

Large Marine Ecosystems & Sustainable Development

A review of Strategic Management Processes and Goals



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Large Marine Ecosystems and Sustainable Development: A review of Strategic Management Processes and Goals

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBA	Cost-benefit Analysis	IUU	Illegal, Unreported or Unregulated (Fisheries)	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
CCA	Causal Chain Analysis	IW:LEARN	International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resource Network	SAP	Strategic Action Programme
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries	LDC	Least Developed Country	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	LME	Large Marine Ecosystem	SIDS	Small Island Developing States
EBM	Ecosystem-Based Management	LMR	Living Marine Resources	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Area	MARPOL	Marine Pollution Convention	UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	MEDA	Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
EQO	Ecosystem Quality Objective	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	VCA	Value Chain Analysis
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (of the United Nations)	MPA	Marine Protected Area	WIOSEA	Western Indian Ocean Sustainable Ecosystem Alliance
GEF	Global Environment Facility	MSP	Marine Spatial Planning		
GIS	Geographic Information System	NAP	National Action Plan		
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management	PEMSEA	Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia		
		TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis		





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme development approach for the management of Large Marine Ecosystems is consistently used to develop management strategies for the Large Marine Ecosystems.*

The two primary objectives of this report were 1) to review the TDA-SAP Process and identify the common issues, threats, causes and barriers and how each of the LMEs are addressing these through the SAP implementation process, and 2) based on this synopsis and 'round-up' of TDA SAP

delivery, identify the linkages between the TDA-SAP processes and the SDG 14 Targets.

This report has reviewed this assessment and management process in 24 of the world's LMEs through 18 GEF-funded projects and initiatives. It concludes that the TDA and the SAP process are 'fit-for-purpose' and have evolved good practices and implementation objectives after two decades of trial and improvements. There are some important areas which could be improved however and these are

captured under a set of Recommendations that address this need.

The review has then looked in detail at the interlinkages between the LME SAP process and objectives and those of the SDG 14 and other SDGs. It confirms that there is **an intrinsic alignment between the two processes** and that the **TDA-SAP processes and SAP Implementation will inevitably and significantly assist with the delivery on most, if not all, of the SDG 14 Targets and Indicators** and, indeed on many of the other SDG Targets.

A number of best practices as well as constraints and shortfalls in the TDA-SAP process have been identified by the review as they have for the SDG 14 LME TDA-SAP interlinkages. As a result, a number of recommendations have arisen and are captured in full detail toward the end of this review document. The main, priority recommendations arising from the overall review process are captured and summarised under two headings and are presented here:

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS DIRECTLY RELATED TO IMPROVING THE TDA-SAP PROCESS

1. Urgent need for more formal coordination arrangements and agreements on roles and responsibilities between the mandated regional bodies that deal with the various aspects of ecosystem-based management of living marine resources. There is also a need to 'anchor' the entire LME process within and under such a formal agreement so that the LME process is being promoted and implemented within the regional seas areas and across the transboundary interfaces a) where LMEs overlap across two or more regional seas areas and b) into the adjacent high seas areas, which are also subject to transboundary interactions
2. There are a number of existing and potential models of institutional and administrative management of the SAP process. However, any decision on where the SAP Implementation process (and thus the LME management and administrative home) should be anchored must be by agreement of the participating transboundary countries
3. Urgent requirement for more effective translation of scientific results and information into adaptive management recommendations and policy guidance



4. SAPs need more detail in the context of a Sustainability Road-Map. This is a major weakness in many of the SAP Implementation phases and represents a significant threat to the investments made over the past decades in the development and implementation of management strategies for LMEs
5. The GEF support to the TDA-SAP process has created strong working relationships and respect between institutions and experts in both 'donor' and 'recipient' countries, thereby encouraging and supporting lasting partnerships between scientific and academic bodies across the world. This process should ideally be sustained through more formal agreements for regional and global partnerships in support of the LME management concept and SAP implementation.
6. There is a critical need to intensify efforts to build capacity for developing countries in relation to ocean and coastal management and EBM, in particular for SIDS and LDCs, as well as coastal African States. In addition to traditional capacity development assistance through North-South cooperation, TDA-SAP processes and LME management *per se* needs to explore the further potential to foster capacity development partnerships that mobilize South-South cooperation.
7. There is a common concern regarding the need to identify a mechanism to avoid the consistently drawn-out transition period between SAP negotiation/adoption (usually at the end of one project phase) and SAP Implementation (at the beginning of the next project phase) either by finding 'bridging' funding or by a smoother and faster transition process
8. The TDA process needs to reconfirm the boundaries of the LME based on the accepted LME designation criteria and including ABNJ, if they fall within these criteria
9. It is advisable to avoid separating the land and sea components of the TDA-SAP process. The linkages between the watershed and the coastal/marine ecosystem(s) are critical to the management objectives within the LME
10. The detail, content, objectives and consequent effectiveness of both TDAs and SAPs varies enormously from one LME

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