

## 10<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE SPRFMO COMMISSION

*Held virtually, 24-28 January 2022*

### COMM 10 – Obs 06

#### Cross Sectoral Project aiming to build capacity for cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination in ABNJ

*UNEP*

This paper consists of 2 documents:

1. A briefing note introducing the ABNJ Cross-sectoral Project led by UNEP under the GEF-7 Common Oceans Program together with an invitation to SPRFMO members to collaborate and participate in the project. The project leaders hope to receive a commitment letter from SPRFMO in due course.
2. A brief compilation of some important elements of the GEF-7 project, including details of the proposed approach towards improving capacity building for cooperation and coordination; project structure in terms of decision-making and the Theory of Change and linkages to the overarching Common Oceans Program.

# ABNJ Cross-Sectoral Project

This briefing provides an introduction to the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Cross-Sectoral Child Project of the GEF-7 Common Oceans Program, jointly led by FAO and UNEP.



## Common Oceans Program

The Common Oceans Program represents an collective effort by FAO, UNEP, UNDP and the GEF Secretariat to support sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). Initiated in 2014 via the GEF-5 funding cycle, the program delivered four projects and a series of recommendations on how to progress towards improved management of ABNJ in future. Further information on can be found via the [Common Oceans webpage](#).

Building upon the initial success of the Common Oceans Program, a second phase has been approved under the GEF-7 funding cycle, consisting five projects focusing on:

- Sustainable deep-seas fisheries
- Sustainable tuna fisheries
- Cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination
- Multi-sector governance of the Sargasso Sea
- Global coordination (of the projects in the Phase II program)

Further information about the upcoming second phase of the Common Oceans Program and its projects can be found via the [GEF project database](#).

## Cross-Sectoral Project

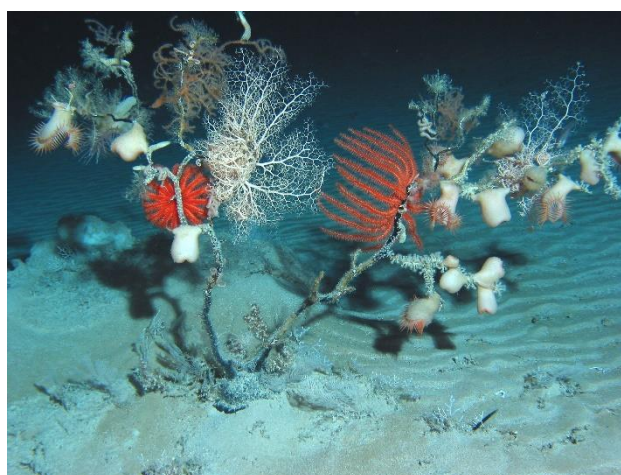
The Cross-Sectoral Project (third in the above list) has been developed by the Global Ocean Forum, UNEP-WCMC and GRID-Arendal, in partnership with UNEP and FAO.

### Project aim

The project aims to build capacity for cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination in ABNJ. The long-term goal of this is to ensure that mandated management organizations operating in ABNJ have the required capacity to conserve biodiversity in ABNJ and to ensure that resources can be used sustainably.

The project focuses on two pilot regions within the Pacific Ocean:

- South-East Pacific region – ABNJ adjacent to the CPPS member country jurisdictions.
- Pacific Islands region – ABNJ adjacent to Pacific Island States' jurisdictions.



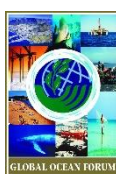
Source: NOAA/OER Bioluminescence 2009 Expedition

The project's aims align with various existing and emerging international policies, including the ongoing negotiations on a new international legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), and wider goals under the Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, among others.

### Project activities

It is becoming increasingly necessary to cooperate and coordinate across sectors to ensure the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of marine resources in ABNJ.

The project activities will aim to improve the capacity of actor networks in the two pilot regions to better cooperate and coordinate across sectors. "Actor" refers to multilateral organizations with a management mandate for ABNJ, their members and national focal points, as well as organizations and



stakeholders with important knowledge or interests in ABNJ. Key project activities include:

A **capacity needs assessment** to identify the needs of different actors (for example, skills, resources or policies) to facilitate effective cooperation and coordination within and across sectoral remits.

Development of a **capacity building program** to address the identified needs.

Facilitation of a **process** through which management bodies in the pilot regions can convene to improve mechanisms for cooperation and coordination between them.

Establishment of a **knowledge exchange mechanism** to improve awareness of and access to ABNJ information.

#### Who is involved?

A wide range of partners are already on board across the two pilot regions and beyond, including PIF, CPPS, USP, UCN, SPREP, WCPFC, SPC, FFA and 23 co-financing organizations. Their specific roles vary, for instance, as project advisers, executing partners, or members of the project steering committee.

#### Timeline

The five-year project will run from 2022 until 2027. The capacity needs assessment will take place in Year 1, with the capacity building program and work to improve cross-sectoral cooperation and knowledge exchange occurring during Years 2 to 5.



Source: NOAA Okeanos Explorer Program, 2012

## We invite you to collaborate and participate in this project

**B**ased on your prior collaboration under the GEF-5 project, and other efforts in capacity building, we would like to invite you and your member states to collaborate and participate in this project. Your participation in the needs assessment and the capacity building program to help support regional capacity development and knowledge exchange for improved management in ABNJ would be warmly welcomed.

You are also invited to participate in the development of mechanisms for improving coordination between peer organizations or management bodies whose geographical remits overlap with your own if you wish to do so.

Other opportunities for collaboration throughout the project are also available, for example as advisors or as members of the project steering committee.

## Further information

**S**upplementary materials to this briefing provide further details about the Cross-Sectoral Project. These include organizational arrangements, project-specific impacts and wider outcomes and further details on the project aim and activities.

## Contact us

Additional information can also be provided upon request and all enquiries are welcome.

**Miriam Balgos, Project Lead, Global Ocean Forum**  
[mbalgos@globaloceanforum.com](mailto:mbalgos@globaloceanforum.com)

**Isabelle Vanderbeck, GEF Task Manager, UNEP**  
[isabelle.vanderbeck@un.org](mailto:isabelle.vanderbeck@un.org)



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations





# Supporting sustainable resource use and biodiversity conservation in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction

*(Building cross-sectoral capacity to enable sustainable ocean management – a second phase)*

**Scope:** Global

**GEF Agency:** UN Environment Programme

**Executing Partners:** Global Ocean Forum (GOF), UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), GRID-Arendal

**Duration:** 5 years

## Rationale

Activities in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) are governed under differing global, regional and sectoral agreements and institutions depending on the sector and location. Globally, for example, the International Maritime Organization and the International Seabed Authority govern shipping and mining respectively, while other activities are managed more regionally such as fishing through Regional Fishery Bodies. Environmental considerations are highlighted through Regional Seas Programmes and Large Marine Ecosystem projects among other initiatives. Current arrangements are driven by the interests of member states which focus on the sector in question, and generally operate independently without an overarching consideration of cross cutting issues or cumulative impacts. Global coordinated consideration of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ is currently lacking, although progress is being made through the consideration of a new implementing agreement under UNCLOS. Cross-sectoral cooperation could play a role in strengthening and enhancing ocean governance to achieve global sustainable development goals. However, there are capacity gaps which need addressing in order to support enhanced coordination, which is the focus of this project.



# Objectives

This project aims to enhance the **sectoral and cross-sectoral capacity of national governments, and relevant regional and global entities** to effectively address issues of common concern in ABNJ **through cooperation, coordination and effective knowledge exchange in relation to sustainable resource use and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ** including through the use of cross-sectoral approaches, area-based management tools and in conducting environmental impact/strategic environmental assessments), in line with existing and emerging legal frameworks and global processes.

## Components

### 1. Building and strengthening capacity for sectoral and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination to improve sustainable use and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ

It is expected that members of national, regional, and global organizations that have an ABNJ-related management remit are applying their enhanced functional capacity (planning, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating) in sectoral and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination initiatives in ABNJ management, including through the use of area-based management tools (ABMTs), environmental impact assessments (EIAs), and marine spatial planning to support sustainable resource and biodiversity conservation.

### 2. Improving sectoral and cross-sectoral knowledge management on and public awareness of sustainable resource use and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ in the pilot regions.

More effective knowledge exchange and improved access to the best available information for well-informed decision-making in cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination among key ABNJ management organizations (national, regional, and global) with a focus on sustainable use and biodiversity conservation.

Increased understanding by a) the International Waters community and high-level officials in the BBNJ process regarding individual and institutional capacity needs and priorities related to cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination in ABNJ; and b) the media and the public, of benefits derived from ABNJ and engagement in associated cross-sectoral issues and opportunities.

## Contacts

Isabelle Vanderbeck, UNEP  
([isabelle.vanderbeck@un.org](mailto:isabelle.vanderbeck@un.org))

Miriam Balgos, Global Ocean Forum  
([mbalgos@globaloceanforum.com](mailto:mbalgos@globaloceanforum.com))

Nina Bhola, UNEP-WCMC  
([Nina.Bhola@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:Nina.Bhola@unep-wcmc.org))

Louise Lieberknecht, GRID-Arendal  
([louise.lieberknecht@grida.no](mailto:louise.lieberknecht@grida.no))

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### Photo Credits

Photographer: David Burdick; Image courtesy of Aquapix and Expedition to the Deep Slope 2007; Gulf of Maine Deep Coral Science Team 2014/NURTEC-UConn/NOAA Fisheries/UMaine. Source: NOAA DeepSea Coral Data

# 1. Capacity Building by the Cross-Sectoral Project: the what, how and who

This document summarizes, for the purposes of the project:

- **what** is meant by “capacity”, “capacity building”, and “cooperation and coordination”;
- **how** the project will improve cooperation and coordination across actor networks, and
- **who** the project will engage with.

## The “What”

**Capacity** is defined as the ability of **1. individuals, 2. organizations and 3. networks** to perform their functions effectively and sustainably, where “ability” refers to

- a. **Competencies/Internal Attributes:** Abilities, characteristics and competencies needed to perform functions and achieve objectives, e.g. knowledge and awareness, skills, attitudes, values, and cultural norms, and the structures and procedures that shape organizations and networks.
- b. **Resources:** Materials, services, and assets needed to perform functions and achieve objectives, e.g. data and scientific information, local and indigenous knowledge and information, finance, tools/technology, and infrastructure.
- c. **Enabling Environment:** Environmental factors that support or constrain the ability to perform functions and achieve objectives, e.g. values and cultural norms, the distribution of power and authority, the existence of social and cultural and financial incentives, legal and policy frameworks, and external demands relating to organizational structures and procedures.

**Capacity building** is defined as activities through which individuals, organizations and networks develop and enhance all three (categories a, b and c).

This project aims to build capacity among networks of actors with a management remit in ABNJ, for:

- **cooperation**, whereby organizations with different interests and mandates exchange relevant information with each other, and align their independent actions to achieve common goals relating to the protection of biodiversity and sustainable resource use in ABNJ, and
- **coordination**, whereby organizations create overarching structures or mechanisms that integrate and harmonize actions across multiple mandates, to improve protection of biodiversity and sustainable resource use in ABNJ.

## The “How”

The project has two components. Component 1 centers on a capacity building program for **competencies / internal attributes** (category a.) of actor networks within the pilot regions, with particular emphasis on mechanisms (structures and processes) for improved cooperation and coordination. Component 2 centers on the development of **resources** (category b.) for actor networks to draw upon to improve cooperation and coordination. Specifically, it centers on **knowledge resources**.

The ultimate aim of the project is to improve **network-level capacity** (level 3). In practice, this can only be done by engaging and building relevant capacities at level 1 (individual) and level 2 (organization), for example, by building of soft skills needed for creating effective networks (e.g., stakeholder engagement, communication, leadership), and related technical skills (e.g., stakeholder mapping, integrated ocean management, etc.). The “how” of this project can therefore be visualized as a stepwise process of capacity building from the individual to the network level, illustrated by the figure below.

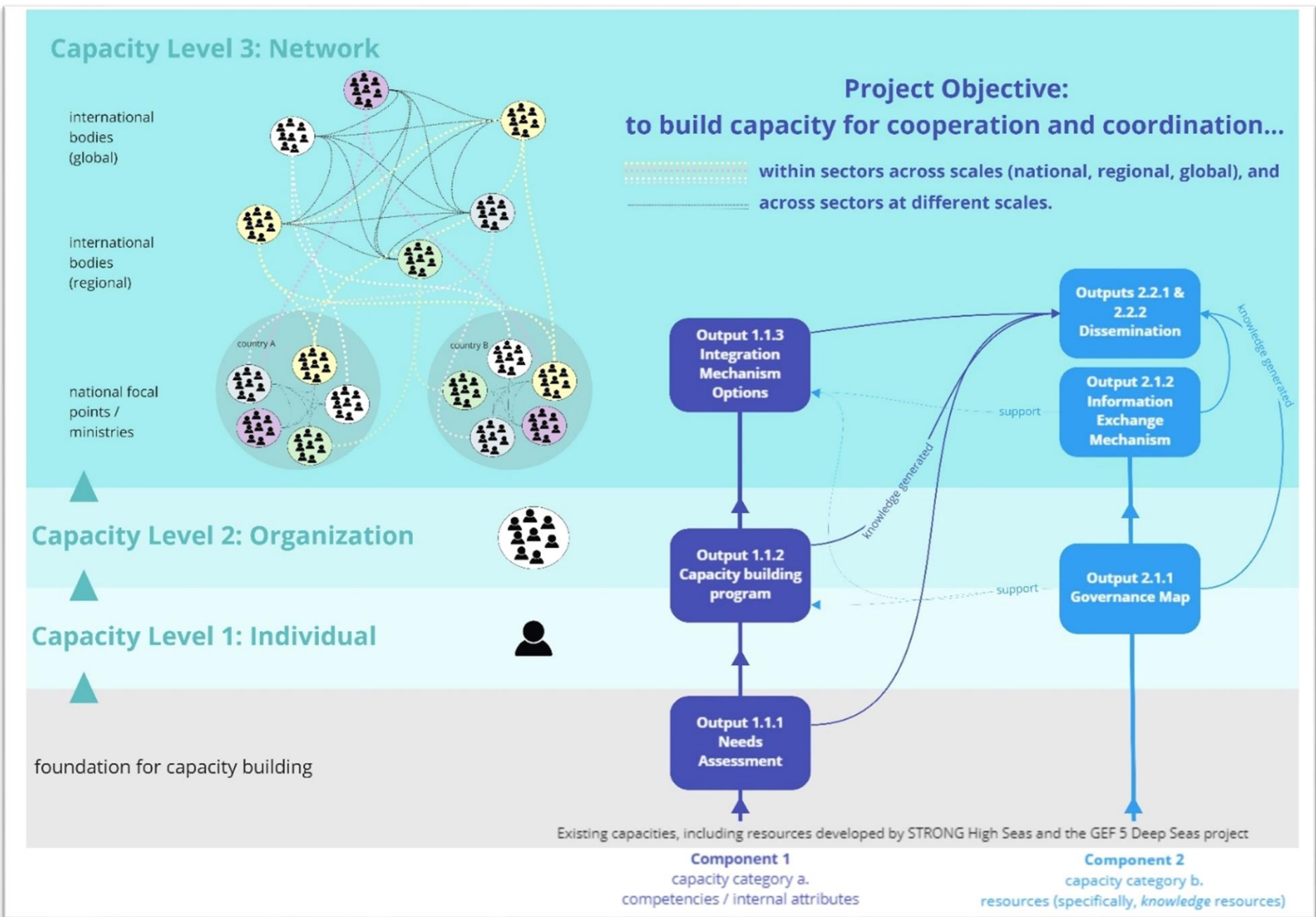


Figure: Illustration of the project design

## The “Who”

The project organogram (provided separately) shows an overview of key project partners, i.e. those who have committed to co-financing the project, act as project advisers, implement project activities, sit on the project steering committee, etc. (a full list of all stakeholders and co-financiers is included in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** and Appendix 11 of the project proposal).

These are not the same as the actor networks whose capacity the project will focus on building (although there is a lot of overlap – for example, the CPPS is a project partner as well as a key management body within the network of actors with interests and remits in managing the south-east Pacific).

One of the project activities in component 2 will be to develop a comprehensive database of these actor networks for the two pilot regions and create an accessible and user-friendly searchable interface for that database. “**Actor**” can refer to an individual or an organization, while “**actor network**” refers to multiple actors (from multiple organizations) and the structures, mechanisms and processes that exist to facilitate cooperation and coordination between them.

The actor networks in this project include:

- national and international organizations who manage human activities within ABNJ in the pilot regions
  - national ministries that act as focal points for multilateral treaties and agreements that regulate activities in ABNJ (requiring cooperation and coordination at a national level);
  - international bodies that act as a coordinator across the national focal points for a given regional or global treaty or agreement (e.g., secretariats of regional seas organizations or regional fisheries management organizations)
- knowledge holders who may have no formal management remit, e.g. non-state actors including academic bodies, indigenous peoples and local communities (requiring effective knowledge exchange mechanisms with actors who have management powers).

Where several organizations manage different activities in the same sector, this requires *sectoral* cooperation and coordination. Where several organizations each have independent remits in different sectors, this requires *cross-sectoral* cooperation and coordination.

The project aims to improve capacity for sectoral and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination of actor networks in the pilot regions. These actor networks include any actor whose geographic remit falls within or intersects with the pilot regions (i.e. global management bodies are included).



## 2. Project Level Decision Making for the Cross-Sectoral Project

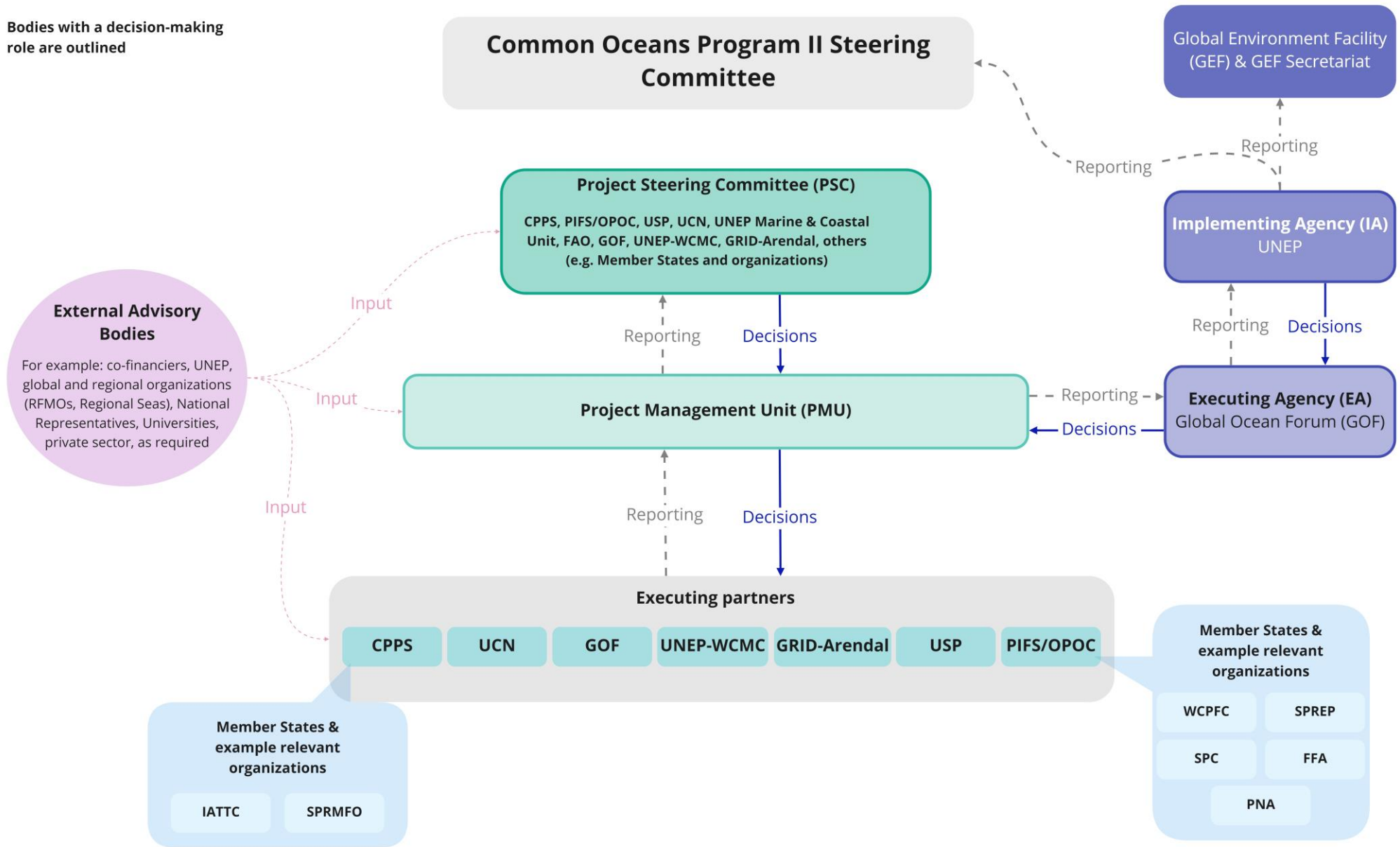
### Background

The overall project governance and internal communication flows within the ABNJ Cross Sectoral project are detailed in Figure 1 below. The general oversight of project activities will be undertaken by the **Project Steering Committee (PSC)**, which will allow project-level communication between the **Executing Partners**, the **Project Management Unit (PMU)**, the **Executing Agency (EA)** and the **Implementing Agency (IA)** (UNEP). The PMU will undertake the day-to-day functions of the project, including maintaining communication between all parties in the project. At the regional level, project activities and interventions will be undertaken by **Executing partners** including Secretariats of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) and Pacific Island Forum (PIF), University of South Pacific (USP), the Northern Catholic University (UCN), GRID-Arendal, Global Ocean Forum (GOF) and UNEP-WCMC.

Acting in the role as the main project authority, the PSC will provide strategic guidelines and decision making for overall execution. The PSC will establish the execution baselines, consider and approve annual work plans, budgets, technical and financial reports, as well as final reports.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible for organizing the PSC and compiling the minutes of the meeting for approval by PSC members. The day-to-day administration of the project will be handled by the Project Management Unit under the direction of the Executing Agency. This will ensure conformity with UNEP and GEF's requirements.

Bodies with a decision-making role are outlined



### 3. Theory of change for the Cross-Sectoral Project and connections to Common Oceans Program

The outcomes of this project as illustrated in the Project's Theory of Change in Figure 1 below will have a flow-on, or 'domino', effect whereby they contribute towards the GEF-7 Common Oceans ABNJ Program's Theory of Change. The connections between the project and outputs in the program level Theory of change presented in Figure 2 includes symbols to represent the points of interconnection towards the long-term impact.

Contributions to the GEF-7 Common Oceans Program are anticipated as follows:

- *Program medium-term outcome 3* - The formation of comprehensive, well-informed processes that achieve ecosystem goals in ABNJ which have coordinating mechanisms between relevant actors;
- *Program medium-term outcome 5* – Increase public and private sector awareness, understanding, support and investment for sustainable management of ABNJ;
- *Program medium-term outcome 7* – Effective and sustainable cross-sectoral governance of natural resources in ABNJ;
- *Program medium-term outcome 8* - Adaptive, coordinated, sustainable management of ABNJ resources following an Ecosystem Approach.

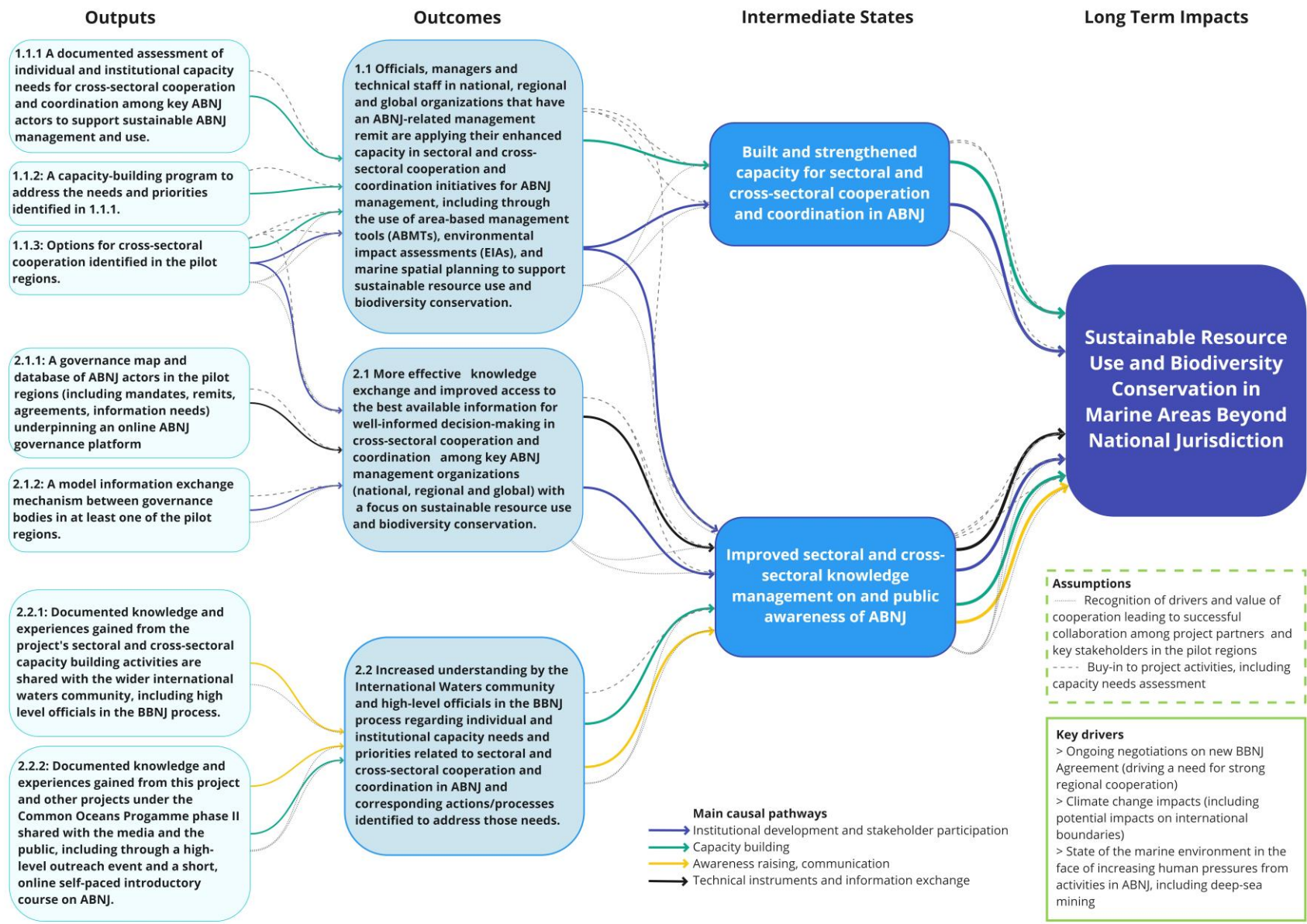


Figure 1. Theory of Change for GEF-7 Common Oceans ABNJ Program

# Connections to Program-level Theory of Change

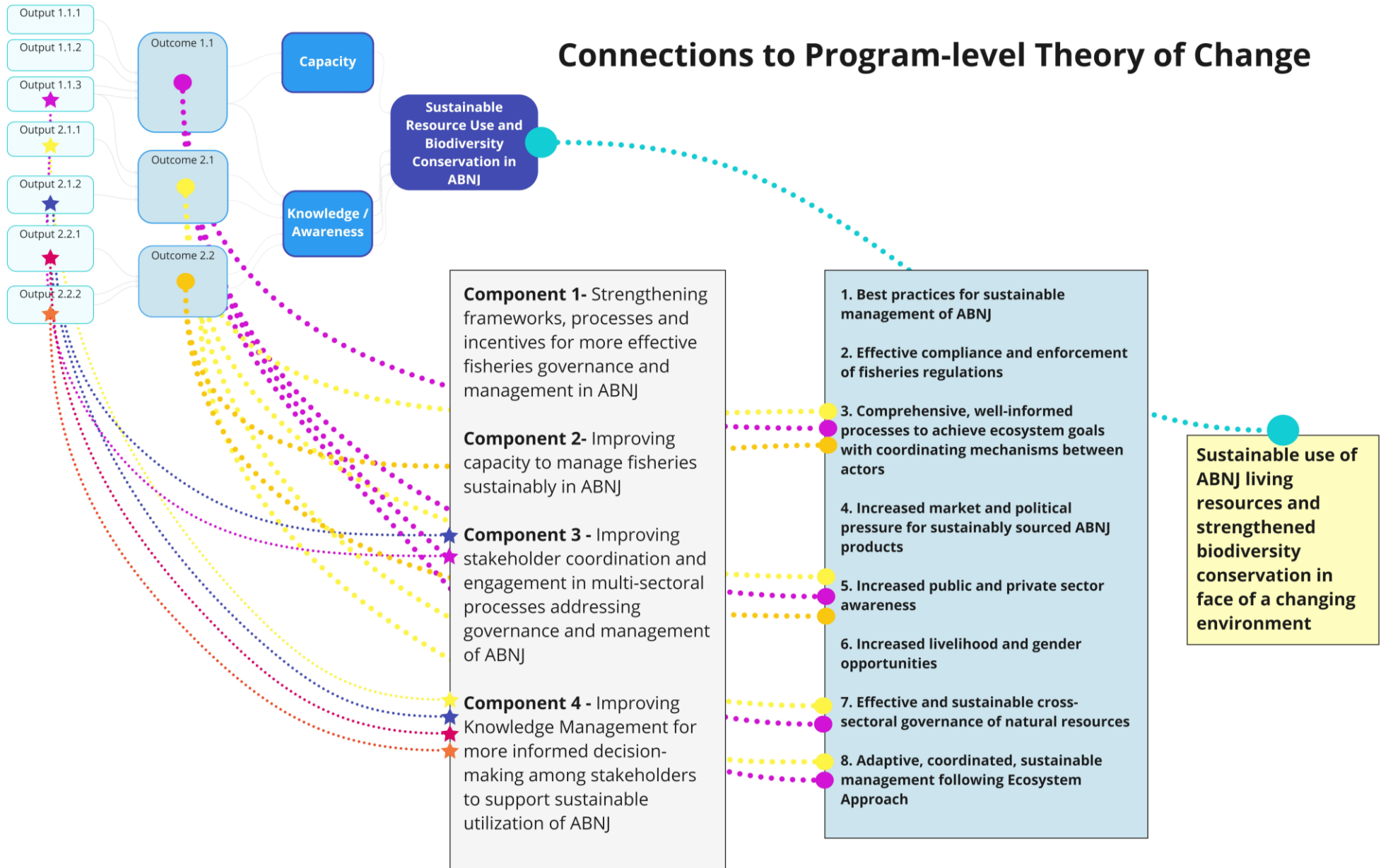


Figure 2. Connections of project with Program level Theory of Change