marine habitats and conservation of biodiversity

This component will lead to improved management and status of degraded, vulnerable and critical coastal and marine habitats and Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species in the BOBLME by integrating marine spatial management tools, such as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and Vulnerable Ecosystems (VEs) into fisheries and biodiversity conservation management of critical habitats in SEAFDEC country region of the Andaman Sea (Myeik Archipelago).

Broadly this component will be implemented by IUCN at regional and national level in collaboration with the responsible ministries (including Environment) and national partners. At national level MPA's related work will be implemented through Focus Areas.

SEAFDEC's role will be to provide technical advice to SEAFDEC/BOBLME countries in areas where fisheries technical advice is needed in relation to conservation and planning.

Component 3: Management of coastal and marine pollution to improve ecosystem health

The health of the BOBLME is threatened by wastewater and solid waste from upriver and coastal cities and settlements, industrial zones, ports and shipping, and excessive nutrient application in agriculture and high nutrient loads in rivers and water courses.

The project aims to change attitudes and approaches so that wastewater and solid waste. Marine and coastal resources represent important natural capital assets, but increasingly are subject to negative impacts of upstream activities on land and along river systems. In this connection, the project will take steps to increase understanding of the complexities of source-to-sea management continuum - where ecosystems are degraded as an unintended consequence of economic activities that might happen far upstream or downstream in the source-to-sea system. The project aims to reduce pollution from discharge of untreated sewage and wastewater; solid waste and marine litter; and nutrient loading reduced or minimized in selected hotspots in river, coastal and marine waters; promotion of cleaner fishing ports and addressing abandoned fishing gears at 8 hotspots applying ICM approaches. It is expected that there will be an increase in fishing ports covered by sewage management systems and improved waste management, and that nutrient loading is significantly reduced at coastal and marine hotspots.

This component will be implemented by the ADB in Mandalay city.

At this stage there are no GEF funds available for other areas of implementation.

Component 4: Improved livelihoods and enhanced resilience of the BOBLME

This component will lead to positive changes in the overall well-being of coastal people and their involvement in both fisheries management and biodiversity conservation, which is expected to lead to both enhanced ecosystem resilience of the BOBLME and of local livelihoods and food security. Vulnerability to natural hazards, and climate variability and change will be reduced and livelihoods diversified for selected coastal communities, with equal opportunities for women, men and youth. This component will also constitute a platform to support implementation of key concerns of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication SSF-Guidelines (VG-SSF), as well as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VG-Tenure). ADB will contribute to this component through the regional training programme under 3.2 above on waste and waste water management with identification of investment opportunities that will contribute to improved well-being of coastal communities.

Where this component is implemented at national level it will link through the Focus Areas integrating with fisheries management planning and MPA strengthening.

Outcome 4.1. Enhanced resilience and reduced vulnerability to natural hazards, climate variability and change of selected coastal communities:

- Output 4.1.1 Resilience plans developed based on valuation of ecosystem services.
- Output 4.1.2 Inclusion of coastal fisheries and aquaculture in poverty reduction and development, as well as climate change policies, strategies and planning processes promoted
- Output 4.1.3. Gender considerations mainstreamed into relevant policy and regulatory frameworks

Outcome 4.2. Enhanced sustainable livelihoods and diversification for selected coastal communities:

- Output 4.2.1 Livelihood diversification for women piloted (in at least one site per country)
 - Sites to be selected in Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand,
- Output 4.2.2. Access to innovative financial services and insurance mechanisms improved
- Output 4.2.3. Regional capacity development programme for selected coastal communities on alternative livelihoods, promoting decent work, social protection for empowerment.

SEAFDEC's role in this component will be to provide technical advice to SEAFDEC member countries where fisheries technical advice is needed. The project will support implementation of the VGSSF.

Component 5: Regional mechanism for planning, coordination and monitoring of the BOBLME

The ability to implement ecosystem management at the regional level in the BOBLME depends on the capacity to undertake monitoring of the whole ecosystem and to plan and coordinate management activities at regional level. This can only be achieved through strengthened regional cooperation between countries and between government agencies within countries and the engagement of civil society and the private sector. The Programme will therefore focus on achieving the following outcomes under this component:

Outcome 5.1. Strengthened institutional mechanisms at regional and national levels for planning, coordination, and monitoring of the BOBLME

Output 5.1.1 CCR-BOBLME established to promote stakeholder participation and awareness, ecosystem assessment, and application of best practices in implementation of the SAP

- 5.1.2 Long-term partnership arrangements agreed for sustainable regional coordination mechanism and sustainable financing for ecosystem-based management in the BOBLME
- 5.1.3 National inter-sectoral coordination committees to support SAP implementation established.
- 5.1.4 Stakeholder consultation mechanism established for engagement of civil society, cooperatives, and the private sector
- 5.1.5 Baseline data collection and analysis systems developed for monitoring systems and sharing information.

Outcome 5.2. Adaptive results-based management and sharing of information and lessons learned

- Output 5.2.1 Communication Strategy developed and implemented
 - SEAFDEC will support the development of a
- Outcome 5.2.2. Programme findings and lessons learned identified and contribute to IWLearn and LME Learn
- Output 5.2.3. Regional information sharing mechanism developed enabling broad access to best practices and lessons learned in the participating countries
- Output 5.2.4. Monitoring system operating and providing systematic and regular information updates on progress towards reaching BOBLME SAP targets

SEAFDEC's role in this component will be to support project efforts to develop a BOBLME wide monitoring and coordination systems, building on existing sub regional mechanisms (such as SEAFDEC MCS networks, IUU reporting mechanisms).

4. Expected Outputs/Outcomes

Describe the expected complete results or finished products at the end of project.

The key project Outputs include (in SEAFDEC/BOBLME countries)

- The ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) institutionalized at national level for targeted transboundary fish stocks (e.g. Hilsa, Indian Mackerel, Anchovy)
- IUU catch in the BOBLME reduced
- Coastal and marine managed areas (MMAs) contribute to conservation of biodiversity and blue carbon
- National MMAs established or strengthened resulting in improved MMA management effectiveness at national level (with STAR funding; without STAR funding, mainly bilateral donor funding to be used; CCM funding for Bangladesh will be used for the Sundarbans (Reserve) Forest)
- Regional consensus and agreements on reduction of threats to marine biodiversity in coastal and open waters
- Pollution from discharge of untreated sewage and wastewater; solid waste and marine litter; and nutrient loading reduced or minimized in selected hotspots in river, coastal and marine waters; promotion of cleaner fishing ports and addressing abandoned fishing gears at 8 hotspots applying ICM approaches
- Enhanced resilience of the BOBLME and reduced vulnerability to natural hazards, climate variability and change of selected coastal communities
- Enhanced sustainable livelihoods and diversification for selected coastal communities
- Strengthened institutional mechanisms at regional and national levels for planning, coordination and monitoring of the BOBLME
- Adaptive results-based management and sharing of information and lessons learned

5. Progress and Status

The BOBLME project document design is underway with submission to the GEF planned for November 2019.

- Regional consultations completed include PPG Inception Workshop (12-13 March 2019) and the PPG PSC meeting (14 March)
- National Consultations completed in Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh (supported by IUCN), Indonesia, India (State and Federal supported by FAO) and Malaysia (supported by DOFM)

Next steps will include developing a Partnership agreement and workplan with SEAFDEC

Implementation is forecast to start in June 2020.