FINAL EVALUATION

THIRD SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN FISHERIES GOVERNANCE AND SHARED GROWTH PROJECT (SWIOFish3)

SEYCHELLES

Final Report

Dr. Julien BANDIAKY
Macroeconomist, Public Finances and Statistics Expert

October 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviations 6

Executive Summary 8

Introduction 16

I. Objectives of the evaluation 18

II. Methodology 18

II.1 Key Informant Interviews 18

II.2 Secondary Data Review 18

II.3 Data analysis 18

II.4 Rating 18

III. Project performance assessment 21

III.1 Relevance 21

III.1.1 Project development objective 22

III.1.2 Project design 26

III.2 Effectiveness 30

III.2.1 Project's implementation 30

III.2.2 Achievement of PDO-level and Intermediate level indicators targets 59

III.2.3 Beneficiaries 64

III.2.4 Factors during preparation 66

III.2.5 Factors during implementation 67

III.3 Efficiency 68

III.3.1 Timeliness 69

III.3.2 Cost-benefit analysis 70

III.4 Sustainability 76

III.4.1 Financial sustainability 76

III.4.2 Strengthening of capacities 78

III.4.3 Ownership and sustainability of partnerships 79

III.4.4 Risks to development outcome 82

III.5 Impacts 83
III.5.1 Gender 83
III.5.2 Youth 83
III.5.3 Institutional strengthening 84
III.5.4 Mobilizing private sector financing 84
III.5.5 Environment 84
III.5.6 Social 85
IV. Performance of stakeholders 86
IV.1 Performance of the World Bank 86
IV.2 Performance of the Government 87
IV.2.1 Coordination, Cooperation, and fiduciary arrangements 87
IV.2.2 Effectiveness of the M&E System 88
IV.2.3 Performance of the Blue Bond placement 89
IV.3 Performance of the Blue Grants Fund 89
IV.4 Performance of the Blue Investment Fund 94
IV.5 Performance of the Beneficiaries 96
V. Analysis of the Mid-Term Evaluation Recommendations 100
VI. Lessons learned and recommendations. 102
Conclusion 112
Bibliography 113
Annex 1: Terms of Reference and Scope of Services 115
Annex 2: Evaluation Framework 120
Annex 3: Key Informants Guide 128
Annex 4. List of persons interviewed 133

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Theory of change (Results Chain) 27
Figure 2: Evolution of cumulative disbursement rates by year 2018-2024, in percent. 70
Figure 3: Breakdown of the funds awarded by SWIOFish3 component in percent. 90
Figure 4: Breakdown of the number of projects funded by type of beneficiaries. 91

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Rating methodology of the evaluation 19
Table 2: Activities implemented under component 1 32
Table 3: Activities implemented under component 2 40
Table 4: Activities implemented under component 3 50
Table 5: Activities implemented under component 4 57
Table 6: Assessment of Achievement under each PDO-level and Intermediate Indicators. 59
Table 7: Capacity building activities undertaken 64
Table 8: Progress in meeting covenants of the project 69
Table 9: Summary of Project finance allocations and expenditures by component as of end June 2024 71
Table 10: Significantly delayed activities 74
Table 11: Key risks to sustainability and mitigation measures 82
Table 12: Numbers of BGF projects funded by Blue Bond proceeds by call for proposals, grant size and SWIOFish3 component. 90
Table 13. Recommendations of the mid-term evaluation and achievements 100
Table 14. Key Lessons Learned and recommendations. 102
Table 15. Overall project final evaluation rating 112

LIST OF BOXES

Box 1: Beneficiaries point of view on the alignment of the intervention with the Government's national development strategy. 23
Box 2: Beneficiaries point of view on the alignment of the intervention with their needs. ... 24

Box 3: Beneficiaries point of view on the appropriateness of the proposed solutions for the identified problems. 25
Box 4: Beneficiaries point of view on the activities of the project that had the greatest effects. 58
Box 5: Beneficiaries point of view on the results achieved by the project. 62
Box 6: Beneficiaries point of view on the adequacy of the funding to meet their needs. 71
Box 7: Beneficiaries point of view on the benefits brought by the project. 71
Box 8: Beneficiaries point of view on the linkages of the project with other supports. 73
Box 9: Beneficiaries point of view on the experienced bottlenecks. 75
Box 10: Beneficiaries point of view on the mechanisms that have been put in place ensuring continued financing of remaining activities or upcoming program of activities. .. 77
Box 11: Beneficiaries point of view on the strengthened capacities brought by the project. 78
Box 12: Beneficiaries point of view on the mechanisms in place guarantying ownership of the project activities. 80
Box 13: Beneficiaries point of view on the partnerships developed during project's implementation. 81
Box 14: Beneficiaries point of view on the environmental impact of the project 85
Box 15: Beneficiaries point of view on the social impacts of the project 85
Box 16: Case study of a project under component 1 of the SWIOFish3 financed through the Blue Grants Fund 96
Box 17: Case study of a project under component 2 of the SWIOFish3 financed through the Blue Grants Fund 97
Box 18: Case study of a project under component 3 of the SWIOFish3 financed through the Blue Grants Fund 99

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AWPB	Annual Work Plan Budgeted
BE	Blue Economy
BGF	Blue Grants Fund
BIF	Blue Investment Fund
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
CPUE	Catch per Unit Effort
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DBE	Department of Blue Economy
DBS	Development Bank of Seychelles
DOE	Department of Environment
DOF	Department of Fisheries
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
ESIA	Environment and Social Impact Assessment
ESMS	Environment and Social Management System
E&S	Environment and Social
EU	European Union
FEIU	Fisheries Economic Intelligence Unit
FIMS	Fisheries Information Management System
FiTI	Fisheries Transparency Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoS	Government of Seychelles
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICCP	The committee for the Mahé Plateau Line and Trap Fishery Co-Management Plan
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IDC	Islands Development Company
IMTA	Integrated Multi-Tropic Aquaculture
IPF	Investment Project Financing
MACCE	Ministry of Agriculture Climate Change and Environment
MCS	Monitoring Control and Surveillance
MDAs	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MFBE	Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy
MFNPT	Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade
MPAs	Marine Protected Areas
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRCA	Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PDO	Project Development Objective
PHFL	Post-harvest fish Losses
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PO	Policy Objectives
PPP	Public Private Partnership
R&D	Research and Development
SC	Steering Committee
SCR	Seychelles Rupee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDS	Sustainable Development Strategy
SeyCCAT	Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust
SFA	Seychelles Fisheries Authority
SIH	Syntème d'Information Halieutique
SMSP	Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan
SNDS	Seychelles National Development Strategy
SPDF	Seychelles People Defense Forces
STEP	Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement
SWIO	South West Indian Ocean
SWIOFish	South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOC	Theory of Change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3) was approved by the World Bank Board on 29 September 2017. The project development objective is to improve management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones and strengthen fisheries value chains in the Seychelles. This objective was to be achieved through the following four mutually reinforcing components: Component 1. Expansion of sustainable-use marine protected areas; Component 2. Improved governance of priority fisheries; Component 3. Sustainable development of the blue economy; and Component 4. Project management and coordination.

The objectives of the final evaluation were to: (i) review and report on progress made against the project development's objectives and results outlined in the SWIOFish3 project document and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework; (ii) report on challenges faced by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in successfully implementing the project; (iii) take stock of SWIOFish3 project's achievements; (iv) review activities and analyse the extent to which their outcomes have accomplished planned targets; and (v) provide lessons learned and recommendations (both technical and operational) for similar projects. It assessed issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of the project and its results, impact, performance of project key stakeholders mainly the World Bank and the government, and draws lessons learned and recommendations for the way forward.

The evaluation was participative involving all project's stakeholders: beneficiaries, implementation agencies, and project implementation unit. Key representatives of the stakeholders were interviewed using the key informants guide presented in annex 3. The following paragraphs present the results of the evaluation which includes the views of the stakeholders on the project. The evaluation concludes that the project was a success with an overall satisfactory rating.

Relevance

The relevance of the project is rated High.

The project was prepared in line with the objective of the Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023 for the fisheries sector which is "to turn Seychelles from a mainly fisheries transshipment hub to the primary seafood processing center of the Indian Ocean" and the Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020 which highlights fisheries and marine resources as key pillars of development. The project is also consistent with two key sector policies namely: (i) the 2005 Fisheries Policy whose long-term policy objective was "the promotion of sustainable and responsible fisheries development and optimisation of the benefits from this sector for the present and future generations."; and (ii) the 2019 Fisheries Policy which goal is "To provide effective, efficient, transparent and accountable service delivery through a participatory approach to ensure long-term sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management and conservation so that the sector continues to play a key role in the sustainable development of the country and the socio-economic well-being of the Seychellois nation."

In addition, it is closely aligned with the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (2012-2015) and the 2017 Systematic Country Diagnostic (report number 114289-SC, dated June 23, 2017) by reducing vulnerability, building long-term sustainability, and focusing on a sector in which the World Bank Group has a long-term and regional engagement. The project is also aligned with the first focus area of the Country Partnership Framework 2018-2023, "Growth for Shared

Prosperity". The two objectives under this focus area seek, first, to retool the core economy (fisheries and tourism) for sustainability and inclusion, along the lines of the flagship program of the Government on the "Blue Economy"; and, second to strengthen management and resilience of natural endowments which is critical to ensuring that the growth path is sustainable both from the viewpoint of the preservation of resources as well as resilience to natural shocks.

The beneficiaries found that the project responded to their needs and the proposed solutions are appropriate. The interventions are logical and strategically linked. The project targeted two main outcomes: (i) improved management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones; and (ii) strengthened fisheries value chains in the Seychelles. It supported the Government of Seychelles in achieving its dual objectives of marine resources conservation and expansion of the seafood value chains. Seafood value chains are a cornerstone of the country's blue economy strategy, and their expansion is expected to deliver long-term, resilient growth, jobs, and food security. The solid project design has been key in monitoring and assessing progress of the project results, which allowed the Bank a certain flexibility regarding adjustments to ensure achievement of the project objectives.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project is rated Substantial.

The project has supported the establishment and management of sustainable-use marine protected areas as part of the Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning Initiative (SMSP). The Project has supported activities that have contributed to the extension and management of Seychelles' protected area system, which was expanded to cover 30% of the EEZ in early 2020. The management plans for those three sustainable-use zones namely Amirantes to Fortune Bank Sustainable Use Area, Cosmoledo and Astove Sustainable Use Area and Farquhar Sustainable Use Area have been finalised. Support to the finalisation and adoption of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan, including its governance structures, and more recently to its implementation, has been a major focus of the project. Significant progress has been made in strengthening the enabling environment for a transition to sustainable fisheries across the policy, legal and institutional domains with improved governance. In parallel, several activities have been implemented that aim to provide robust information and fisheries statistics for decision-making, including stock assessments and a series of sequential improvements to SFA's fisheries data collection and management systems.

The project focused also on promoting sustainable fisheries value chains as core objective of Seychelles' Blue Economy agenda and roadmap. Activities included capacity building and studies in support of blue economy investment opportunities, seafood brand development and marketing, human capital needs assessment and studies of market incentives for sustainable seafood. Gender issues and labour conditions in the blue economy sector have been addressed through a study of gender assessment of blue economy, employment study and human capacity needs assessment for the fisheries sector, policies and standards to improve recruitment and retention of local crew and skippers. National laboratories important for developing seafood value chains and certifying that seafood products meet international standards have been equipped.

Eighty (80) percent (four out of five) of the project targets on the PDO-level indicators have been reached. In addition, fifty (50) percent (five out of ten) of the intermediate-level indicators have been reached. Boundaries of sustainable-use MPAs have been designated. The governance structure for managing those new designated areas was set up and became operational

in 2023. All species and relevant species groups were characterized by stable or increasing CPUE trends. Results from the Perception Survey undertaken in 2022, highlights that about 70% of all the respondents, 69% of female, and 73% of Male rated Fisheries Management and Ocean Management as satisfactory.

The report provides detailed description of the achievements by components and sub-components. It includes also detailed assessment on the achievements of the PDO-level and Intermediate Indicators and the results of the capacity building activities.

Efficiency

The efficiency of the project is rated Substantial.

The project was approved by the World Bank Board on 29 September 2017 and became effective on 16 April 2018 (7 months after approval). Given the delays in implementing some of the activities and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project closing date was extended to allow completion of the activities. The estimated 69 months duration of the project (29 September 2017- 30 June 2023) was extended to 81 months (29 September 2017- 28 June 2024).

The project's total cost was estimated at US$25.29 million. The activities were going to be financed using proceeds from: (i) a US$5 million loan from IBRD; (ii) a US$5.29 million grant from GEF; and (iii) an up to US$15 million Blue Bond placement (which in turn will be supported by an up to US$5 million IBRD guarantee and a US$5 million concessional loan from GEF Non-Grant Instrument Pilot). At the end of June 2024, the following performances were noted: (i) the disbursement rate on the IBRD loan is 95.8 percent; (ii) the disbursement rate on the GEF grant is 99.6 percent; (iii) the disbursement rate on the Blue Grant Fund managed by SeyCATT is 100 percent; and (iv) the disbursement rate on the Blue Investment Fund managed by DBS is 100 percent.

The beneficiaries identified the following main benefits from the project:

- Bridged knowledge gap in some specific areas namely on maritime boundaries and ocean governance, fisheries assessment and management, fisheries data collection and management, aquaculture management, sustainability, and business development, environmental and social safeguards.
- Communication, technical tools and equipment were acquired.
- Enhanced positive public image of Seychelles for pursuing and following through with this innovative project, that improves the country's track record and opens up new opportunities for other related collaboration and assistance.
- Facilitated advancement of Seychelles' blue economy endeavours.
- The project provided significant financial support to Seychelles towards the development of its aquaculture sector. This funding facilitated the implementation of various initiatives aimed at enhancing aquaculture production, infrastructure, and capacity building, research and innovation, policies and regulations. The project funding supported initiatives to develop domestic and international markets for Seychellois aquaculture products.

- In the fisheries sector, the project led to streamlined processes, better data consistency, improved Data Integrity, elimination of Redundancy by different Departments, easier data Sharing.
- The project contributed towards the SMSP process and other national initiatives

Sustainability

The sustainability of the project is rated Substantial.

The financial sustainability of the project is rated Modest. Plan, Policy and strategy documents have been elaborated and contain action plans which require resources to be implemented. There is need for continued financial support from development partners and the Government over the medium-term. However, the project led to strengthened capacities. It helped to address human, physical, and institutional capacity constraints and weaknesses through developing instruments that will sustain systems and capacity improvements beyond the lifespan of the project. In the area of capacity building, the project financed training and technical assistance which produced tangible results and guarantee the sustainability of the project's achievements.

The project preparation and appraisal process has benefited from a multi-stakeholder consultation with Government Departments, business community and development partners. The consultations with the stakeholders continued during project implementation through the project's steering committee with representatives of the beneficiaries and the world Bank supervision missions. In the fisheries sector, collaborative platforms facilitated dialogue and knowledge sharing among stakeholders, fostering cooperation and collective action. Policy frameworks were developed or revised to integrate sustainable practices, ensuring alignment with national priorities and international standards. To ensure long-term sustainability, measures were put in place including institutionalization of policies, continuous capacity building, robust monitoring and evaluation, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement to maintain ownership and relevance of the changes implemented. However, existing risks can hamper/undermine the sustainability of the results achieved: (i) Slow disbursement of the Blue Investment Fund; (ii) No frequent surveillance trips in sustainable-use marine protected areas; (iii) Fisheries Information Management System not functional because of high turnover of trained staff and lack of a database administrator; (iv) Fisheries economic intelligence information not publicly accessible; and (v) Limited funding.

Impacts

The impacts of the project are rated Substantial.

Gender dimension has been considered through a Gender assessment which offers a comprehensive analysis of gender dynamics within the Seychelles Blue Economy, providing valuable insights to inform policies aimed at achieving gender equality in the sector. In addition, the project supported capacity building activities taking into consideration gender aspects. Youth involvement has been considered through the promotion of youth participation in economic opportunities within the Blue Economy sector, Marine Scholarship Programme, and Capacity building on aquaculture.

The project led to institutional changes. It supported the strengthening of the fisheries sector institutions. The key activities, among others, were: (i) Revision of Fisheries Act (2014) and

regulations (Fisheries regulations for management measures of the Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan); (ii) Development of the 2019 fisheries sector policy; (iii) Preparation of policy and legal framework for beneficial ownership and joint ventures; (iv) Institutional policy and structure of SFA (Performance management system; SFA Board support for strategic plan to guide organizational restructuring).

The project helped to mobilize private sector financing. The Government of Seychelles, World Bank and partners launched the Blue Bond on October 29th, 2018, which raised US$15 million from international investors (Calvert Impact Capital, Nuveen and U.S. Headquartered Prudential Financial, Inc.) to support marine conservation, a transition to sustainable fisheries and investment in the blue economy.

The project had great impact on the environment. Through its first component, the project supported activities that have contributed towards the expansion and management of Seychelles' protected area network, which was expanded to cover 30% of the EEZ in March 2020. The boundaries of the sustainable-use MPAs have been designated and management plans for those sustainable-use areas have been finalised. The governance structure for managing those new designated areas was also set up and became operational in 2023. In addition, among others, the project helped to elaborate a coral reef conservation policy in 2022 along with its action plan for implementation and develop a harvest strategy policy and management standards for Seychelles fisheries and sustainable use MPAs in May 2022. An Environmental and Social specialist was recruited under the project and environment and social impact assessments (ESIAs) were conducted on projects submitted for financing through the Blue Grants Fund and the Blue Investment Fund.

The project generated positive social impacts. The project generated employment opportunities, contributing to poverty reduction and improved livelihoods for local communities. By involving local stakeholders in project activities such as training programs and collaborative platforms, the project fostered a sense of ownership and empowerment, strengthening social cohesion and resilience. For all ESIA funded under the project (either for BGF and BIF), mitigation measures for the associated risks were identified with clear monitoring guidelines. This includes ESIA for the Aquaculture project on Coetivy island and the land designated for fish processing on Ile Du Port. The project helped to involve fishermen, by involving the fishermen associations representative in stakeholder's consultation to get their valuable insights on what is happening in the fisheries sector especially areas where data/information is lacking. A Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) was in place.

Performance of the World Bank

The performance of the World Bank is rated Satisfactory.

During the project's preparation, the World Bank held discussions with the beneficiaries and Government officials to identify their needs. Services provided by the World Bank supported effective project's implementation. The project's supervision and reporting were adequate. During supervision missions, the World Bank's team made concrete recommendations which led the Government to take the necessary corrective measures in time for satisfactory implementation of the project. The World Bank communication with the PIU was highly effective. The successive task managers maintained very good relationship with all the coordinators and were very helpful. The World Bank's team provided continuous support and guidance. There was a positive attitude towards providing effective support to Seychelles which was felt throughout the project even

through handing over to new staff along the way. E&S training were provided on many occasions throughout the lifespan of the project to the E&S specialist as well as to project implementation partners and project beneficiaries. The World Bank staff delivered training on E&S safeguards to eighteen (18) participants from the DBS, SeyCCAT, DOE, DOF, DBE, SFA, DFA, and PIU. They also provided procurement training to all the implementing agencies on how to draft a TOR, introduction to WB procurement system and so on.

Performance of the government

The performance of the government is rated Satisfactory.

Strong government ownership, a well-functioning PIU, coordination. Cooperation, and a participatory approach to project implementation were all elements that contributed to the success of the project. The PIU has supported the operations of DBS and SeyCCAT in their implementation of the BIF and BGF. It coordinated key processes such as ensuring eligibility with Project frameworks, undertaking environmental and social screenings, and supporting monitoring and evaluation. The M&E system was effective. A well-designed Results Framework supported the M&E system. A core set of PDO indicators and intermediate indicators with baselines and targets was agreed on with the Government during project preparation. The PIU maintained communication channels and met regularly with implementing partners, who also contributed by providing information for the compilation of the quarterly reports. The Project has largely met its quarterly reporting intervals since effectiveness and reports were disseminated to partners, the SC, the World Bank and Blue Bond investors.

Performance of the Blue Bond placement

The performance of the Blue Bond placement is rated Highly Satisfactory.

The Government of Seychelles, World Bank and partners announced the launch of the World's first sovereign Blue Bond on October 29th, 2018. The innovative financial transaction, which concluded earlier that month of October, raised US$15 million from international investors (Calvert Impact Capital, Nuveen and U.S. Headquartered Prudential Financial, Inc.) to support marine conservation, a transition to sustainable fisheries and investment in the blue economy under the framework of SWIOFish3. Disbursement of the proceeds of the Blue Bond to SeyCCAT and DBS, to capitalise the BGF and BIF, respectively, began in 2019.

Performance of the Blue Grants Fund

The performance of the Blue Grants Fund is rated Satisfactory.

The Blue Grants Fund (BGF) is one of the flagship grant programs of SeyCCAT. It was launched by SeyCCAT in 2017 using proceeds of the debt restructuring deal ($21.6m), with the 1st call for proposals issued earlier that year. Subsequently, the 2nd (2018), 3rd (2019), 4th (2020), 5th (2021), 6th (2022), 7th (2023) and 8th (2024) calls for proposals made available Blue Bond proceeds through the BGF.

Since its inception, the BGF has funded 87 projects and allocated a total of SCR 63,094,126.24 (approx. USD 4.7 million) across all 5 strategic objectives and funding streams. The number of BGF applications received by SeyCCAT has increased over time as communication and awareness of the fund developed. Grants have been awarded to a wide range of civil society organisations, academic institutions, MDAs, businesses, and individuals. Out of this global figure,

SeyCCAT has financed 48 projects using Blue Bond proceeds (12 small size, 15 medium size, and 21 large size) from the 2nd to the 7th call for proposals.

The 8th Cycle was launched on April 15, 2024, with a 6-week application window. BGF 8 accepted applications for projects supporting any of the three strategic objectives. A total of 51 applications were received during this call for proposals. The proposals are currently under review by the Grants Committee. Decisions are expected to be finalized by December 2024, and successful applicants will be notified by January 2025. SeyCCAT expects to fully utilize the remaining blue bond funds in the 8th cycle.

Performance of the Blue Investment Fund

The performance of the Blue Investment Fund is rated Unsatisfactory.

Following the conclusion of the Blue Bond transaction in late 2018, the BIF was formally, launched in April 2019. The BIF uses 80% of the Blue Bond proceeds (US$12 million). Unlike the BGF, which had been launched by SeyCCAT prior to bond issuance, DBS required time to establish their internal operations for the BIF, while additional time was beneficial in allowing finalisation of a communication campaign and the conclusion of a study on value chains that informed the eligible activities under the fund. At project closure, five complete loan applications have been made to the BIF and has been submitted to the PIU for eligibility check.

The following obstacles prevented the issuance of loans by the Blue Investment Fund (BIF): (i) Format of proposal invitation; (ii) Applicant eligibility; (iii) Personal contribution; (iv) Perceived complexity of application and evaluation process; (v) Initial communications for the launch and early implementation of the BIF which focused too broadly on conventional media and wider blue finance opportunities for a broad audience; (vi) Delays in the availability of land; (vii) Leasehold arrangements; (viii) delays in launching the aquaculture sector; and (ix) investment climate in Seychelles which was negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Performance of the Beneficiaries

The performance of the Beneficiaries is rated Satisfactory.

The report presents the outcomes of three successful projects financed through the Blue Grants Fund managed by SeyCCAT: (i) establishment of the first official inventory of fish species present in the shallow water marine habitats of the Alphonse Group; (ii) cost-benefit analysis of small-scale fisheries operations on Mahé Island, Seychelles conducted by the Grantee; (iii) Capacity development for sea cucumber aquaculture in Seychelles through a collaborative effort between the grantee and the Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA).

Lessons learned

Detailed lessons are presented in the report.

Key lessons learned include: (i) The project is aligned with the country' needs and priorities. This has contributed to smoothening the implementation of the project activities; (ii) The project adopted a good approach in helping the country to deal with the negative effects of climate change. Expanding the network of marine protected areas and promoting cautious management of fisheries are the two pillars of the project's ecosystem-based adaptation approach. In addition, the project helped the Seychelles diversify its economy and reduce its vulnerability to

climate change by expanding the seafood value chains; (iii) Blending conventional project financing (IBRD loan, GEF grant) with the Blue Bond proceeds, Seychelles is supporting public and private sector and civil society collaboration towards meeting shared objectives for ocean conservation, improved fisheries governance, and sustainable blue economy growth; (iv) The PIU maintained a great working relationship with the implementing organizations and interacted with them regularly. The project had environmental and social safeguards which played a key role in weeding out unsustainable projects under the BGF and avoided time wasting; (v) The capacity building activities were diverse covering multiple sectors including fisheries, aquaculture, seafood value-chain, maritime boundary delimitation, environment and social safeguards, data analysis, blue economy, financial management, and procurement. In addition, the beneficiaries were diverse including representatives from the government, civil society, NGOs, and private sector; (vi) The factors ensuring the sustainability of the project' results include the importance of stakeholder engagement and participation, the need for adaptive management approaches to address dynamic environmental and socio-economic factors, and the significance of integrating sustainable practices into policy frameworks.

Recommendations for the way forward

Detailed recommendations are presented in the report.

Key recommendations include: (i) The Government and the Bank should ensure that future project is linked to the national priorities and beneficiaries needs; (ii) To ensure better impact, the project should take a holistic approach combining marine resources protection, management, and investment leading to greater value addition of the fisheries sector and diversification; (iii) Combine conventional project financing (loan or grant) with Blue Bond proceeds for effective resource mobilization and involve the private sector and the civil society in a collaborative manner for achievement of the intended results of the project; (iv) Regularly assess project progress, identify areas for improvement, and adapt strategies based on challenges and constraints. Keep stakeholders informed and regularly assess alignment with their goals; (v) Capacity building is key for a successful project's implementation. It should be designed and conducted in close collaboration with all stakeholders; (vi) Recommendations for sustaining the project' results include fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, investing in capacity building and knowledge sharing, promoting innovation and technology adoption, and prioritizing long-term monitoring and evaluation to assess progress and adapt strategies accordingly. Additionally, emphasizing ecosystem-based management approaches and fostering resilience to climate change will be vital for ensuring the long-term sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture in the Southwest Indian Ocean region.

INTRODUCTION

- ***Country context at appraisal.***

In 2015, the Seychelles had the second highest gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa (US$27,177). The economy expanded on average by 4 percent during the period 2015-2016. The tourism sector was the major engine of growth. The population was estimated at 90,000, around 90 percent of which is located on the main island of Mahe. Unemployment rate was low and labour force participation high at 70 percent (2015). Poverty rates were low with extreme poverty estimated at 1.1 percent of the population in 2013. However, inequality was high with a GINI index of 0.46 in 2013. Households in the fisheries and agriculture sector were among the poorest. The Seychelles' comparative advantage lies with its natural capital, which were actively preserved by public policy.

- ***Sector context at appraisal.***

The project is part of the regional South-West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth (SWIOFish) Program, which adopts a regional and long-term approach to supporting the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) countries in sustainably developing their fisheries sector. The program goal is to increase the economic, social, and environmental benefits to SWIO countries for sustainable marine fisheries. The development of a national fisheries project under the SWIOFish program was informed by growing evidence of increasing resource depletion in the context of inadequate governance and regulatory structures to rebuild fish stocks and improve economic returns and profitability in the main fisheries.

The fisheries sector is the second most important sector of the Seychelles economy. Its annual contribution to GDP varies from 8 percent to 20 percent and it employs 17 percent of the total population. There is increasing evidence that the pressures exerted by the fisheries and tourism sectors on the coastal and marine natural resources are reaching unsustainable levels. Declining catch rates of the main species of fish are worrying indicators of the health of the ecosystems. Most of these pressures come from overfishing in the artisanal, recreational, and sport fishing subsectors and from an increasing environmental footprint of the tourism industry. They are particularly acute on the Mahe Plateau, where the population and economic activity are concentrated. The fisheries are open access, which impedes any action to limit the fishing effort and ensure their sustainability.

In partnership with the Nature Conservancy and in the framework of an innovative climate adaptation debt restructuring, the Seychelles pledged to protect 30 percent of its EEZ by 2020 and initiated a marine spatial planning exercise in 2014 to serve as the foundation of its sustainable blue economy strategy. This marine spatial planning exercise progressively identified and gazetted area amounting 15 percent of the EEZ to be protected as high biodiversity zones and another 15 percent to be protected as medium biodiversity zones, allowing for some sustainable economic activities – including controlled fishing (sustainable use marine protected areas). In parallel, but in the same framework, Seychelles was also developing management plans for its nearshore fisheries, including the first fisheries management plan for the Mahe Plateau, with a view to progressively transition from an open-access fishery to a more controlled fishery.

The management of the Seychelles' marine ecosystems and fisheries is hampered by insufficient financing, capacity, and incomplete legal and institutional frameworks. The newly created marine areas will benefit from a constant and indefinite revenue stream of around

US$250,000 per year from an endowment fund created with the proceeds of a debt restructuring. The total available funding will not be sufficient to effectively manage the marine areas and the fisheries of the Mahe Plateau, potentially jeopardising the achievement of their objectives. In addition, the enabling environment for marine resources management requires stronger human capacity, clear policies and strategies, and surveillance capacity. The knowledge of the environmental, social, and economic state of the fisheries is deficient and current capability for applied fisheries research is insufficient. While many of these constraints are recognized by the sector, they contribute to deficiencies in the management of small-scale fisheries and monitoring of the offshore tuna fisheries.

The potential to expand capture fishery value chains and diversify into aquaculture was long recognised in policy (The Fisheries Policy of Seychelles 2005) and the Government had invested substantially in port infrastructure, processing facilities and aquaculture sector planning in the years leading up to SWIOFish3 in support of those objectives. However, at Project inception, few new private sector investments in post-harvesting and fisheries service sectors had been realised despite the policy direction. Several of the factors recognised as constraining investment became focal areas for SWIOFish3, including capacity building and labour issues, access to affordable finance, value chain mapping and prioritisation and identification of market opportunities. In particular, the Project recognised the benefits of targeted value chain investments to build on the opportunities that would be afforded by the Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan (SMSP) and improved fisheries management, including access to sustainable seafood markets through international certification schemes.

The commitment on ocean protection and recognition of the need to improve fisheries management emerged in parallel to Seychelles' adoption of a blue economy development agenda. Launched at a summit in Abu Dhabi in 2014, the agenda was articulated in the Seychelles Blue Economy Strategic Framework and Roadmap (2018) (the 'BE Roadmap'). The country defines the blue economy as the array of economic activities that directly or indirectly take place in the ocean and coastal areas, use outputs from the ocean, and place goods and services into ocean's activities, as well as the contribution of these activities to economic growth and social, cultural and environmental wellbeing.

- ***Basic project data including financial information and project' key dates.***

The Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3) was approved by the World Bank Board on 29 September 2017 and became effective on 16 April 2018. The initial project closing date set to 30 June 2023 was extended to 28 June 2024. The project's total cost was estimated at US$25.29 million. The activities were going to be financed using proceeds from: (i) a US$5 million loan from IBRD; (ii) a US$5.29 million grant from GEF; and (iii) an up to US$15 million Blue Bond placement (which in turn will be supported by an up to US$5 million IBRD guarantee and a US$5 million concessional loan from GEF Non-Grant Instrument Pilot). The government applied part of the total amount to payments under the contract for the Final Evaluation of the project.

- ***Structure of the report***

The report is organized as follows. The first section presents the objectives of the evaluation. The second section describes the methodology used to conduct the evaluation. The third section highlights the results of the project performance assessment in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impacts. The fourth section reviews the performance

of stakeholders particularly the government and the Bank. The fifth section provides an analysis of the mid-term review evaluation recommendations. The sixth section draws the main lessons and recommendations of the review. Finally, the conclusion presents the main results of the study.

I. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The objectives of the final evaluation are to: (i) review and report on progress made against the project development's objectives and results outlined in the SWIOFish3 project document and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework; (ii) report on challenges faced by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in successfully implementing the project; (iii) take stock of SWIOFish3 project's achievements; (iv) review activities and analyse the extent to which their outcomes have accomplished planned targets; and (v) provide lessons learned and recommendations (both technical and operational) for similar projects.

Specifically, the final evaluation assesses the implementation of the SWIOFish3 in terms of its: (I) Relevance; (ii) Effectiveness; (iii) Efficiency; (iv) Sustainability; (v) Impact; (vi) Coordination and Cooperation; (vii) Effectiveness of the M&E System.

II. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was participative involving all project's stakeholders: beneficiaries, implementing agencies, project implementation unit, and World Bank staff.

II.1 Key Informant Interviews

Key stakeholders were interviewed using the key informants guide presented in annex 3. The objectives were to gather information and collect views on the project achievements, implementation challenges, lessons and recommendations, and ways for further collaboration.

II.2 Secondary Data Review

All the project related documents (project appraisal document, grant agreement, project's annual and quarterly progress reports, publications from the project, etc) were also examined to collect information such as the project objectives, justification, design, covenants, progress in implementing planned activities, project achievements, and implementation challenges.

II.3 Data analysis

All collected data from key informants was combined to draw common themes/views emerging. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of quantitative data where needed.

II.4 Rating

The following rating methodology, mainly derived from the World Bank "Bank Guidance, Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) for Investment Project Financing (IPF) Operations, December 9, 2021" was used.

Table 1: Rating methodology of the evaluation

Criteria	Rating
Relevance	4. High: There were no shortcomings or at most minor shortcomings in the relevance. 3. Substantial: There were moderate shortcomings in the relevance. 2. Modest: There were significant shortcomings in the relevance. 1.Negligible: There were severe shortcomings in the relevance.
Effectiveness	4. High: The project exceeded or fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes and outputs) or is likely to do so. 3. Substantial: The operation almost fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes and outputs) or is likely to do so. 2. Modest: The operation partly achieved (or is expected to partly achieve) its objectives (intended outcomes and outputs). 1.Negligible: The operation barely achieved or did not achieve (minimal achievement, if any) its objectives (intended outcomes and outputs).
Efficiency	4. High: Efficiency exceeds expectations. 3. Substantial: Efficiency is what would be expected. 2. Modest: Efficiency is below expectations. 1.Negligible: Efficiency is very low in comparison with both the benefits (if any) and with recognized norms in the sector.
Sustainability	4. High: Mechanisms are in place to ensure continued flow of benefits are high after project completion. 3. Substantial: Mechanisms are in place to ensure continued flow of benefits are substantial after project completion. 2. Modest: Mechanisms are in place to ensure continued flow of benefits are modest after project completion. 1.Negligible: Mechanisms are in place to ensure continued flow of benefits are negligible after project completion.

Impacts	4. High: Impacts exceed expectations. 3. Substantial: Impacts are what would be expected. 2. Modest: Impacts are below expectations. 1.Negligible: Impacts are very low in comparison to expectations.
Performance of stakeholders	6. Highly Satisfactory: There were no shortcomings in its performance. 5. Satisfactory: There were minor shortcomings in its performance. 4. Moderately Satisfactory: There were moderate shortcomings in its performance. 3. Moderately Unsatisfactory: There were significant shortcomings in its performance. 2. Unsatisfactory: There were major shortcomings in its performance. 1. Highly Unsatisfactory: There were severe shortcomings in its performance.
Overall rating	6. Highly Satisfactory: There were no shortcomings in the operation's relevance, in its effectiveness, in its efficiency, in its sustainability, in its impacts, or in the performance of stakeholders. 5. Satisfactory: There were minor shortcomings in the operation's relevance, in its effectiveness, in its efficiency, in its sustainability, in its impacts, or in the performance of stakeholders. 4. Moderately Satisfactory: There were moderate shortcomings in the operation's relevance, in its effectiveness, in its efficiency, in its sustainability, in its impacts, or in the performance of stakeholders. 3. Moderately Unsatisfactory: There were significant shortcomings in the operation's relevance, in its effectiveness, in its efficiency, in its sustainability, in its impacts, or in the performance of stakeholders. 2. Unsatisfactory: There were major shortcomings in the operation's relevance, in its effectiveness, in its efficiency, in its sustainability, in its impacts, or in the performance of stakeholders. 1. Highly Unsatisfactory: There were severe shortcomings in the operation's relevance, in its effectiveness, in its efficiency, in its sustainability, in its impacts, or in the performance of stakeholders. The Overall rating is based on the average rating of the six key dimensions mentioned above (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Impacts, and Performance of stakeholders).

III. PROJECT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

This section provides an answer to the following objectives of the evaluation which are to: (i) review and report on progress made against the project development's objectives and results outlined in the SWIOFish3 project document and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework; (ii) report on challenges faced by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in successfully implementing the project; (iii) take stock of SWIOFish3 project's achievements; (iv) review activities and analyse the extent to which their outcomes have accomplished planned targets; and (v) provide lessons learned and recommendations (both technical and operational) for similar projects.

III.1 Relevance

The relevance of the project is rated High. The relevance of the project has been re-assessed to validate the original analysis conducted during project appraisal and to consider any changes in the project design that may have been done during implementation. The assessment covers both the relevance of the development objective (or the project purpose), and the relevance of project design to achieve this objective from design/approval to completion. The relevance of development objective has been reassessed against beneficiary needs, the country's development or policy priorities and strategy, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Bank's Country Partnership Strategy at project's appraisal and completion. The relevance of design assesses the extent to which the project design adopted the appropriate solutions to the identified problems and the appropriateness of the eventual changes in the scope, implementation arrangements, and technical solutions during the life of the project.

The evaluation of the project relevance answered the following questions:

- How is the SWIOFish3 project objective aligned to the 2005 Fisheries Policy, 2019 Fisheries Policy, Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023, the Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020, the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (2012-2015), and the Country Partnership Framework (2018-2023)?
- To what extent is the intervention in line with the beneficiaries needs?
- Are the proposed solutions appropriate for the identified problems?
- Are the interventions logical and their "strategic fit" in the desired causality chain? Are the links between the project's interventions, outputs, intermediate results, and desired outcomes valid? What are the underlying assumptions?
- Is the funding approach appropriate for the intended results of the project (combination of loan from IBRD, grant from GEF; and Blue Bond placement supported by an IBRD guarantee and a GEF Non-Grant Instrument Pilot; management of the Blue Grants Fund by the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust SeyCCAT; management of the Blue Investment Fund by the Development Bank of Seychelles DBS)?
- Are the chosen partnerships appropriate to deliver on the results? To what extent are the roles of the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Blue Economy; Ministry of

Fisheries and the Blue Economy; the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment clearly articulated in the project document?

- Were there adjustments/changes during project's implementation to ensure achievement of the project objectives?

III.1.1 Project development objective

How is the SWIOFish3 project objective aligned to the 2005 Fisheries Policy, 2019 Fisheries Policy, the Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023, the Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020, the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (2012-2015), and the Country Partnership Framework (2018-2023)?

The SWIOFish3 development objective is "to improve management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones and strengthen fisheries value chains in the Seychelles". This objective was to be achieved through the following four mutually reinforcing components: Component 1. Expansion of sustainable-use marine protected areas; Component 2. Improved governance of priority fisheries; Component 3. Sustainable development of the blue economy; and Component 4. Project management and coordination.

The project is aligned with the 2005 Fisheries Policy whose long-term policy objective for the fishing industry was "the promotion of sustainable and responsible fisheries development and optimisation of the benefits from this sector for the present and future generations." It is also aligned with the 2019 Fisheries Policy. The 2019 Fisheries Policy overall goal is "To provide effective, efficient, transparent and accountable service delivery through a participatory approach to ensure long-term sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management and conservation so that the sector continues to play a key role in the sustainable development of the country and the socio-economic well-being of the Seychellois nation." This policy is structured around ten (10) policy objectives (PO). The project is aligned to the following four (4) policy objectives (PO): (i) "Good governance and institutional strengthening" where the Government tries to strengthen the fisheries institution in promoting and ensuring transparency, good governance, clear and effective, legislative framework and efficient service delivery; (ii) "Sustainable management of fisheries and climate resilience" where the Government intends to make a more concerted effort to properly manage its fisheries, including rights-based management in its artisanal and semi-industrial subsectors, and pursues a proactive and collaborative participation to advance the regional management of the main tuna species, including, inter alia, through an equitable quota and allocation system. Fisheries will be made more resilient to climate change by the incorporation of adaptation and mitigation measures within fisheries management; (iii) "Infrastructure support and value chain development" where the Government facilitates, including through Public Private Partnership (PPP), the development of onshore infrastructure connecting fishers, businesses and markets with those that support value-adding and product-development in order to increase in-country processing, improve net gain in the sector, capture more landings of the catch taken within national waters, and to increase exports consistent with international standards. Government must endeavour to promote processing and value addition (manufacturing) to propel growth in the sector."; (iv) Research and innovation in the fisheries sector and aquaculture.

In addition, the project is aligned with the Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023 and the Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020. The objective of the Seychelles

National Development Strategy for the fisheries sector is "to turn Seychelles from a mainly fisheries transshipment hub to the primary seafood processing center of the Indian Ocean". The Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020 highlights fisheries and marine resources as key pillars of development. Furthermore, the project is a key contributor to Seychelles 2015 intended Nationally Determined Contribution. It intends to reduce the vulnerability of the marine resources to uncertain impacts of climate change. Expanding the network of marine protected areas and promoting cautious management of fisheries are the two pillars of the project's ecosystem-based adaptation approach. In addition, the project intends to help Seychelles diversify its economy and reduce its vulnerability to climate change by expanding the seafood value chains. It is in line with the African Climate Change Business Plan which looks to support countries, including the Seychelles, in their adoption of climate-smart ocean economies, resulting in better adaptation to the negative effects of climate change.

It is also aligned with the objectives of the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (2012-2015) and the 2017 Systematic Country Diagnostic (report number 114289-SC, dated June 23, 2017) by reducing vulnerability, building long-term sustainability, and focusing on a sector in which the World Bank Group has a long-term and regional engagement. The project is also aligned with the first focus area of the Country Partnership Framework 2018-2023, "Growth for Shared Prosperity". The two objectives under this focus area seek, first, to retool the core economy (fisheries and tourism) for sustainability and inclusion, along the lines of the flagship program of the Government on the "Blue Economy"; and, second to strengthen management and resilience of natural endowments which is critical to ensuring that the growth path is sustainable both from the viewpoint of the preservation of resources as well as resilience to natural shocks. The SWIOFish3 project supported expanding the network of marine protected areas and promoting careful management of fisheries, using an ecosystem-based adaptation approach.

Box 1: Beneficiaries point of view on the alignment of the intervention with the Government's national development strategy.

DBE

It is significantly aligned noting the focus that Government is putting on the transition to sustainable fisheries, the development of fisheries value chains and towards efforts to adopt smarter strategies to facilitate sustainable sector development in line with environmental objectives. It is also important to highlight that the blue economy has been adopted at the level of the African Union as the continent's development pathway, hence the importance of ocean governance for the country and strategic ocean management tools such as the SMSP.

DBS

The project as far as we know was mainly to assist in developing the blue economy in making sure the money received from World Bank were use for its intended purpose for both DBS loan and the SeyCCAT grant. We believe it is in line with the Government strategy, to ensure a sustainable economy in encouraging diversification, to assist in achieving the SDG and also dealing with the issue of climate change.

SFA

The project financed activities that are more sustainable and do not have detrimental effects on the environment. I feel that this makes the SWIOFish3's objectives more aligned to that of the Government's national development strategy.

It provided the opportunity for SFA to upgrade its Fisheries data management systems which will enable decision making based on reliable fisheries statistics.

It is aligned with the sustainable fisheries development.

DOE

It addresses various ocean issues through a combination of strategies focused on sustainable fisheries management, governance improvement, and fostering shared growth.

DOF

The objective of SWIOFish3 is directly aligned with the National Development Strategy (NDS) for Fisheries, which is related to the Transformative Economic Agenda (TEA).

The Fisheries TEA is part of the second priority area for NDS in Seychelles and is related to components 2 & 3 (SWIOFish3). Further alignment relates to the sixth NDS priority area on environmental sustainability and climate change resilience with component 1 (SWIOFish3).

To what extent is the intervention in line with the beneficiaries needs?

The project is strongly aligned to the Beneficiaries needs.

Box 2: Beneficiaries point of view on the alignment of the intervention with their needs.

DBS

To a great extent. It has helped DBS to be cognisant of the social and environmental assessment which has become a norm today. We also needed the support for the assessment of the social and environment safeguard which we did not have the capacity internally.

SFA

The interventions of SWIOFish3 are very much in line with the needs of my department and programmes on aquaculture.

The intervention proved to be highly aligned with our needs. It resolved the data integration issues under the Fisheries Information Management System (FIMS) project, enhanced the accuracy and management of our data in the SIH project, and equipped our team with the skills to maintain high data quality standards.

We had the opportunity to discuss about the various projects to make sure they aligned with the goal.

DOE

The SWIOFish3 project plays a crucial role in conservation efforts which aligns with the work of the Department of Environment: (i) promotion of the conservation of marine biodiversity by implementing measures to protect key habitats, species, and ecosystems eg through the development of Management plans; (ii) strengthening of enforcement mechanisms in order to

improve monitoring and surveillance capabilities – purchasing of equipment, risk assessment for MPAs, identification of gaps in Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) etc; (iii) supporting research and data collection efforts to improve our understanding of marine ecosystems, fisheries dynamics, and the impacts of human activities on marine biodiversity for eg through the mangrove blue carbon assessment work.

DOF

The intervention relates to the strategic priorities for the sector:

- Promote fish and fish products trade through the setting up of a robust marketing strategy and branding of fish and seafood products;
- Build capacity within the fisheries industry by facilitating training opportunities for relevant actors in order to increase Seychellois stakeholding in the sector;
- To increase the value-added and diversify fish and fisheries products through a shift from primary to secondary economy, while supporting the development of an emerging sub-sector such as aquaculture;
- Improve the sustainability of fisheries-related activities through the adoption of a circular economy, with encouragement and use of by-products;
- Support the development of the Fish Processing Zone and other fisheries-related infrastructure through increased investment opportunities;
- Strengthen the organisation in order to deliver on the Department's core mandate; and
- Improve communication and enhance the visibility of the sector.

Are the proposed solutions appropriate for the identified problems?

The proposed solutions are appropriate for the identified problems.

Box 3: Beneficiaries point of view on the appropriateness of the proposed solutions for the identified problems.

DBE

The proposed solutions were in line with available data/information gathered at the time of project development. Some of the solutions are indeed appropriate, however, there are some e.g. in line with the development of the fish processing industry that did not materialize effectively as planned due to a number of reasons, some of which had nothing to do with the project itself but local circumstances and arising developments. Hence, there were some adjustments made, that helped a bit, but still some challenges persisted, that largely had to do with external factors.

SFA

The proposed solutions were appropriate. Adjustment and changes required will be additional projects to upgrade the systems or extend to other departments.

Effective communication and coordination were in place to guarantee that projects could be completed on time and effectively.

DOE

Most solutions were appropriate. However, the Department faced a number of challenges including extension of consultancies, poor delivery of deliverables which resulted in some going back and forth. Stakeholders were also not satisfied at times as the consultants failed to address their concerns. Unfortunately, we also did not manage to spend all the funds.

DOF

The majority of the solutions were appropriate; however, amendments and additional programmes were developed to adapt to changes in the sector.

The Department was able to support and undertake the following new activities that did not previously feature under the projects, for example, providing support to the Maritime Academy with educational materials, and the development of a FAD regulation which responds to environmental and social concerns.

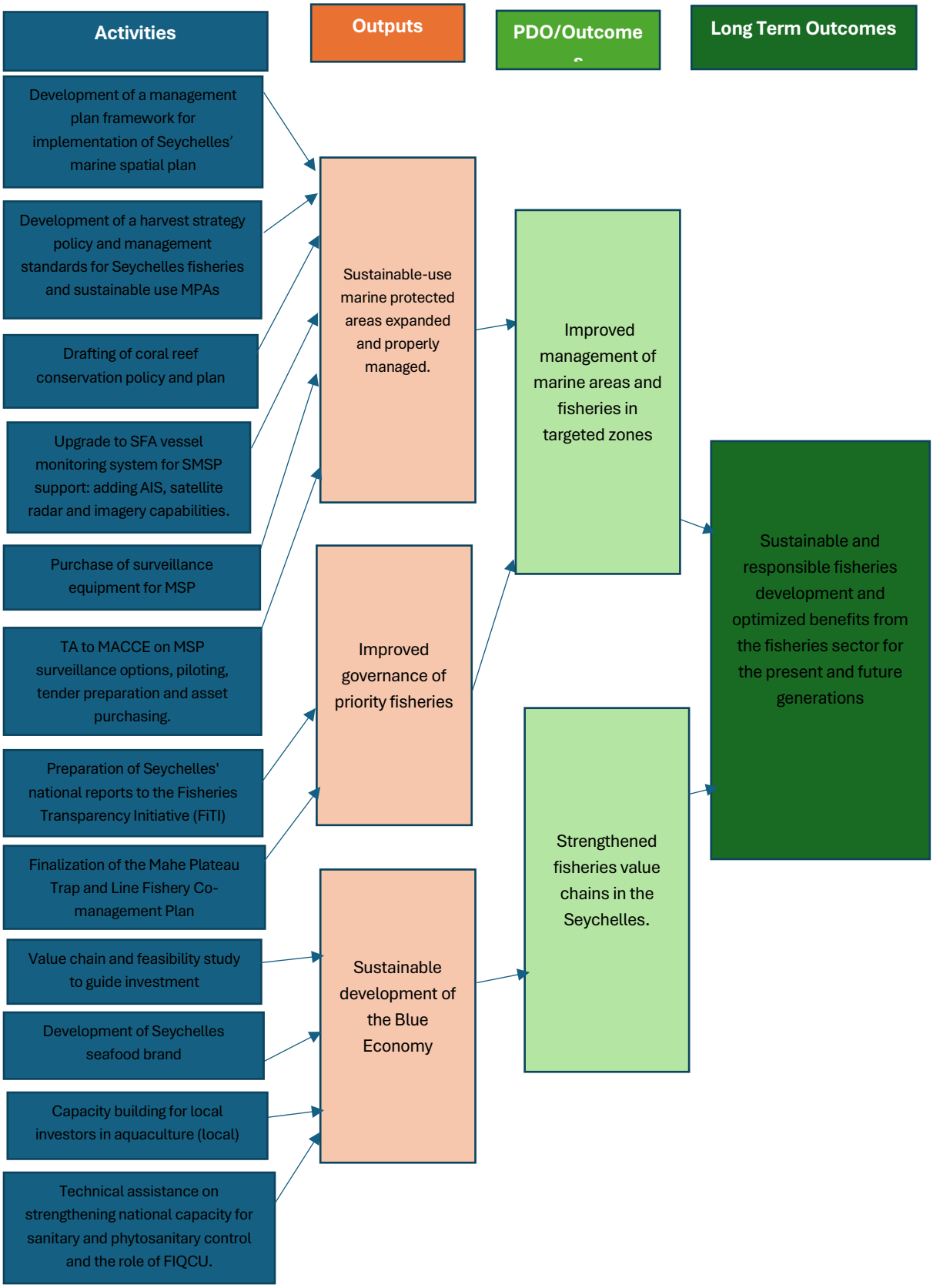
III.1.2 Project design

Are the interventions logical and their "strategic fit" in the desired causality chain? Are the links between the project's interventions, outputs, intermediate results, and desired outcomes valid? What are the underlying assumptions?

The interventions are logical and strategically linked. The PDO is to improve management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones and strengthen fisheries value chains in the Seychelles. The project targeted two main outcomes: (i) improved management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones; and (ii) strengthened fisheries value chains in the Seychelles. These outcomes contributed to the long-term objectives of the fisheries sector sets out in the 2005 fisheries policy: "the promotion of sustainable and responsible fisheries development and optimizing the benefits from this sector for the present and future generations". SWIOFish3 supported the Government of Seychelles in achieving its dual objectives of marine resources conservation and expansion of the seafood value chains. Seafood value chains are a cornerstone of the country's blue economy strategy, and their expansion is expected to deliver long-term, resilient growth, jobs, and food security. It is the focus of component 3. However, this development will not be sustainable if the marine resource base is not properly managed, which was supported by components 1 and 2. Because marine and coastal resource management will potentially translate into reduced access to the resource, component 3 tries to compensate fishers for any loss of access and foster adherence to the management measures.

The Project Appraisal Document (PAD) did not describe a Theory of Change (TOC). It is constructed ex post and has been retrofitted from the PAD, the project's Results Framework, and its detailed description. Figure 1 below presents the links between the project activities, outputs, and outcomes and its long-term expected impact. Activities under project management and coordination have an overall impact on all outcomes/objectives and contribute to the attainment of the Project Development Objective (PDO).

Figure 1. Theory of change (Results Chain)



Is the funding approach appropriate for the intended results of the project (combination of loan from IBRD, grant from GEF; and Blue Bond placement supported by an IBRD guarantee and a GEF Non-Grant Instrument Pilot; management of the Blue Grants Fund by the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust SeyCCAT; management of the Blue Investment Fund by the Development Bank of Seychelles DBS)?

The funding approach is appropriate for the intended results of the project. The Project is particularly significant and innovative because it is built around the proceeds of the Seychelles Sovereign Blue Bond, the first of its kind issued globally, and mirroring green bonds that had been placed previously, but placed with impact investors who are specifically focused on addressing ocean challenges. Blending conventional project financing (IBRD loan, GEF grant) with the Blue Bond proceeds, Seychelles is supporting public and private sector and civil society collaboration towards meeting shared objectives for ocean conservation, improved fisheries governance, and sustainable blue economy growth. While the public sector financing is strengthening the enabling environment, the loans and grants from the bond proceeds support communities and businesses to develop local solutions and benefit from opportunities for investing in sustainable value chains.

The Blue Grants Fund was administered by the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT). SeyCCAT is an independent, public-private trust fund committed to advance policies and investment around marine conservation, the blue economy, and climate change. SeyCCAT was established in 2015 to manage an innovative debt for nature restructure between the Government of Seychelles (GoS) and the Paris Club of creditors, supported by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), notably the development of a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for its 1.35 million km2 Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). SeyCCAT is currently managing over US$ 25 million in staggered long-term financing and grant projects. It seeks to strategically invest in ocean stakeholders to generate new learning, bold action, and sustainable blue prosperity in Seychelles. The Blue Grants Fund (BGF) is one of the flagship grant programs of SeyCCAT. It is capitalized by the blended proceeds of the debt-for-nature swap of $5.6 million over a course of 20 years starting from 2015 and US$3 million of the Seychelles' sovereign blue bond over a course of 6 years starting from 2018 up to 2023. Together annually, SeyCCAT aims to disburse US$700,000 as grants for projects in Seychelles that seek to achieve some strategic objectives.

The Blue Investment Fund was administered by the Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS). The Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS), established in 1977, has evolved into a leading financial institution, financing over 8,816 projects. The Blue Investment Fund (BIF) is a loan scheme developed specifically to support the expansion of sustainable fisheries' value chains in Seychelles. Loans from US$10,000 to US$ 3 million (in SCR equivalent) are offered at an affordable 4% interest rate to help scaling up businesses. Currently, the BIF focuses on the value chains of managed pelagic fisheries (tuna, billfish) and does not cover demersal fish. The BIF is capitalized with the proceeds from the world's first sovereign Blue Bond. Together with the Blue Grants Fund, the BIF is a part of the Blue Finance approach of the government to streamline innovative capital towards building a resilient blue economy in Seychelles.

Are the chosen partnerships appropriate to deliver on the results? To what extent are the roles of the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade;Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment clearly articulated in the project document?

Partnerships between key beneficiary entities of the project were appropriate for project implementation. The project was prepared and implemented jointly by the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade (MFNPT)the Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment. The MFNPT led the preparation and the implementation of the project. It had the mandate to oversee the implementation of the project and conduct its fiduciary management. The ministry was supported by the Department of Blue Economy in relation to technical coordination of the project. The other ministries were responsible for the implementation of their respective activities. The Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment was mostly involved in component 1, while the Department of Fisheries and the Seychelles Fisheries Authority led the implementation of components 2 and 3, for the most part. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) was embedded in the MFBE and worked closely with the other ministries and agencies. The PIU managed the implementation of the project under the oversight of a Steering Committee chaired by the Principal Secretary of DBE.

Were there adjustments/changes during project's implementation to ensure achievement of the project objectives?

The solid project design has been key in monitoring and assessing progress of the project results, which allowed the World Bank a certain flexibility regarding adjustments to ensure achievement of the project objectives. A project's restructuring was approved by the World Bank to extend the closing date from June 30, 2023, to June 28, 2024, for all four sources of the financing to allow completion of the activities and achievement of the PDO. The extension allowed for additional activities for each of the components. For the fisheries sector, the following activities were added: another round of stakeholder consultation and validation of the draft fisheries management plans; configuration and delivery of the server for GIS equipment; and elaboration of new surveillance solutions to be pursued by the Government for MSP surveillance. The extension would allow the project additional time needed for the purchase and fitting of the surveillance vessel, for more loans to be completed under the Blue Investment Fund, and more Blue Grants fund to be committed or disbursed to beneficiaries. It would also ensure that a larger number of sub-projects funded by blue grants fund would have concluded, supporting more robust evaluation of outcomes and impacts of the project. No changes were introduced in the E&S implementation instruments.

III.2 Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project is rated Substantial. The assessment of effectiveness evaluated the extent to which the project achieved (or is expected to achieve) its stated results, i.e. the intended set of outcomes and outputs. It provides an updated and accurate reporting of actual achievements compared to planned targets for the Project Development Objective (PDO)-level and intermediate-level indicators of the project's results framework. The assessment presents the factors, either positive or negative, that have influenced the achievement of the project outcomes. The total number of beneficiaries by categories and disaggregated by sex where relevant have been reported.

The following questions were answered:

- What project activities have been implemented? which had the greatest effects on the beneficiaries?
- What results have been achieved in terms of the PDO-level and intermediate-level indicators compared to targets?
- To what extent the project has built capacity of the beneficiaries? What is the total number of beneficiaries disaggregated by sex compared to planned targets?
- What are the key factors during the preparation stage or issues related to quality at entry that affected implementation and outcomes?
- What are the key factors during the implementation that affected implementation and outcomes? The factors may be distinguished by: (a) factors subject to the control of the government and/or implementing entities control, (b) factors subject to World Bank, and (c) factors outside the control of government and or implementing entities.

III.2.1 Project's implementation

What project activities have been implemented? which had the greatest effects on the beneficiaries?

Component 1: Expanded Sustainable-use Marine Protected Areas

The first component of the project supported the Government of Seychelles (GOS) to implement its pledge to protect an increasing share of its marine space. The project has supported the development of management plans for sustainable-use marine protected areas as part of the Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning Initiative (SMSP). The Project has supported activities that have contributed to the expansion and management of Seychelles' protected area network, which was expanded to cover 30% of the EEZ in March 2020. The management plans for some of those sustainable-use zones have been finalised. Comprising a mix of consultancy assignments and BGF-funded projects, activities undertaken ranged from policy and strategic planning, ecological and socio-economic systems research, climate change science, strengthening of surveillance assets, capacity building and educational initiatives. In parallel, SeyCCAT launched multiple calls for proposals that financed activities oriented towards the SMSP implementation (Table 2 below).

Key activities funded under this component include:

- Developing management plans for three sustainable use Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).
- Drafting of the Coral Reef Policy and strategic action plan (2022).
- Development of a harvest strategy policy and management standards for Seychelles fisheries and sustainable use MPAs.
- Upgrade to the national GIS system to support boundary limitation and the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP).
- Purchasing of surveillance equipment for better management of the Marine Protected Areas designated under the MSP..
- First use of satellite telemetry on small pelagic and abundant seabirds (juvenile Sooty Terns) to define potential Marine Protected Areas through identification of foraging areas used during the gaining of independence from their parents.

Table 2: Activities implemented under component 1

Activity	Type	Status	Beneficiaries	Outputs
Sub-component 1.1. Expansion of the sustainable-use marine protected areas.				
Development of a management plan framework for implementation of Seychelles' marine spatial plan	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Stakeholder selection/ranking of governance options; Implementation plan; draft management plan, endorsement of management plan by the Minister for MACCE
Drafting of Coral Reef Policy and strategic action plan	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Stakeholder-validated the Draft Policy and Strategic Action Plan; Policy and SAP endorsed by Cabinet of Ministers in September 2021; Implementation set for 2022-2026
Blue carbon assessment of Seychelles' mangrove ecosystems: informing MPA management and climate change policy	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Stakeholder-validated the findings and results of the assessment; Technical report and data sets submitted and endorsed
Evaluation of ecosystem goods and services for Seychelles MPA system	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	A gap analysis report and metadata file; final technical report detailing all aspects of the study, including the non-technical appendices submitted and endorsed
Study on the conservation status of threatened and protected sharks and rays to inform the management of Seychelles' protected area network	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Draft technical report and data files (including georeferenced data for sampled sites); National

				endangered sharks and rays database; Final technical report submitted and endorsed
Development of a harvest strategy policy and management standards for Seychelles fisheries and sustainable use MPAs	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Policy document; non-technical summary of the policy
Blue carbon mangrove assessment flights to outer islands	Operational Cost	Completed	DOE	Flight for consultants
Preparation of management plans for sustainable-use areas	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Draft management plans; Stakeholder consultations reports
Preparing national boiler plate text for management plans	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Text for the management plans submitted and endorsed
Capacity building and training for DBE on boundary delimitation	Training	Completed	DBE	The training enhanced the capacity and confidence of 20 Blue Economy key stakeholders, to finalize the outstanding negotiations and maritime boundary with Madagascar.
Support for bilateral negotiations on boundary delimitation	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	1 bilateral negotiation and discussion conducted between Madagascar and Seychelles in the year 2022.
Sensitization and communication activities on boundary delimitation (video-presentations)	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	One video completed.
Upgrade to the national GIS system to support boundary limitation and the MSP	GOODS	Completed	DBE	One server
Sub-component 1.2: Management of the sustainable-use marine protected areas				
Upgrade to SFA vessel monitoring system for SMSP support: adding AIS, satellite radar and imagery capabilities	GOODS	Completed	SFA	The Upgrade and Training was completed in November 2021.

Purchase of diving and survey equipment for MPA authorities (incl. standard dive equip, cameras/housings)	GOODS	Completed	DOE	Lot1: 2 PDA tablets, 4 Handheld GPS, 1 GPS, 2 Rugged Laptop, 2 GPS Path finder, 2 Underwater camera, 3 binoculars Lot 2: 12 Dive mask, 12 snorkels, 12 fins, 2 diving BCD, 2 diving regulator, 6 weight belts, 30 Dive weight, 3 scorkles Lot3: 15 shackles, 1 rim of waterproof paper, 4 underwater dive hard slates, 4 measuring tapes Lot 4: 1 laboratory refrigerator, 3 digital microscope, 2 USB digital microscope, 2 fish finder, 6 vernier caliper, 2 digital water current meter, 6 hobo data lodggers Lot 5: 4 fence oil spin boom, 2 underwater drone
Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment in Support of the MSP	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Stakeholders input sought on the draft report: Final report on the identified risk submitted and endorsed
Purchase of surveillance equipment for MSP (depending on outcomes of 1.2.2.9, may include drones, radar)	GOODS	Completed	DOE	2 satellite equipment, 2 RIB and engine, 2 binoculars 18x, 2 binoculars 15x, 1 SLR

				camera, 1 lense (100-400mm), 1 lense (800mm), 2 hand held GPS, 4 handheld 2 way VHF radio, 2 server, 5 laptops
Upgrade to the Vessel Monitoring System of the SFA FMC and technical support	GOODS	Completed	SFA	The Upgrade and Training was completed in November 2021.
TA to MACCE on MSP surveillance options, piloting, tender preparation and asset purchasing	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	The draft TOR for the strategic threat and risk assessment in support of MSP; Technical specification of equipment required for MSP surveillance
FAD Module for Themis and system for NICSS data sharing to use data for FAD recovery	GOODS	Completed	SFA	The Upgrade and Training came to an end on 29th May 2024. 16 participants benefited from this training.
Supply of Mahe Plateau surveillance vessel	GOODS	Completed	SFA	The surveillance vessel arrived in Seychelles on 24th June 2024.
Studies on importance (social, economic, value chains) of charter and sport fishing sector	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	The study has been completed and the final consultancy report has been submitted to the SFA.
Perception survey of ocean governance, fisheries management and blue economy (University of Seychelles)	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Survey results disaggregated by gender as well as communication materials on the survey outcome.
Communication activities in support of Blue Grants Fund	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	Adverts paid for BGF call for proposals

Subcomponent 1.3: Blue grants fund				
First use of satellite telemetry on small pelagic and abundant seabirds (juvenile Sooty Terns) to define potential Marine Protected Areas through identification of foraging areas used during the gaining of independence from their parents	Development and implementation of management plans	Completed	Individual - Rachel Bristol	Satellite tracking data on movements of 14 juvenile Sooty Terns for up to 1 year after fledging; Maps and data layers showing important foraging areas used by juvenile Sooty Terns; Analysis relating Sooty Tern distribution to oceanographic factors; Sharing of data with Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning initiative; Workshop presenting results to stakeholders; Draft scientific paper on the results
Marine biodiversity baseline assessment around Fregate Island, the eastern-most Seychelles' inner granitic island	Research for fisheries management	Completed	NGO - Green Islands Foundation	Belt survey protocol developed, and data collected for one survey session; BRUV (Baited Remote Underwater Video) data collected for one survey session; Interim and draft final report for photogrammetry surveys; Geophysical maps, bathymetry maps, sidescan orthoimages produced for 6 sites around Fregate Island; BSc student project

				proposal developed on fish community composition using BRUV data
Marine scholarship programme: internship for Seychellois youth with local marine conservation programs and technical centres	Capacity building and training activities	Completed	NGO - WiseOceans	Providing two (2) groups of internship programmes with local youth. The seventeen (17) youth had the chance to gain experiences on conservation.
Mapping coral population connectivity and ocean currents to inform management and conservation policy for reef systems	Research for fisheries management	Completed	NGO - Seychelles Islands Foundation	Genetic analysis of Porites coral samples from across Seychelles; High-resolution Ocean current model (WINDS) for the Western Indian Ocean; Coral larval dispersal simulations and connectivity estimates; Comparison of genetic and model-based connectivity estimates
Wildlife books/educational materials for school children with focus on seabird foraging areas and potential fisheries interactions	Education and awareness programs	Completed	Individual - Robert Mondon	Two 26-minute videos produced on Caiman River and mangrove area; Footage filmed of mangrove ecosystem, pollution issues, cleanup activities; Interviews conducted with experts, community members, fishers;

				Underwater footage obtained of coral reefs; Voice over completed (English subtitles pending)

Component 2: Improved governance of priority fisheries

This component focuses on strengthening fisheries policy, governance, and management for a transition to sustainability. It addresses priority fisheries but also builds capacity for the benefit of the wider sector, including institutional strategy development, providing training in modern approaches to fisheries assessment and management, supporting improvements in data collection and management, and capacity building for fishers and their associations. Support to the finalisation and adoption of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan, including its governance structures, and more recently to its implementation, has been a major focus of the project. Significant progress has been made in strengthening the enabling environment for a transition to sustainable fisheries across the policy, legal and institutional domains with improved governance. In parallel, several activities have been implemented that aim to provide robust information and fisheries statistics for decision-making, including stock assessments and a series of sequential improvements to SFA's fisheries data collection and management systems. The BGF-funded projects have contributed by gathering biological and socioeconomic information on data-poor fisheries (Table 3 below).

Key activities funded under this component include:

- Revision of Fisheries Act 2014 and regulations.
- Preparation of Seychelles' national reports to the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) for 2019 and 2020, 2021.
- Development of the 2019 fisheries sector policy and strategy.
- Preparation of national tuna fisheries development and management plan.
- Conduct frame survey, design new licensing system and fleet management plan.
- Purchase and fitting of new vessel for surveillance.
- Preparation of policy and legal framework for beneficial ownership and joint ventures.

Table 3: Activities implemented under component 2

Activity	Type	Status	Beneficiaries	Outputs
Subcomponent 2.1: Fisheries management				
Preparation of Seychelles' national reports to the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) for 2019 and 2020, 2021	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	1st FiTI report issued by the National Multi-stakeholder Group of Seychelles; First country globally to issue national report benchmarked to FiTI standard; Report guiding other FiTI countries
Conduct frame survey, design new licensing system and fleet management plan		Modified		Survey results; New licensing system; Report proposing draft fleet management plan
Development of a communication strategy, materials, and plan for the implementation of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Communication strategy report; Communication materials (videos, leaflets ect)
Provision of a Liaison Officer in support of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Quarterly report detailing outreach done to hotels, restaurant and fisherman on the new measures and regulations in the Mahe Plateau management Plan
Provision of a technical assistant for the finalization of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	final co-management plan submitted to government.
Provision of a technical assistant to the Implementation Co-management Committee secretariat of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Implementation Committee (ICCP) for Plan established; Finalization of the Plan; Secretariat support to ICCP; Plan approved by Cabinet of Ministers 2019; Plan gazetted early 2020, launched 2021; ICCP operational, meeting regularly.

Stock assessment update: CPUE standardization and production models for indicator species	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	A technical report (including assessment of the quality of the catch and effort data from the Catch Assessment Survey, selection of species selection analysis, stock assessment update and so on); A comprehensive and clear description and documentation of the analytical codes and data files used
Scientific survey design and analytical support for a fisheries-independent assessment of sea cucumber stocks	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Final technical report including stock status determination; Management recommendations; New fishery management measures, incl. introduction of catch limits, banned harvest of most depleted species.
Socio-economic impact assessments for fisheries management measures	Consultancy	Terminated	SFA	Inception report
Socio-economic impact assessments for fisheries management measures	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Approved and cleared final report on the socio-economic impact assessments of the Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line fishery co-management plan) Regulations 2021 by the WB with recommendation for integration into the co-management plan and government process

Education & awareness planning for fisheries governance reform	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Education & awareness campaign
Fisher training through Seychelles Maritime Academy (including fisheries management)	Training	Completed	DOF	Training provided to fisherman
Training on data analysis, risk assessment and asset deployment planning for MCS (plus supervise risk assessment)	Training	Completed	SFA	Training provided to MCS staff
Education materials for Seychelles Maritime Academy	Goods	Completed	DOF	Education materials for students at maritime school which includes books, fishing line, hooks and so on.
Capacity building for plan Steering Committee (P2P exchanges)	Operational Cost	Completed	SFA	Report on lessons learned from the exchanges
Logistical and technical backstopping for P2P: Shetland, UK	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Completion report which includes an overview of activities undertaken in Shetland and listing of contact of the different organization and government representative met.
Logistical and technical backstopping for P2P: Sete, France	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Completion report which includes an overview of activities undertaken in Sete and listing of contact of the different organization and government representative met.
Supply of Mahe Plateau surveillance vessel	Goods	On-going	SFA	Surveillance vessel which will assist in monitoring around the Mahe Plateau
Preparation of national tuna fisheries development and management plan	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Draft final Tuna management plan; Draft final tuna development framework
Subcomponent 2.2: Fisheries and marine environment statistics				

Provision of a data administrator to reconfigure data servers to improve SFA's fisheries statistical system	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	One person was recruited as consultant to update the server and was later recruited as an SFA staff to maintain this work.
Development of data capture software and upgrade for SFA's fisheries statistical system	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Upgrade of Allegro for data capture of artisanal fisheries was done. EIS developed the extraction module to allow data extraction for both CAS data and Logbook data
Development of data processing, analytical and reporting tools for SFA's fisheries statistical system	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	"System Information Halieutique (SIH) has been developed to manage data for all coastal fishery, both logbooks based, and data collected through a Catch Assessment Survey (CAS). The SIH manages catch and effort data, biological data, economic data (trip expenses and sales data). All historical CAS data for artisanal fishery from the year 1985 has been transferred in the SIH database. The SIH has been upgraded to a web-based version allowing data collection and capture at landing site.
Provision of technical assistant to the Fisheries Economic Intelligence Unit of the Department of Fisheries	Consultancy	Terminated	DOF	Setting up and operational plan for the FEIU section.
Development of a social accounting matrix and artisanal fisheries component for Seychelles fisheries satellite account	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Report quantifying the value of fisheries contribution to GDP

Supply of data servers and video conferencing system to the Department of Fisheries	Goods	Completed	DOF	Data servers for storage of data; Video conferencing system to facilitate virtual meetings
Training in Posgresql and R programming for SFA and MFAg staff	Training	Completed	SFA	Built Capacity
FEIU staff training (including market intelligence, remote training to be considered)	Training	On going	DOF	Built Capacity
Subcomponent 2.3: Fisheries sector institutions				
Production of a policy note for the fisheries sector of Seychelles, in support of SWIOFish3 project preparation	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Policy note
Preparation of a policy and strategy (Fisheries Policy and Strategy 2019) for the fisheries sector of Seychelles	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Fisheries Policy
Support to legal framework update (revision of Fisheries Act and regulations)	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Fisheries regulations for management measures of the Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan; Plan launched October 2021; Regulations gazetted September 2021 (enforcement commences January 2022)
Institutional policy and structure of SFA	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Final report (plus situational analysis, goals/strategies); Performance management system; Performance measures assessed (2021); SFA Board support for strategic plan to guide organizational restructuring (2021).
Study to quantify public sector support to the fisheries sector	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Report quantifying the value and number of the public sector support in Seychelles

Sea cucumber stock assessment and management advice	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Stock assessment result and a report on recommendations for the future.
Develop fisheries sector policy and strategy	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Sector Policy
Review fisheries sector strategy and comprehensive plan implementation	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Revised sector policy
Preparation of policy and legal framework for beneficial ownership and joint ventures	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Report on the suggested legal framework that needs to be put to law Beneficial ownership GAP analysis.
Independent assessment of EU and Mauritian Fisheries Partnership Agreements	Consultancy	Terminated	DOF	Independent assessment of the EU and Mauritian agreements which will be used in future negotiations
Draft policy on the management of bycatch landed by industrial fishing vessels in Seychelles	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Draft policy for bycatch which are good for human consumption.
Prepare regulations for FADs	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Draft legal regulation to manage drifting FADs
Reporting and dissemination of project progress and results (e.g. conferences)	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	Communication video of final project results
Comms consultancy for final project reporting and dissemination, incl MFBE website (custodian of outputs)	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Symposium report; Final report highlighting all activities done and lessons learned; Summaries of activities funded under the project
Symposium on project outcomes and impacts (first quarter 2023)	Operational Cost	On-going	DBE	Greater visibility of project activities and results
Subcomponent 2.4: Blue grants fund				
Assessment and valuation of parrotfish fishery to support an ecosystem approach to fisheries	Research for fisheries management and development	Completed	Individual John Nevill	Assessment of the parrotfish population; report on the value of parrotfish to the ecosystem

Fishing livelihoods and fisheries management on Mahé: A cost-benefit analysis based on a value chain approach	Research for fisheries management and development	Completed	Individual -Keith Andre	Cost-benefit and value chain analysis study of small-scale fisheries in Seychelles; SWOT analysis of LANSIV-ABALOBI mobile app for fisheries data collection; Training workshop on LANSIV-ABALOBI app for 30 stakeholders; Scientific paper published on vulnerability of fishery-based livelihoods to climate change; Final stakeholder workshop to present results (40+ participants)
Reduction of ocean pollution through sea floor clean up: education of fishermen and youths on the impact of ocean pollution	Education and awareness programs by fisher associations	Ongoing	Individual - Marcus Quatre	Cleaned up 4 marine areas around Mahé: Providence, Perseverance, Glacis, Bel Ombre; Collected and logged waste data from cleanups; Conducted recycling/reuse activities with fishermen; Held educational talks at 5+ schools and institutions; Carried out sensitization campaigns on local media; Launched NGO "The Voice of the Ocean" to continue work
'Proze Caiman': producing an educational video on the importance of mangroves to local communities	Education and awareness programs by fisher associations	Completed	Individual -Allen Faddy Boniface	Footage filmed of pollution/littering in the mangrove area; Footage filmed of mangrove biodiversity and ecosystem; 7 interviews conducted with

				community members and fishermen; Draft video compiled (incomplete - underwater footage still needed)
Nou lanmer ble: Lannen 2020: Video documentaries of marine habitats and fisheries	Education and awareness programs by fisher associations	Completed	Individual -Dillys Pouponneau	3 episode documentary series in Creole language with English subtitles; Covers topics including: Seychelles ocean, coral reefs, threats, deep sea, beaches, mangroves, seagrass, marine animals, human activities, marine research
Piloting and integration of tracking, logbook, and market traceability tools for co-management of the small-scale fisheries	Fisheries management planning	Ongoing	NGO - Fisherman and Boat Owner Association	Installation of vessel tracking units on participating fisher vessels; Co-design and implementation of digital catch logbook app (ABALOBI FISHER); Integration of catch log data and vessel tracking data; Development of data visualizations for individual fishers and aggregated data; Co-design of framework for fisher participation in co-management structures; Training and engagement workshops with fishers
Blue education: Equipping Seychelles youth with skills, knowledge and understanding to invest in Seychelles Blue Future	Education and awareness programs by fisher associations	Completed	Individual - Nathalie Duval	Produced an educational workbook on the Blue Economy for secondary school students; Printed 171 copies of the workbook (more than the initial target of

				150); Delivered workbooks to all secondary schools on Mahé, Praslin and La Digue; Launched the workbook with a ceremony featured on national media; Conducted review sessions with teachers and stakeholders to improve drafts
Feasibility study on potential and scope for Seychelles Sustainable Seafood Initiative: local tourism market-based incentive for sustainable fisheries incl. labelling	Research for fisheries management and development	Completed	Individual - Sheena Talma	Questionnaires developed for different stakeholder groups; 75+ customer surveys completed so far; 20 out of 50 targeted retailer surveys completed; First peer-reviewed paper published with fisher survey results

Component 3: Sustainable development of the Blue Economy

This component focuses on promoting sustainable fisheries value chains as core objective of Seychelles' Blue Economy agenda and roadmap. It encompasses the industrial, semi-industrial and artisanal fishing subsectors and seeks to build capacity in support of the aquaculture sector. Activities include capacity building and studies in support of blue economy investment opportunities, seafood brand development and marketing, human capital needs assessment and studies of market incentives for sustainable seafood. A series of activities have been undertaken to promote uptake of blue finance opportunities (i.e. BGF and BIF) and to inform potential beneficiaries of the synergies between the two funds. An increasing number of BGF-funded activities are addressing research and development and business propositions for local investment in the newly launched aquaculture sector. Compared to other components, there has been a greater focus on training for local public and private sector staff involved in fisheries and aquaculture. Other activities include capacity building and training on aquaculture, support for a transition of key fisheries to sustainability through assessment and entry into internationally recognized certification schemes. Gender issues and labour conditions in the blue economy sector have been addressed through a study of gender assessment of blue economy, employment study and human capacity needs assessment for the fisheries sector, policies and standards to improve recruitment and retention of local crew and skippers. National laboratories important for developing seafood value chains and certifying that seafood products meet international standards have been equipped (Table 4 below).

Key activities funded under this component include:

- Development of operation manuals and evaluation methods for the BIF.
- Capacity-building in project planning and business planning for small-scale fishers.
- Environment and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) support for BIF applicants.
- Value chain and feasibility study to guide investment.
- Development of Seychelles seafood brand.
- Capacity building for local investors in aquaculture (local).
- Design and build of containerized invertebrate hatchery.
- Laboratory equipment (HPLC and ICP-MS).

Table 4: Activities implemented under component 3

Activity	Type	Status	Beneficiaries	Outputs
Subcomponent 3.1: Expansion of the seafood value chains				
Development of operation manuals and evaluation methods for the BIF	Consultancy	Completed	MFEPT	BIF operational Manual
Marketing and Communication strategy for Blue Finance	Consultancy	Completed	MFEPT	Video on SWIOFish3 and blue finance
Phase 2 Marketing and Communication strategy for Blue Finance	Consultancy	Completed	MFEPT	Marketing strategy for BIF and BGF
Capacity-building in project planning and business planning for small-scale fishers	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Training documents to grantees; yearly training of BGF applicants
Environment and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) support for BIF applicants	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	3 ESIAs and 1 ESMP completed and cleared by the WB and MACCE
Grievance Redress Mechanism: SWIOFish3 Website, GRM Communication Strategy and Online Platform	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Website including GRM platform; Leaflets and posters on GRM; GRM guide for first point of contact; 2 Video to create GRM awareness
Support for SeyCCAT for BGF management: technical assistant	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	1 staff on retainer at SeyCCAT until June 2024 to support with the coordination and administration of the BGF.
Financial and economic feasibility study of the Providence fish center	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Final report of feasibility study; Government decision not to invest Project funds in public/private venture due to risks identified by the study.
Value chain and feasibility study to guide investment	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Final technical reports on VC mapping, development and upgrading strategies and investment/capacity

				needs; Investment opportunities of DBS Blue Investment Fund (BIF) identified Potential beneficiaries to BIF using outputs for business plan development
Development and piloting of app to promote post-harvest information sharing	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	The App was launched on the 21st of November 2022 to commemorate the fisheries day.
Development of Seychelles seafood brand	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	A strong Brand was successfully developed for Seychelles Aquaculture / Sea Food by the company V360. There is an effective marketing plan, website and a whole database of assets, which will ultimately lead to the growth of the Sector.
Fish quality assessment training - Phase 1	Training	Completed	SFA	8 local stakeholders from both private and public sector benefited from training in advanced fish quality assessment, where they learned the use of the international assessment tool. The Torry scheme and Quality Index Method.
Attendance at World Seafood Congress Portugal	Training	Completed	SFA	9 participants attended the World Sea Food Congress in Portugal. 5 participants were women. Increased knowledge on challenges and opportunities in trading

				of fish, Traceability for food safety, Food safety hazard and risk in fisheries like Worker welfare and is exploring traceability tools to address seafood fraud issues.
Capacity building for the Blue Economy youth group on governance	Training	Completed	DBE	Capacity Building
Feasibility study on the potential contribution of seaweed cultivation for cross-sectoral, sustainable production and consumption	Feasibility Study	Completed	BGF Project-Marinette Dine	Literature review on use of algae as a resource; Online survey to assess awareness of algae-based products; Field observations and identification of macro-algae species on Mahe and Praslin islands; Lab experiments to create bioplastic and bio-fiber samples from algae; Dissertation submitted for MSc degree; Presentations to stakeholders including African Union
Feasibility study to determine the economic viability of a commercial rock-oyster farm	Feasibility Study	Ongoing	BGF Project-Jacques Belle	Implementation of this project not started
Support to DBS for management of BIF: Development of new DBS website	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	New interactive website set up for DBS
ESMF and PF site visits for screening and monitoring	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	5 Site visits for BIF loan application; 30 Site visits for BGF
Social impact assessment for MPA plans	Consultancy	Completed	DOE	Approved and cleared final report on the social impact assessment for the 3 sustainable use MPAs by WB, with recommendation for integration into the

				management plans and government process.
Grievance Redress Mechanism: mobile phone and compliants boxes	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	30 Complaint boxes which were put in all district Administration office and partnering institution: 1 Mobile phones for grievance complaints via call and SMS
Grievance Redress Mechanism: costs for advertising GRM and Mahe Plateau-specific grievances on TV and radio	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	2 rounds of GRM adverts over a period of 1 month on TV, and the 3 radio channels; 1 round of GRM advert over 1 month period on the big screen at the frequently visited hypermarket; 40 logbooks for registering of complaints
Updating of the BIF operation manuals and guidance	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Updated manuals for BIF with inclusion of aquaculture as an eligible activity, move from call for proposals to an open entry system, reduction of personal contribution to 10% and allow for majority foreign owned business to apply for the BIF.
Environment and Social Management System (ESMS) for DBS	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	1 training session for senior management staff at DBS and an action plan to prepare and operationalize an ESMF
Preparation of options paper on branding and labelling for ICCP	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Option paper on the branding and labelling scheme which could be set up was presented to ICCP

				for decision on the way forward.
Pre-assessment of Seychelles longline fishery against MSC standard	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	The final consultancy report was submitted by SCS Global Services and was endorsed by the SFA.
Study of post-harvest losses and introduction of routine survey methodology	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	The consultancy report was submitted by MRAG Ltd on the 'Determination of post-harvest fish losses (PHFL) in Seychelles fisheries value chains' for the SFA.
Equipment for post-harvest lab: sausage filler and vacuum sealer	GOODS	Completed	SFA	1 Sausage filler and 1 vacuum sealer
M&E site visits for indicator PDOI3 (landed and retailer price surveys)	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE	2 site visits for reporting on PDOI3
Predicting climate impacts on Seychelles fisheries sector	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Report on how to mitigate climate impact on the marine ecosystem and fisheries resources.
Equipment for post-harvest lab: blast freezer	GOODS	Completed	SFA	Blast freezer
Subcomponent 3.2: Enabling environment for local investments in the aquaculture sector				
Preparation of a human capacity development plan for the aquaculture sector of Seychelles	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	Received the final report and findings presented to SFA Senior Management in a workshop.
Design and build of containerized invertebrate hatchery	GOODS	Completed	SFA	2 containerized hatchery and training on how to use it
Capacity building for local investors in aquaculture (local)	Training	Completed	SFA	12 Seychellois being a mix of local entrepreneurs and SFA aquaculture technicians spent over 25 days on an aquaculture farm in Cyprus to obtain practical training on ocean cage practices. The

				last group of staff and private investors went to the Cyprus ocean cage training in May 2023. Final training reports were submitted.
Training courses for aquaculture public sector staff (local)	Training	Completed	SFA	Capacity Building
Subcomponent 3.3: Strategic development of the blue economy				
Employment study and human capacity needs assessment for the fisheries sector	Consultancy	Completed	SFA	The study was conducted, and the final report was submitted to the SFA
Communications support for raising awareness of BE opportunities		Completed	DBE	Communication materials
Liveaboard and yachting industry assessment in support of policies on the recreational fishery	Consultancy	Completed	MOFBE	Final report
Policies and standards to improve recruitment and retention of local crew and skippers	Consultancy	Completed	DOF	Policy Finding ways to incentivize local in the sector
Gender assessment of blue economy	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Report on gender assessment in the BE sectors with recommendations
Business case assessment for key sectors	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	1 economic report identifying 5 new sectors along with their business case for implementation.
Communications consultant for BE	Consultancy	Completed	DBE	Enhanced visibility on social media; Production of 4 videos; Redesigned of the blue economy logo; Production of newsletters.
Subcomponent 3.4: Sanitary and phytosanitary monitoring				
Training for Seychelles Bureau of Standards (8 staff) in laboratory method validation and measurement uncertainty in support of testing fish products	Training	Completed	SBS	8 Staff trained on methods validation and measurement uncertainty
Laboratory equipment (HPLC and ICP-MS)	GOODS	Completed	SBS	1 HPLC equipment purchased and ICP_MS equipment for use in fish testing before exportation.

Technical assistance on strengthening national capacity for sanitary and phytosanitary control and the role of FIQCU	Consultancy	Completed	SBS	Final report with recommendation for the transfer of this unit to either the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, or SFA or also set it up as an independent authority.

Component 4: Project management and coordination

The last component supported the coordination and implementation of the project. Activities under this component mainly concern preparation of the project, staffing of the PIU and strengthening of E&S and M&E systems. In terms of consultancy positions, the PIU was fully staffed in late 2018, but the structure of the PIU was revised in 2020 to allow for the recruitment of a full-time Procurement Assistant as a consultant. Operational costs and internal training associated with coordination and management are also included under this component (table 5 below).

Table 5: Activities implemented under component 4

Activity	Type	Status	Beneficiaries
Project Manager	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Monitoring and evaluation and communication specialist	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Monitoring and evaluation and communication specialist for PIU, SeyCCAT and DBS	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Environmental and social specialist	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Environmental and social specialist	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Procurement Assistant	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Safeguards studies	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Project implementation manual	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Financial audit (reinstated and add budget for 2021 onwards)	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Operation costs: adverts, goods and office equipment	Operational Cost	Completed	DBE
Mid-term review	Consultancy	Terminated	DBE
Internal audit of SeyCCAT	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Communication and reporting support for project coordination and management (mid-term, annual, quarterly reports)	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Financial management and procurement training	Training	Completed	DBE
Monitoring and evaluation support for data quality review, results framework, final evaluation preparation	Consultancy	Completed	DBE
Final project report	Consultancy	Completed	DBE

Box 4: Beneficiaries point of view on the activities of the project that had the greatest effects.

DBE

Lot of activities have been implemented especially through consultancies in support of the fisheries and environment sectors. The latter had the greatest effects, notably those in support of Seychelles MSP, and the grants i.e. the 3 million USD that was being administered by SeyCCAT and funded research-related, sensitization and other projects, were very successful.

SFA

The project with the greatest impact for aquaculture, that was funded by SWIOFish3, is the Containerised Echinoderm Hatchery and the capacity building of public and private sector candidates in various aquaculture hands on training.

Developing a Fisheries Information Management system, upgrading the Artisanal Fishery data management system and Data processing tools. The FIMS as it was extended to all other technical departments of SFA and to SFA stakeholders.

Post-harvest fish Losses (PHFL) study in Seychelles' fisheries sector; Purchase of processing equipment for the processing lab; Mobile application for the promotion of fish products and publication of reports.

DOE

Development of management plans; Assessment of Mangrove blue carbon for inner and outer islands; Purchasing of equipment; Survey of elasmobranchs in the artisanal fishery and NDFs for key threatened species. This information will benefit the country and enable us to fulfil our obligations under CITES/CMS.

DOF

The development of key legislative frameworks: Fisheries and Aquaculture Act and Regulation; Fisheries Sector Policies; Harvest Strategy Policy and Management Standard; Policy for Recruitment and Retention of local skippers and crew; Review of the Fisheries Sector Policy and Strategy; Legal Framework for Joint Ventures and Gap analysis for Beneficial ownership; Drifting FAD regulation.

Capacity Building for the Ministry, Sector and SMA;

Improving fisheries economic monitoring and seafood marketing: Development of a Marketing Intelligence Plan; Assessment of Public Sector Support for the Fisheries Sector; Fisheries Satellite Account; Procurement of a data server; Assessment of marketing opportunities for the Mahe Plateau

III.2.2 Achievement of PDO-level and Intermediate level indicators targets

What results have been achieved in terms of the PDO-level and intermediate-level indicators compared to targets?

Eighty (80) percent (four out of five) of the project targets on the PDO-level indicators have been reached. In addition, fifty (50) percent (five out of ten) of the intermediate-level indicators have been reached.

Table 6: Assessment of Achievement under each PDO-level and Intermediate Indicators

PDO-level Indicators	
Indicators	**Achievements**
Outcome 1: Improved management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones	
PDO 1: Sustainable-use marine protected areas with a Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score of 50 or higher (ha) (Baseline: 0; End target: 50)	***Achievement: 54*** ***Target fully achieved (108 percent)*** Boundaries of sustainable-use MPAs have been designated. The Interim structure for overseeing those new designated areas was set up and became operational in 2023. However, the Authorities who will be managing these different areas will need to be established formally through signing of the co-management agreements currently being finalized. The Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act 2022 (NRCA) was rolled out in March 2024 along with proposed management plans templates. The 3 management plans funded by SWIOFish3 have been completed and have been endorsed by MACCE In June 2024. At the end of the project in June 2024, the allowable activities have been finalized. The METT was undertaken and submitted in Q1 2024. The METT score received was 54 which is above the 50 targets. Higher score can be achieved when the management plans for these zones are implemented.
PDO 2: Share of key demersal indicator species stable or rebuilding in the Mahé Plateau fisheries (%) (Baseline: 11; End target: 55)	***Achievement: 100*** ***Target fully achieved (182 percent)*** Assessment to measure this indicator has recently been completed except for 3 species, the remaining 6 species assessed to establish the baseline of this indicator were aggregated in species groups (family level) for the 2021 analysis. Nevertheless, all species and relevant species groups were characterized by stable or increasing CPUE trends (between 2017 and 2019).
PDO 5: Share of citizens (%) of the Seychelles who rate management of sustainable-use marine areas and selected fisheries as 'Satisfactory' or above, disaggregated by female and male respondents (Baseline: 110; End target: 50)	***Achievement: 70% for all respondents, 69% of female, and 73% of Male*** ***Target fully achieved (140 percent overall, 138 percent for female, 146 percent for male).*** Results from the Perception Survey undertaken in December 2022 and published in 2023, highlights that about 70% of all the respondents, 69% of female, and 73% of Male rated Fisheries Management and Ocean Management as satisfactory.
Outcome 2: Strengthened fisheries value chains in the Seychelles	
PDO 3: Ratio between consumer price per kilogram and landed catch price per kilogram in artisanal	***Achievement: 141% for Red snapper, 177% for Job, 205% for Vara Vara, 165% for Captain Rouge*** ***Target fully achieved (108 percent for Red snapper, 136 percent for Job, 158 percent for Vara Vara, 127 percent for Captain Rouge)***

fisheries (%)[1] (Baseline: 11; End target: 130)	Overall, looking at the average percentage of price increase, great value has been added to the species selected. Processors have managed to create greater value on the catch purchased. For instance, for red snapper, the average landed catch price paid by processors was SCR108.71 per kg. Following processing, red snapper are being sold at an average of SCR 261.60 per kg of fish sold. This shows an average increase of about 141%, which is above the 130% end project target. The same can be observed for Job, VaraVara and captain rouge which have an average increase of 177%, 205% and 165% respectively.
PDO 4: Share of by-catch landed and sold in the Seychelles (%) (Baseline: 10; End target: 50) ***Replacement indicator:*** Volume of bycatch purchased and used by local businesses for value addition	***Achievement: Not reported (Data limitation problem)*** ***Target not achieved (percent): Not reported (Data limitation problem)*** ***Replacement indicator Achievement: From 2020 to 2023, the volume of bycatch bought and processed locally have increased significantly with an increase of respectively 30% in 2020, 31% in 2021, and 64% in 2023.*** The data on by-catch purchases were collected from businesses licensed to purchase and process bycatch. The data on the quantity of by-catch landed in Seychelles as reported by the different Fishing vessels were collected from the statistical section at SFA. The later data were much lower than the volume purchased and used by local businesses. SFA confirmed that they are aware of the issue of under reporting of the volume of bycatch landed by the different vessels. Some of the vessels were only reporting on the tuna species related bycatch and not on all the 14 species, specified by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). This might be one of the reasons for the underreporting of the volume of by-catch landed. As a result of this under reporting on bycatch landed, the share of bycatch results cannot be used to report on this indicator. As a replacement, the volume of bycatch purchased and used by local businesses for value addition over the last four years was analyzed. The assumption is that increase in volume of bycatch being purchased by local businesses shows that local businesses are getting access to greater share of the bycatch landed.
Intermediate Results Indicators	
Indicators	**Achievements**
IRI 1.1: Area with submission for gazettement to the Parliament as a sustainable-use marine protected area with agreed-upon management plans developed in consultative manner (Hectares)	***Achievement: 41,000,000.00 out of which the project is claiming attribution to 10,000,000 hectares*** ***Target fully achieved (410 percent)*** The area has already been demarcated and gazetted. The three (3) management plans funded by SWIOFish3 have been completed and endorsed.

[1] This indicator measures the differences in price between landed catch (prices before value is added) and the local consumer price (prices after value addition) of the most processed fish species, to denote the highest value addition process and to reflect evolution of the value chain. Landed catch price (SCR/kg) was taken from the Statistical Section of the Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA). The local consumer price (SCR/kg) for value added products was obtained through a price survey of all fish processing outlets, shops and supermarkets selling fish value added products.

(Baseline: 0; End target: 10,000,000.00)	
IRI 1.2: Annual air surveillance trips in sustainable-use marine protected areas (Number) (Baseline: 0; End target: 7)	***Achievement: 8*** ***Target fully achieved (114.3 percent)*** In terms of air surveillance, this is already being done by SFA in areas that will be managed as sustainable use MPAs, to enforce existing fisheries regulation. Looking at the number of air surveillance undertaken for monitoring purposes we can see a gradual increase in trips from 6 trips undertaken in 2021 to 8 trips in 2023.
IRI 1.3: Sustainable-use marine protected areas managed by non-state actors (Number) (Baseline: 0; End target: 3)	***Achievement: 0*** ***Target not achieved (0 percent)*** The Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act (NRCA) was rolled out in March 2024 along with proposed management plans templates. The 3 management plans funded by SWIOFish3 have been completed and endorsed by MACCE. The Co-management agreement template is currently being reviewed and will be validated by all relevant stakeholders prior to MACCE endorsement. Relevant Authorities /Stakeholders will then sign the co-management agreements as per sites that have been designated under their management. Signing of the co-management template is expected to take place Q4 2024. The regulations for the Marine Protected areas are also being developed.
IRI 2.1: Fisheries management plans implemented (Number) (Baseline: 2; End target: 5)	***Achievement: 4*** ***Target partly achieved (80 percent)*** The Sea cucumber fishery management plan, the Spanner crab licensing framework and the set of regulations for the Lobster fishery are currently in implementation. Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-Management Plan started implementation in October 2021, bringing the current total to 4. The Praslin Fishery Co-Management Plan which was initially planned at project preparation has been integrated under the Mahe Plateau plan. Finally, The Tuna Fishery management plan has been drafted by June 2024 under the SWIOFish3 project. SFA and Department of Fisheries will now be responsible for finalizing the plan.
IRI 2.2: Performance review of fisheries management plans (Baseline: No; End target: Yes)	***Achievement: Yes*** ***Target fully achieved (100 percent)*** SFA annually review the lobster fishery and make decisions such as whether or not to open the fishery that season, how long the season should be, and how many licenses to issue. Report for the 2023-2024 season has been shared by SFA. SFA also introduce a spanner crab license framework in 2023. In Q1 2024, SFA through the ICCP committee has initiated the review of the Mahe Plateau management plan.
IRI 2.3: Fisheries economic intelligence information publicly accessible (Baseline: No; End target: Yes)	***Achievement: Yes*** ***Target fully achieved (100 percent)*** The Fisheries Information Management System (FIMS) has been set up on the SFA website. It provides public access to fisheries economics and statistics data. Also, from the FiTI report, some economic data has been made publicly available on the MFBE website. These includes data on fishing license issued to scale fishing vessels, fishing efforts, annual retained catches, Total value of imports of fish and fish products, Total value of exports of fish and fish products, Value

	of fuel subsidies for small-scale fisheries and GDP contribution of the fisheries sector in Seychelles.
IRI 3.1: Share landed catch from domestic fisheries sold via auction (%) (Baseline: 0; End target: 10)	***Achievement: 0*** ***Target not achieved (0 percent)*** This indicator is not measurable as SWIOFish3 feasibility study on the proposed auction centre undertaken in 2017 was unfavorable.
IRI 3.2: Food fish sold commercially from in-shore aquaculture (Yes/No) (Baseline: No; End target: Yes)	***Achievement: Yes*** ***Target fully achieved (100 percent)*** In 2023, the prawns farm on Coetivy Island has started commercialization. Furthermore, there are some relevant SeyCCAT projects piloting inshore aquaculture (rock oyster farming for instance). Whilst they are not commercial projects, the intention is to demonstrate feasibility and business cases to potential investors and the general community
IRI 3.3: Proportion of landed catch from artisanal fisheries in labelling scheme (%) (Baseline: 10; End target: 30)	***Achievement: 0*** ***Target not achieved (0 percent)*** The consultancy work funded under the project to write an option paper for the artisanal fisheries labelling scheme has been finalized and presented to ICCP before project end. ICCP will discuss on the different options and decide on how this will go about.
IRI 3.4: Blue Investment Fund approval rate (%) (Baseline: 0; End target: 60)	***Achievement: 25*** ***Target not achieved (42 percent)*** 1 loan application was approved by the DBS Board in 2022. Signing of the loan agreement was done in Q1 2023 committing 25% of the available funds. However, at the end of 2023 no disbursement had been made.

Box 5: Beneficiaries point of view on the results achieved by the project.

DBE

Decreased data/information gaps in particular areas of the fisheries and the environment sectors, provisions for technical equipment and communication tools that would enhance local capacity to deliver more effectively on assigned responsibilities.

SFA

Better facility to accelerate the experiments to assist the small-scale entrepreneurs in farming of sea urchins and sea cucumbers. Also, we managed to get extensive training of staff and entrepreneurs in the echinoid and finfish farming techniques that they are now applying in their work and ventures.

Data integration of all coastal fishery data in one data management system (SIH), Improved and more robust and reliable data processing tools for artisanal fishery and major improvement in transparency and access to fisheries related information (FIMS).

- The most successful was the post-harvest fish losses study which called for the implementation of solutions to lower the post-harvest fish Losses (PHFL) and identified various fish losses in the semi-industrial and artisanal sectors.
- The lab is now better positioned to support the industry for individuals who wish to use the equipment to develop their products for market research.
- The extra equipment also guarantees that the required standards are maintained.

DOE

Overall, all the activities will contribute towards the SMSP process. Better conservation and management of threatened species; Equipment will allow the Department and its partners to increase its monitoring of MPAs, address issues related to IUU etc; Assessment will assist with development of key policies for eg Blue Carbon Policy.

DOF

Developed policies and regulations

Capacity building

Support with equipment (e.g. lab equipment, vessel, educational material)

III.2.3 Beneficiaries

To what extent the project has built capacity of the beneficiaries? What is the total number of beneficiaries disaggregated by sex compared to planned targets?

Table 7: Capacity building activities undertaken

Training	**Institutions beneficiaries**	**Number of beneficiaries (of which number of women)**	**Status**
Training Status Comment Training on data analysis, risk assessment and asset deployment planning for MCS	SFA	21 participants of which 13 were women	Completed
Maritime Boundary Delimitation Training in Seychelles	DBE	20 participants out of which 4 women	completed
Aquaculture training for both SFA staff and potential investors	SFA and investors	12 participants, of which 0 were women.	Completed
Training in Posgresql and R programming for SFA and MFAg staff	SFA and MFAg	2 participants of which 1 was a woman	Completed
Grievance Redress Mechanism Learning Session for District Administrators	DAs; Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs	22 (of which 17 women)	Completed
Department of Fisheries Training Law on the Sea	DOF	4 persons (all woman)	Completed
Time series Analysis training	DOF	2 persons (both woman)	Completed
Fisheries Management Course	DOF	3 persons (all women)	Completed
Microeconomic and Macroeconomic and Introduction Fisheries Management course	DOF	2 persons (both woman)	Completed
Capacity Building on Maritime Boundary delimitation	DBE	1 (of which 0 Women)	Completed
Training Introduction to the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework	DBS, SeyCCAT, DOE, DOF, DBE, SFA, DFA, and PIU	18 (of which 14 Woman)	Completed

Marine scholarship programme: internship for Seychellois youth with local marine conservation programs and technical centres	Blue grants fund for an NGO - WiseOceans	17 youth (of which	Ongoing
Fisher training through Seychelles Maritime Academy (including fisheries management)	DOF	17 (of which 3 woman)	Completed
Training on data analysis, risk assessment and asset deployment planning for MCS (plus supervise risk assessment)	SFA	21 participants of which 13 were women	Completed
Fish quality assessment training - Phase 1	SFA	8 participants of which 3 were women.	Completed
Attendance at World Seafood Congress Portugal	SFA	9 Participants of which 5 were women	Completed
Capacity building for the Blue Economy youth group on governance	DBE	7 participants of which 2 women	Completed
Training for Seychelles Bureau of Standards (8 staff) in laboratory method validation and measurement uncertainty in support of testing fish products	SBS	8 (of which 5 woman)	Completed
Financial management and procurement training	DBE	25 (of which 13 women)	Completed

III.2.4 Factors during preparation

What are the key factors during the preparation stage or issues related to quality at entry that affected implementation and outcomes?

The key factors during the preparation stage that affected the project's implementation and outcomes are the following:

The implementation arrangement was well designed. The project was prepared and implemented jointly by the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade (MFNPT); the Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy (MFBE); and the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment (MACCE). A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) embedded in the MFNPT managed the implementation of the project under the oversight of a Steering Committee chaired by the Principal Secretary of DBE. The committee includes representatives from the beneficiaries' institutions. The proceeds of the Blue bond followed two tracks. The MFNPT signed a subsidiary agreement with the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) whereby a portion of the blue bond proceeds (USD3 million) was transferred to SeyCCAT to be part of the proceeds of the Blue Grants Fund. The MFTBE signed a subsidiary agreement with the Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS) whereby a portion of the Blue bond proceeds (USD12 million) will be transferred to DBS to establish a Blue Investment Fund.

The project components are linked and contributed to the achievement of the PDO. The development of seafood value chains which was the focus of component 3 will not be sustainable if the marine resource base is not properly managed, which was supported by components 1 and 2. Because marine and coastal resource management will potentially translate into reduced access to the resource, component 3 tries to compensate fishers for any loss of access and foster adherence to the management measures.

A well-designed Results Framework supported the M&E system. A core set of PDO indicators and intermediate indicators with baselines and targets was agreed on with the Government during project preparation.

The project adopted strategical mitigation measures to deal with the risks. The uncertainty related to the design and the placement of the Blue Bond in capital markets was partially mitigated by the technical assistance provided by the World Bank to the MFTBE, which includes market outreach, direct support in the design of the Blue Bond, liaison with investors to identify buyers of the placement, and documentation of the transaction. Fisheries management measures were put in place while fisheries value chains were developed to avoid creating price signal that would further increase the pressure on the fisheries. The risk of institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability due to human capacity constraint has been dealt by recruiting additional staff for the PIU, providing technical assistance on specific themes, investing in capacity building and leadership. In addition, the World Bank conducted frequent implementation support missions. The potential resistance of key public and private sector stakeholders whose activity could be restricted by the gazettement of the protected areas has been dealt using consultative and transparent processes, careful design of reform processes, and identification and compensation of potential losers.

III.2.5 Factors during implementation

What are the key factors during the implementation that affected implementation and outcomes?

a) Factors subject to the control of the government and/or implementing entities control

Several changes to ministerial portfolios have occurred during project preparation and implementation. Notably, the DBE was embedded within the Ministry of Finance at inception but moved, just prior to effectiveness, to the Office of the Vice-President and in late 2020 to its current ministerial portfolio. The recent integration of the Departments of Fisheries and the Blue Economy in the same ministry has greatly improved coordination. As expected of Government-led projects, the project has also been implemented through numerous changes to key partner staff, from Principal Secretaries to CEOs.

The delay in the recruitment of a procurement assistant hampered the project's implementation. The absence of a dedicated Procurement Assistant until 2020 significantly slowed implementation and undermined compliance with national and World Bank procurement standards. However, the project adopted swift procurement process that facilitated the implementation of activities.

The PIU conducted an effective monitoring and evaluation of the project. The Project has largely met its quarterly reporting requirements since effectiveness and reports were disseminated to partners, the Steering Committee (SC), the World Bank and Blue Bond investors. The SC met at least twice a year to better monitor progress and coordinate implementation. There was good cooperation (esp. active participation) amongst committee members. The PIU maintained frequent communication and met regularly with implementing partners to assess the status of implementation of the project' activities, adjust, when necessary, the activities for the results' achievement. Stakeholder consultation and engagement was done throughout the project.

The PIU has supported the operations of DBS and SeyCCAT in their implementation of the BIF and BGF. It coordinated key processes such as ensuring eligibility with Project frameworks, undertaking environmental and social screenings, and supporting monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, the PIU has established (and reconstituted) the Technical Committee of the BIF, the structures supporting the GRM, and serves as observers to the Grants Committee of SeyCCAT.

The poor performance of the BIF was mainly due to the lack of access to land by investors. Securing land for business development, in or near to ports for fish processing facilities, has proved problematic for investors. However, good advertising and reaching out to clients have helped to encourage them to apply for the loan.

The successful implementation of the Fisheries management information system was due to the following factors: (i) setting clear, measurable objectives; (ii) working in close collaboration with the project team including the Statistics and IT department and the consultants; (iii) involving all statistics staff concerns to provide their feedback during the development stages of the projects; (iv) collaborating with other department and stakeholders; (v) having team members with good project management skills; and (vi) ensuring collaboration between the different stakeholders involved.

(b) factors subject to World Bank

The project's supervision and reporting were adequate. During supervision missions, the World Bank's team was always composed of staff with high-level multidisciplinary skills, particularly experts on natural resources management, environmental and social safeguards, fisheries specialist, guarantee specialist, lawyer, financial management, and procurement. The team made concrete recommendations which led the Government to take the necessary corrective measures in time for satisfactory implementation of the project. One extension of the closing date took place to cope with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Withdrawal applications and approvals were done through Client Connection. Procurement was done through the Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP). The use of these systems provided avenues for fast and convenient services while ensuring proper documentation of project transactions. The World Bank communication with the PIU was highly effective.

(c) factors outside the control of government and or implementing entities.

The main factor which impacted the project during implementation was the Covid-19 pandemic which delayed lot of activities due to travel restrictions.

III.3 Efficiency

The efficiency of the project is rated Substantial. The efficiency assessment attempts to answer the following two questions: i) did the benefits of the project (achieved or expected to be achieved) exceed project cost (cost-benefit), and ii) was the project implementation efficient in delivering the expected project results (implementation cost). To complement the cost-benefit analysis, the report discusses aspects that influenced efficiency in the use of resources, including for examples delays in implementation of key activities, frequent Staff turn-over, procurement issues and delays, cost overruns, and planned vs. actual project timeframe (recognizing that delays are not always inefficient, and can in some instances result in net efficiency gains).

The evaluation of the project efficiency answered the following questions:

- To what extent was the project implemented according to agreed timelines (respect timing of effectiveness, project's launching, project's duration)?
- What is the project implementation cost compared to the planned cost? Did reallocation of resources happen during project's implementation?
- Was the funding adequate to meet the needs of the beneficiaries?
- What are the benefits brought by the project?
- To what extent does the project institutional structure facilitate linkages with other supports to the beneficiaries?
- What bottlenecks were experienced (political, social, economic, capacity, bureaucracy of government and World Bank, frequent Staff turn-over, procurement issues and delays, etc)?

III.3.1 Timeliness

To what extent was the project implemented according to agreed timelines (respect timing of effectiveness, project's launching, project's duration)?

The Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3) was approved by the World Bank Board on 29 September 2017 and became effective on 16 April 2018 (7 months after approval).

The Government of Seychelles, World Bank and partners launched the Blue Bond on October 29th, 2018, which raised US$15 million from international investors. The Government made part of the proceeds of the SWIOFish3 Blue Bond available to SeyCCAT under a subsidiary agreement between the Government and SeyCCAT which was signed in October 2018. It made also part of the proceeds of the SWIOFish3 Blue Bond available to DBS under a subsidiary agreement between the Government and DBS which was signed in October 2018. The World Bank, acted as an Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility ("GEF") grant and loan.

The Government maintained an existing Project Implementation Unit within the MFTBE comprised of qualified and experienced personnel in adequate numbers and recruited without delays an environmental and social specialist and a monitoring and evaluation specialist. The delay in the recruitment of a procurement assistant significantly slowed project's implementation. The Project Implementation Manual was prepared by the Government and approved by the World Bank in April 2018. The project's launching took place in April 2018.

Given the delays in implementing some of the activities and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project closing date was extended to allow completion of the activities. The estimated 69 months duration of the project (29 September 2017- 30 June 2023) was extended to 81 months (29 September 2017- 28 June 2024).

Table 8: Progress in meeting covenants of the project

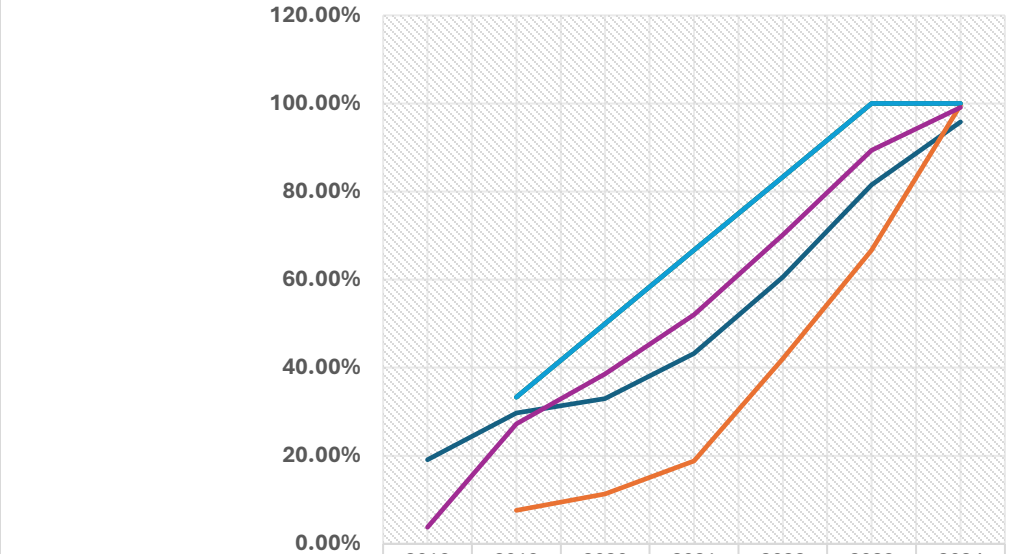
Project covenants	**Date**
Signature of the subsidiary agreement between the Government and SeyCCAT	October 2018
Signature of the subsidiary agreement between the Government and DBS	October 2018
Establishment of the Project Implementation Unit within the MFTBE	April 2018
Recruitment of an environmental and social specialist	September 2018
Recruitment of a monitoring and evaluation specialist	June 2020
Recruitment of a procurement assistant	February 2020
Approval of the Project Implementation Manual by the World Bank	April 2018
Project's launching	April 2018

III.3.2 Cost-benefit analysis

What is the project implementation cost compared to the planned cost? Did reallocation of resources happen during project's implementation?

The project's total cost was estimated at US$25.29 million. The activities were going to be financed using proceeds from: (i) a US$5 million loan from IBRD; (ii) a US$5.29 million grant from GEF; and (iii) an up to US$15 million Blue Bond placement (which in turn will be supported by an up to US$5 million IBRD guarantee and a US$5 million concessional loan from GEF Non-Grant Instrument Pilot). As of end June 2024, the following performances were noted: (i) the disbursement rate on the IBRD loan is 95.8 percent; (ii) the disbursement rate on the GEF grant is 99.6 percent; (iii) the disbursement rate on the Blue Grant Fund managed by SeyCatt is 100 percent; and (iv) the disbursement rate on the Blue Investment Fund managed by DBS is 100 percent. Figure 2 below presents the evolution of the disbursement rates on those instruments during the period 2018-2024.

Figure 2: Evolution of cumulative disbursement rates by year 2018-2024, in percent.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
IBRD loan	19.10%	29.70%	33.00%	43.20%	60.60%	81.50%	95.80%
GEF grant		7.60%	11.30%	18.80%	42.10%	66.70%	99.60%
Blue Grant Fund managed by SeyCatt		33.30%	50.00%	66.70%	83.30%	100.00%	100.00%
Blue Investment Fund managed by DBS		33.30%	50.00%	66.70%	83.30%	100.00%	100.00%
Overall	3.8%	27.2%	38.5%	52.0%	70.2%	89.4%	99.1%

The total estimated expenditure by component diverges with the funds allocated to each component in the Project design (Table 9 below). A deficit in funds allocated relative to estimated expenditure occurs for Components 2 and 4, but overall, the total funds available are slightly greater than the current estimated Project expenditure, by an amount of US$2.2 million.

Table 9: Summary of Project finance allocations and expenditures by component as of end June 2024

	Allocations					Total Expenditures	Expenditures rate
	GEF grant	IBRD loan	BGF	BIF	**Total**		
Component 1	2,646,055		1,500,000		**4,146,055**	1,763,961.29	43%
Component 2	2,646,055		1,500,000		**4,146,055**	5,233,014.97	126%
Component 3		4,000,000		12,000,000	**16,000,000**	14,711,290.05	92%
Component 4		1,000,000			**1,000,000**	1,360,985.62	136%
Total Allocations	**5,292,110**	**5,000,000**	**3,000,000**	**12,000,000**	**25,292,110**	**23,069,251.93**	**91%**

Was the funding adequate to meet the needs of the beneficiaries?

Box 6: Beneficiaries point of view on the adequacy of the funding to meet their needs.

DBE

The funding was adequate for the desired outcome. Future project can support other development needs.

DBS

Although we have more areas that we will need support especially with setting up the safeguard policy we are grateful for the support received.

SFA

Yes, the funding could always be more as we had some bigger infrastructure projects to implement. But overall, in the timeframe that we had the funding was just right to allow us to implement the approved concepts successfully.

DOE

The funds were adequate. The main issue was with the ability of the department to review the deliverables from the project which limited our ability to fully utilise the funds.

DOF

The Department made maximum use of the allocated funds, and welcome further support to continue with other projects to support the arising needs of the sector.

What are the benefits brought by the project?

Box 7: Beneficiaries point of view on the benefits brought by the project.

DBE

Bridged knowledge gap in some specific areas.

Communication and technical tools and equipment not available were acquired.

Enhanced positive public image of Seychelles for pursuing and following through with this innovative project, that improves the country's track record and also opens up new opportunities for other related collaboration and assistance.

Facilitated advancement of Seychelles' blue economy endeavours.

DBS

Training, knowledge, and visibility.

SFA (aquaculture)

- **Financial Support**: The project provided significant financial support to Seychelles for the development of its aquaculture sector. This funding facilitated the implementation of various initiatives aimed at enhancing aquaculture production, infrastructure, and capacity building.
- **Technology Transfer**: Funding from the SWIOFish3 project enabled Seychelles to access advanced aquaculture technologies and expertise. This technology transfer helped improve farming practices, productivity, and sustainability in the sector.
- **Infrastructure Development**: The project funding supported the development of aquaculture infrastructure in Seychelles, including the construction of hatcheries, processing facilities, and research laboratories. These infrastructure investments strengthened the foundation of the aquaculture industry and promoted its long-term growth.
- **Capacity Building**: Financial support from the project facilitated capacity building programs for local fishers, aquaculture practitioners, and government officials. Training workshops, seminars, and educational initiatives enhanced skills in aquaculture management, sustainability, and business development.
- **Research and Innovation**: Funding from the SWIOFish3 project contributed to research and innovation in Seychelles' aquaculture sector. Research initiatives focused on species suitability, environmental impact assessments, and technological innovations to improve production efficiency and sustainability.
- **Market Development**: The project funding supported initiatives to develop domestic and international markets for Seychellois aquaculture products. Marketing campaigns, trade missions, and market assessments helped promote local seafood products and expand market access for aquaculture producers.
- **Policy Support**: Financial support from the project assisted Seychelles in developing and implementing supportive policies and regulations for the aquaculture sector. This included licensing frameworks, environmental regulations, and incentives to encourage investment and responsible practices.

SFA (Fisheries management)

Streamlined process, better data consistency, Improved Data Integrity, Elimination of Redundancy by different department, Easier Data Sharing

The lab is now better positioned to support the industry for individuals who wish to use the equipment to develop their products for market research.

DOE

Capacity building for staff

Contribution towards the SMSP process and other national initiatives

Collaborations and partnerships

Data and information

Equipment

DOF

The project allowed the Department to deliver and implement priority objectives for the sector.

Supported initiatives by the Department to enhance the capacity and knowledge of its employees.

To what extent does the project institutional structure facilitate linkages with other supports to the beneficiaries?

Box 8: Beneficiaries point of view on the linkages of the project with other supports.

DBE

The project went hand in hand with some of the national project such as the Fisheries Transparancy Initative (FiTI) and commonwealth.

DBS

N/A

SFA

The project complemented the other projects to develop aquaculture, which were being funded for example under other EU grants and GoS budgets. For instance, we procured a much-needed aquaculture service vessel under an EU grant and the grant was not enough hence we funded the two outboard engines under the SWIOFish3 budget which was really great.

DOE

Linkages were made with the consultancies under this project with several other project. For instance, the development of the management plans for the sustainable use zone was financed under this project, whilst the other management allowable activities were financed by TNC through consultations.

DOF

Provided the platform to create synergies and avoid duplication with other sectors.

What bottlenecks were experienced (political, social, economic, capacity, bureaucracy of government and World Bank, frequent Staff turn-over, procurement issues and delays, etc)?

Table 10: Significantly delayed activities

Activity name	Planned Completion Date	Effective completion date	Reasons for delays
PHFL report	9th June 2023	October 2023	Due to the underestimation of the time required for data collection.
Legal Framework and regulations	19th March 2021	16th October 2023	Due to COVID-19, the consultant was unable to travel to Seychelles and hold stakeholder consultations. Once the draft report was submitted, additional review and stakeholder consultation were required.
Seychelles Sea food Brand	17th January 2022	26th October 2022	COVID-19 was a major issue, preventing stakeholder's consultations. The change in key expert also took some time to finalize. Additionally, the advance payment guarantee in the contract was not feasible, which caused further delays in starting the consultancy.
Upgrading of SFA's Fisheries Data Processing System and the Development of Reporting Tools	12th May 2023	27th February 2024	The change in key experts presented challenges in remote testing of the codes, leading to a lot of back-and-forth communication. They also encountered unforeseen technical issues.
Environmental and Social Impact Assessments for Blue Investment Fund Application, Providence Industrial Zone & Fish Processing Land, Zone 14, Ile Du Port	30th April 2022	31st January 2024	The finalization of the ESIA report was delayed due to the need for information from a concurrent consultancy. The ESIA consultant had to wait for the approved plans and final report for the Development of Infrastructure Services for Ile Du Port to incorporate into the ESIA report for Fish Processing Land, Zone 14.
Development of a Social Accounting Matrix and the Artisanal Fisheries Component of Seychelles' Fisheries Satellite Account	30th November 2021	30th January 2023	The data collection was delayed because the Seychelles National Bureau of Statistics lacked a CEO and technical staff to provide the necessary information.
Seychelles National Tuna Development and Management Plan	30th July 2023	31st May 2024	Significantly more stakeholder consultations and reviews were needed compared to the planned number. There were also delays in reviewing deliverables by the implementing partners.
Assessing the Potential of the Live Aboard and Yachting Industry	31st August 2023	31st August 2023	There were issues in collecting data, and the draft report did not meet the required standards. The consultant was asked to revise and improve it, necessitating additional time to deliver a better report.

Data capture software and upgrade of SIH'	9th May 2021	30th May 2023	Due to COVID-19, consultants were unable to travel. This consultancy depended on inputs from another ongoing consultancy funded by another agency. The delay in receiving the data consequently delayed this one as well.

Box 9: Beneficiaries point of view on the experienced bottlenecks.

DBE

Some delays at times, notably in line with local procedures e.g. local bank procedure.

DBS

Facilities not available, e.g infrastructure not yet in place

SFA (aquaculture)

The only main barrier was the legal one for accessing land, and to a lesser extent the bureaucracy at Seychelles Customs to import some containers which we put a lot of effort in for to have clearance well ahead of time.

An additional bottleneck at the beginning of the project was the misunderstanding by some Steering Committee members in keeping track of the project relevance and implementation. Not all the members actually understood what some of the projects were trying to achieve and it showed! Particularly from representatives of the Economic Planning/National Planning Department. Arguments about the simplest of programme activities led to time wastage and ridiculous discussions at times. If a project falls under a particular policy which has been approved by the government, then the project should be allowed to be implemented as submitted.

SFA (Fisheries management)

Only delays due to Covid19 resulting in unavailability of consultants due to changes in schedule.

DOE

Resource constraint- Human

External Factors and Dependencies: External factors such as regulatory changes, geopolitical instability.

DOF

Data gaps (e.g. Socioeconomic)

Capacity constraints.

III.4 Sustainability

The sustainability of the project is rated Substantial. The assessment of sustainability considers the extent to which the project has addressed risks during implementation and put in place mechanisms to ensure the continued flow of benefits after project completion. It evaluates risks to the sustainability of development outcomes and/or the project's benefits. The following three criteria has been rated: i) financial sustainability, ii) strengthening of capacities, and iii) ownership and sustainability of partnerships.

- What mechanisms have been put in place ensuring continued financing of remaining activities or upcoming program of activities?
- What activities of the project supported strengthened capacities? What measures were put in place ensuring their sustainability in the long term?
- What mechanisms have been put in place during project's preparation, appraisal and implementation guarantying ownership of the project activities by all stakeholders?
- What partnerships with regional or local institutions have been developed during project's implementation?
- What are the factors/risks (technical, financial, social, economic, political, environmental, or related to governmental/stakeholders' ownership and commitment) that could undermine sustainability and their mitigation measures?

III.4.1 Financial sustainability

What mechanisms have been put in place ensuring continued financing of remaining activities or upcoming program of activities?

Plan, Policy and strategy documents have been elaborated, such as, the 2019 Seychelles fisheries sector policy and strategy, the management plan framework for implementation of Seychelles' marine spatial plan, and the communication strategy, materials, and plan for the implementation of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan. These documents contain action plans which require resources to be implemented. The Government has taken steps to mobilize resources through the national budget and supports from other development partners such as commonwealth and the EU Funds.

The Blue Grants Fund (BGF) was launched by SeyCCAT in 2017 using proceeds of the debt restructuring deal ($21.6m) and the Blue Bond proceeds ($3m). In May 2022, SeyCCAT developed a comprehensive Blue Grants Award Strategy. The main objective was to formulate a roadmap to align the SeyCCAT Blue Grants Fund with the critical needs and priorities outlined in Seychelles' Marine Spatial Plan 2022-2024. The resulting strategy delivers a targeted action plan enabling SeyCCAT to strategically invest Blue Grants Fund proceeds over 2023-2025 for maximum impact.

The BIF was launched in April 2019 using 80% of the Blue Bond proceeds (US$12 million). The conclusions of a study on seafood value chains informed the eligible activities under the fund. Several businesses had submitted applications for financing under the BIF. However, no loans have yet been awarded. The Government has taken actions to solve the land access problem by investors. The new government moved quickly to address this constraint after taking office in

late 2020, with a competitive process established soon after to reallocate areas for development at Ile Du Port to committed investors. Several local businesses that have now been allocated land at the port are currently applying for loans or poised to do so.

The World Bank approved a restructuring of the BGF funds in June 2024 (prior to project closure), so as to reallocate funds from component 1 to component 2 and 3. The aim of this reallocation is to better link the activities of the BGF with the ultimate preparation and submission of future loans to be submitted to the Blue Investment Fund (BIF). Based on previous cycles of the BGF and past experiences, it is unlikely that the 8th call under the BGF (BGF8) will lead to exhaustion of the funds allocated to component 1, with most of the projects likely to be linked to Strategic objectives 2 and 5 under components 2 and 3. The main interest of the Government of Seychelles is to develop a pipeline of blue economy businesses that can lead to more bankable projects to be potentially funded under BIF, which implies that subsequent calls for proposal using blue bonds proceeds will have to specifically target SeyCCAT's Strategic objectives 2 and 5. This will contribute to the increase usage of the BIF.

Box 10: Beneficiaries point of view on the mechanisms that have been put in place ensuring continued financing of remaining activities or upcoming program of activities.

DBE

Payment of the salary of the PIU staff up to four months following project closure, and the integration in Government structure of an Environmental and Social Specialist post beyond project completion up to 2028.

DOE

Inclusion in DoE budget of the activities

Implementation of Biodiversity Finance Plan

Environment support (previously ETF)

SFA

Budget has been made to cater for the fuel cost for the surveillance vessel under the EU funds.

With regards to the draft Tuna Fisheries Management Plan, which was drafted under the SWIOFish3 Project, SFA will be reviewing the plan to make provision for staffing withing the 2025 budget for implementation of the Plan once finalised.

DBS

DBS will be budgeting for setting up the ESMS framework and policy within the Bank as well as training of staff on the same.

DOF

Government budget allocations to support implementation.

Seek alternative funding to match deficiencies.

III.4.2 Strengthening of capacities

What activities of the project supported strengthened capacities? What measures were put in place ensuring their sustainability in the long term?

The project strengthened capacities of the beneficiaries. It helped to address human and physical capacity constraints and weaknesses. The second component of the project focused on strengthening fisheries policy, governance, and management for a transition to sustainability. It addresses priority fisheries but also builds capacity for the benefit of the wider sector, including providing training in modern approaches to fisheries assessment and management, supporting improvements in data collection and management, and capacity building for fishers and their associations. Box 7 above shows the benefits/changes brought by the project which ensure sustainability. In addition, table 7 above highlights the detailed capacity building activities undertaken through the project and the beneficiaries.

Box 11: Beneficiaries point of view on the strengthened capacities brought by the project.

DBE

The project supported:

- Capacity building training targeting most internal and other local staff in the field of Maritime Boundaries and Ocean governance.
- Consultancies on gender assessment, and feasibility studies on the yacht industry and new emerging blue economy sectors.
- Development of communication tools and materials.
- Active participation in international thematic discussions.

DBS

The marketing team is more proactive and has learnt some good advertising techniques. It has also built capacity in project appraisal and the need for constant monitoring. The project assisted DBS to uplift its brand image and build its social and environment safeguard capacity.

SFA

The project supported the country's transition to sustainable fisheries. It supported institutional changes through activities such as capacity building for government agencies, establishment of collaborative platforms, and development of policy frameworks. Capacity building initiatives enhanced the technical expertise of government agencies responsible for fisheries management and aquaculture development, empowering them to make informed decisions and implement regulations effectively.

For the fisheries management information system, the project helped to:

- upgrade to a robust, scalable data infrastructure that supports our growing data needs
- allow automation and streamlined workflows that have increased efficiency and reduced errors

- put Data to be central to the decision-making process, leading to more informed and effective strategies
- have a strong data culture, with all staff recognizing the value of data and its role in our success.

The other aspects ensuring sustainability are the recruitment of database administrator and the training of key staff, including staff from the IT department, that enables further development by in-house staff to develop further projects in phases so that different phases can be undertaken as per annual budget availability.

For aquaculture, we undertook capacity building mostly in institutional enhancement by sending our staff on targeted/customised training to allow them to upgrade their skills for supporting the development of this sector.

DOE

Staff were able to participate in field surveys for Blue carbon, elasmobranchs

Workshops, seminars, and conferences facilitated knowledge sharing, networking, and collaboration among environmental professionals.

The project built the capacity of the staff through training on different issues including project monitoring and evaluation.

DOF

Employment survey and capacity needs assessment for the sector to guide future project development

Policy for Recruitment and Retention of local crew and skippers for the development of capacity in the sector

Upon completion of projects, the Department has requested complete datasets, as well as, implementation manuals and guidelines to ensure long-term use and continuity.

III.4.3 Ownership and sustainability of partnerships

What mechanisms have been put in place during project's preparation, appraisal and implementation guarantying ownership of the project activities by all stakeholders?

The project preparation and appraisal process has benefited from a multi-stakeholder consultation with government departments, business community and development partners. Consultations were held with various Government departments from the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade (MFNPT); the Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment. The project preparation also included discussions with the private sector representatives. The consultations with the stakeholders continue during project implementation through the project's steering committee with representatives of the beneficiaries and the world Bank supervision missions.

The management plans of the sustainable-use marine protected areas have been developed in a consultative manner. Stakeholder consultations and workshops were organised with different focus groups who will be directly or indirectly impacted by the management plans. This includes

environment related NGOs, Island Development Company (IDC), government ministries and departments (DOE, SFA, DOF etc). Once drafted a three-day validation workshop was organised to review and provide comments before finalisation.

In the fisheries sector, collaborative platforms facilitated dialogue and knowledge sharing among stakeholders, fostering cooperation and collective action. Policy frameworks were developed or revised to integrate sustainable practices, ensuring alignment with national priorities and international standards. To ensure long-term sustainability, measures were put in place including institutionalization of policies, continuous capacity building, robust monitoring and evaluation, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement to maintain ownership and relevance of the changes implemented.

In the environment sector, workshops, seminars, and conferences facilitated knowledge sharing, networking, and collaboration among environmental professionals.

Box 12: Beneficiaries point of view on the mechanisms in place guarantying ownership of the project activities.

DBE

Involvement of internal staff.

DBS

Trained staff

SFA

Fisheries management

All source codes of the projects have been provided to SFA and was a requirement in all contracts.

Aquaculture

All equipment and infrastructure have been handed over and all the necessary documentation has been secured and filed accordingly. Capacity building activities were all complemented with certificates at the end of the training periods.

DOE

Implementation – eg Management plan endorsement

DOF

The Department spearheads projects and continues engagement with stakeholders.

Internal coordination within the Department.

What partnerships with regional or local institutions have been developed during project's implementation?

Partnerships between key beneficiary entities of the project were developed for project implementation. The project was prepared and implemented jointly by the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade (MFNPT); the Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment. The MFTBE led the preparation and

the implementation of the project. The ministry was supported by the Department of Blue Economy in relation to technical coordination of the project. The other ministries were responsible for the implementation of their respective activities. The Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Energy was mostly involved in component 1, Department of Fisheries and the Seychelles Fisheries Authority led the implementation of components 2 and 3, for the most part. Other partnerships were developed during project's implementation.

Box 13: Beneficiaries point of view on the partnerships developed during project's implementation.

DBE

Partnership with DBS as we have one staff seating on the BIF Technical committee. The project has also strengthened the department's relationship with the World Bank counterpart.

DBS

SeyCCAT sits as an observer on the (DBS) Blue Investment Fund Evaluation Committee.

SFA

In the aquaculture sector, we have developed a very strong relationship with some commercial, training and research institutions particularly in Cape Town in South Africa, Kimagro Farm in Cyprus and Krabi in Thailand.

For the development of the Fisheries Information Management System, partnerships with key stakeholders such as the National Bureau of Statistics, Central Bank, Port Authority have been enhanced.

One project included participation of all technical departments, and this has enhanced the need to collaborate with those department t so that their data management system is also improved.

DOE

Through the project, the communication between the department and the World Bank has improved.

DOF

Steering committees were set up for oversight of individual project implementation, including various partners across the government and the private sector. However, there were issues with engagement and follow-up.

Partnership with various local institutions, such as MDAs, Environmental NGOs, Fisheries Associations, Educational Institutions and other key industry representatives.

III.4.4 Risks to development outcome

What are the factors/risks (technical, financial, social, economic, political, environmental, or related to governmental/stakeholders' ownership and commitment) that could undermine sustainability and their mitigation measures?

Table 11: Key risks to sustainability and mitigation measures

Risks	Mitigation measures
Slow disbursement of the BIF. Award of leasehold titles and pace of public infrastructure development at Ile Du Port slowed disbursements of the BIF to potential beneficiaries	DBE should continue to promote integrated Government solutions and prioritisation and hold regular meetings with investors.
No frequent air surveillance trips in sustainable-use marine protected areas. In the year 2023, no air surveillance trips were undertaken due to unavailability of aircraft from SPDF. SPDF is operating with a limited number of aircraft due to breakdowns or ongoing maintenance which was the case in 2023.	MACCE should sign an MOU with The Seychelles Coast Guard/Airforce to build better collaboration.
Fisheries Information Management System not functional. There is high turnover of trained staff and lack of a database administrator that can affect the functioning of the FIMS.	A team should be dedicated for the functioning of the FIMS and a database administrator should be recruited.
Fisheries economic intelligence information not publicly accessible. The FEIU has not published any information to date.	The FEIU should publish the fisheries economic intelligence information.
Limited funding. Additional funding is needed to implement recommendations from the multiple plans, policies, and strategies elaborated and to ensure the maintenance of the equipment bought through the project.	The Government should allocate resources through the national budget and mobilize supports from development partners.

III.5 Impacts

The impacts of the project are rated Substantial. This section assesses any effects and impacts of the operation that were not covered in previous sections - whether intended or unintended, positive, or negative, including impacts on gender, youth, institutional strengthening, mobilizing private sector financing, environment, and poverty reduction and shared prosperity.

III.5.1 Gender

Gender assessment in the Blue Economy sector

The project financed a study on "Gender assessment in the Blue Economy sector, September 2023". The report offers a comprehensive analysis of gender dynamics within the Seychelles Blue Economy, providing valuable insights to inform policies aimed at achieving gender equality in the sector. The study's objectives include informing relevant authorities about the current gender landscape, identifying gender disparities and their underlying causes, and providing recommendations backed by data-driven insights to foster gender balance and opportunities in the Blue Economy. The study focuses on four (4) core sectors of the Blue Economy, specifically marine security, maritime/coastal tourism, port development/shipping, and Education/training. The report provided recommendations on the following areas: (i) addressing gender inequalities and disparities in the Blue Economy; (ii) gender stereotyping in the Blue Economy; (iii) salary disparity within the Blue Economy; (iv) childbearing within the Blue Economy; (v) the situation of stevedores; and (vi) gender mainstreaming within the Blue Economy. In addition, the project supported capacity building activities taking into consideration gender aspects (table 7 above).

III.5.2 Youth

Youth participation in economic opportunities within the Blue Economy sector

On the 3rd of December 2021, the Blue Economy Department in collaboration with the Youth and Sports Department brought together in a workshop some 20 Youth participants from various sectors and 10 ministerial representatives to assist in vetting a list of key actions and recommendations to maximize participation and economic opportunities for youth in the Blue Economy Sector. The workshop's overall aim was to formulate a strategy document.

Two pre-session workshops were organized with the youth participants on the 11th and 26th November 2021 at the Blue Economy Department and the Youth and Sports Department's conference room respectively, to discuss and propose key actions and recommendations according to the six thematic areas (youth and sports, emerging sectors, education, tourism sector, fisheries sector, ports and marine transport sector) identified in the three studies conducted in the Blue Economy Sector in Seychelles and the survey conducted to identify Blue Economy projects in the public Service. The key actions and recommendations were then used to feed into the main capacity building session where these were vetted by the ministerial representatives.

The workshop explored the different key actions and recommendations identified by the youth participants and brought about discussions to vet those presented and identify new actions and recommendations that could be included in the final strategy document. An additional objective was to engage youth in the process of policy development so that they could eventually take leadership roles in the Seychelles' Blue Economy.

Marine Scholarship Programme

The project financed a Marine Scholarship Programme which offered a comprehensive nine-month training programme for 18–25-year-old Seychellois with a passion and commitment to the marine sector. Its objectives were to: (i) develop a marine science and conservation training Programme for young adults in Seychelles offering a comprehensive overview of theoretical and practical skills in a Seychelles context; (ii) deliver two training Programmes, each over a nine-month period with a minimum of six participants per Programme, between the ages of 18 and 25. including placements with partner organisations; (iii) build local capacity in the Blue Economy sector, by engaging and providing education and vocational opportunities to young adult Seychelles Nationals; (iv) increase access to marine and Blue Economy employment opportunities for young adult Seychellois.

Capacity building on aquaculture

In the aquaculture sector, the project has been very instrumental in building essential capacity of many young entrepreneurs and staff alike in echinoid and finfish farming. They are now very confident. Entrepreneurs have applied for aquaculture licences and submitted project proposals for funding under other projects as well.

III.5.3 Institutional strengthening

Under the subcomponent 2.3, the project supported the strengthening of the fisheries sector institutions. The key activities, among others, were: (i) Revision of Fisheries Act and regulations (Fisheries regulations for management measures of the Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan); (ii) Development of the 2019 fisheries sector policy; (iii) Preparation of policy and legal framework for beneficial ownership and joint ventures; (iv) Institutional policy and structure of SFA (Performance management system; SFA Board support for strategic plan to guide organizational restructuring); (v)Embracing marketing as a core mandate for the sector (creation of a trade and marketing unit within the Department of Fisheries); (vi) Technical assistance on strengthening capacity for Sanitary and Phytosanitary control and the role of the Fish Inspection and Quality Control Unit.

III.5.4 Mobilizing private sector financing

The Seychelles blue bond was partially guaranteed by a US$5 million guarantee from the World Bank (IBRD) and further supported by a US$5 million concessional loan from the GEF which partially covered interest payments for the bond. The innovative financial transaction, which was concluded in October 2018, raised US$15 million from international investors (Calvert Impact Capital, Nuveen and U.S. Headquartered Prudential Financial, Inc.) to support marine conservation, a transition to sustainable fisheries and investment in the blue economy.

III.5.5 Environment

Through its first component, the project supported activities that have contributed to the expansion and management of Seychelles' protected area network, which was expanded to cover 30% of the EEZ in March2020. The boundaries of the sustainable-use MPAs have been designated. The management plans for those sustainable-use areas have been finalised and endorsed. The governance structure for overseeing those new designated areas was also set up and became operational in 2023. In addition, among others, the project helped to develop the Coral Reef Policy and Strategic Action Plan 2022 and develop a harvest strategy policy and management standards for Seychelles fisheries and sustainable use MPAs. An Environmental and Social Specialist was

recruited under the project and environment and social impact assessments were conducted on projects submitted for financing through the Blue Grants Fund and the Blue Investment Fund.

Box 14: Beneficiaries point of view on the environmental impact of the project

DBE

Several successful environmental activities were implemented.

Environmental and Social specialist was recruited under the project and committees were established along with a Grievance mechanism.

DBS

Thorough environment and social assessment were conducted on projects submitted for financing through the Blue Investment Fund.

SFA

The project had positive environmental impacts in the sense that it provided a new activity to enhance fish stock restoration while developing a new socio-economic sector for the country.

The project facilitated the fast-tracking of the commercialisation strategy for the government which is aiming to accelerate the transition from research to commercialisation by private sector.

The aquaculture sector already had in place its ESMP which was developed prior to the start of development in the sector and the start of any activities that were funded by the SWIOfish3 project.

Data availability and accessibility improve fisheries resource management and policy decisions related to the marine environment.

DOE

The project contributed towards environmental protection.

III.5.6 Social

Box 15: Beneficiaries point of view on the social impacts of the project

DBE

Provisions of employment for local professionals.Environmental and Social specialist was recruited under the project and committees were established along with a Grievance mechanism.

SFA

Employment Opportunities: The project likely generated employment opportunities in the aquaculture sector, contributing to poverty reduction and improved livelihoods for local communities as new licenses were taken up after the project implementation.

Community Engagement: By involving local stakeholders in project activities such as training programs and collaborative platforms, the project fostered a sense of ownership and empowerment, strengthening social cohesion and resilience.

Lot of precautions were taken during the ESIA done in 2016 which provided lot of mitigation measures for any aquaculture development in any case.

Effective data management can lead to better fisheries management, which in turn supports sustainable fishing practices. This benefits fishermen and their families by ensuring a stable livelihood.

The project helped to involve fishermen, through the fishermen associations representative in stakeholder's consultation to get their valuable insights on what is happening in the fisheries that the data may be missing.

A complaint communication mechanism was in place.

The project also funded the Economic and Social Impact assessment of a new Fisheries product development zone.

DOE
The project promoted the involvement of communities.

DOF

Creation of employment for local consultant.

Capacity building for actors in the industry.

Improve relations with the industry through increased stakeholder consultations.

Facilitating access to education (S5 School Leavers, Skippers training).

Support and educate local communities on sustainable use of resources.

IV. PERFORMANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS

Under this section, the performance of the World Bank, Government, implementing agencies, and beneficiaries is assessed using both qualitative and quantitative information as available. This information provides valuable insights and explanations to the performance dimensions (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impacts).

IV.1 Performance of the World Bank

The performance of the World Bank is rated Satisfactory. During the project's preparation, the World Bank held discussions with the beneficiaries and Government officials to identify their needs. Services provided by the World Bank supported effective project's implementation. The project's supervision and reporting were adequate. The in-country supervision missions were very helpful. During supervision missions, the World Bank's team was always composed of staff with high-level multidisciplinary skills, particularly experts on natural resources management, environmental and social safeguards, fisheries specialist, guarantee specialist, lawyer, financial management, and procurement. The team made concrete recommendations which led the Government to take the necessary corrective measures in time for satisfactory implementation of the project. Withdrawal applications and approvals were done through Client Connection. Procurement was done through the Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP). The use of these systems provided avenues for fast and convenient services while ensuring proper documentation of project transactions. The World Bank

communication with the PIU was highly effective. The successive task managers maintained very good relationship with all the coordinators and were very helpful. The World Bank's team provided continuous support and guidance. There was a positive attitude towards providing effective support to Seychelles which was felt throughout the project even through handing over to new staff along the way. The World Bank staff delivered training on E&S safeguards to eighteen (18) participants from the DBS, SeyCCAT, DOE, DOF, DBE, SFA, DFA, and PIU. There were prompt responses from the World Bank in the procurement processes.

IV.2 Performance of the Government

The performance of the Government is rated Satisfactory.

IV.2.1 Coordination, Cooperation, and fiduciary arrangements

Coordination and cooperation. The project was prepared and implemented jointly by the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade (MFNPT); the Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) embedded in the MFBE managed the implementation of the project under the oversight of a Steering Committee chaired by the BDE. The committee includes representatives from the beneficiaries' institutions. It met at least twice a year to better monitor progress and coordinate implementation. There was good cooperation (esp. active participation) amongst committee members. The PIU maintained frequent communication and met regularly with implementing partners to assess the status of implementation of the project' activities, adjust, when necessary, the activities for the results' achievement. Stakeholder consultation and engagement was done throughout the project. The government platform provided opportunities for all to raise any concerns.

The PIU has supported the operations of DBS and SeyCCAT in their implementation of the BIF and BGF. It coordinated key processes such as ensuring eligibility with Project frameworks, undertaking environmental and social screenings, and supporting monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, the PIU has established (and reconstituted) the Technical Committee of the BIF, the structures supporting the GRM, and serves as observers to the Grants Committee of SeyCCAT.

Procurement assessment. The delay in the recruitment of a procurement assistant hampered the project's implementation. The absence of a dedicated Procurement Assistant until 2020 significantly slowed implementation and undermined compliance with national and World Bank procurement standards. However, the project adopted swift procurement process that facilitated the implementation of activities. Throughout the project, the procurement assistant maintained close collaboration (via email) with the Procurement manager which ensured that World Bank procurement system was being followed and adhered to.

Financial management assessment. The overall assessment done by the World Bank on the project's financial management during implementation was respectable. The finance team was well guided by the World Bank Team and support was always provided when requested. Overall, no bottlenecks were experienced, and no issues were found during financial management assessments, apart from slight delays in submission of Audited Financial Statements.

Auditing. There was one (1) internal audit and seven (7) external audits done during the project lifetime. The main findings of the audits and steps taken to improve them are:

- Applicability of withholding tax (WHT) on the consultancy fees was not considered as per the Business Tax Act 2009. In the beginning WHT was not applied to any contracts. But as per Seychelles regulations, tax needed to be paid especially by international consultants. In 2022, Department of finance agreed to pay the tax on behalf of the consultants to address this shortcoming. WHT amount started appearing in the contract and deduction was done by finance upon processing of invoices.
- Audit could not review the procurement aspect for the selection of the consultant. This was mainly because the project did not have a procurement person as this role was being done by the Project Manager. The files got well maintain upon the arrival of the procurement assistant which resolve this issue.
- Delays encountered in project completion against deliverables as per the Contract Agreement which meant deliveries was approved after contract had expired. At times this was beyond the control of the PIU or implementing partners. There were external issues such as policy not being set on time or restrictions to legislations, COVID pandemic etc. In such cases addendum are now drafted and signed to that consultant would have more time to address these challenges and complete the work with an ongoing contract.
- Before 2020, PIU was just submitting the monthly invoices for the services- in Audit 2020- a recommendation was made that PIU staff needs to provide a report of monthly work done, target for the following month so that the progress could be monitored. This was implemented by the PIU.
- Authorisation of payments- in 2020 audit, PIU was advised that we need approval from implementing partners and not only authorisation from Project manager and Ps. Following that all deliverables and invoices was approved by email first by the implementing and monitoring partners before any invoices was processed and approved by PM and Ps.

IV.2.2 Effectiveness of the M&E System

A well-designed Results Framework supported the M&E system. A core set of PDO indicators and intermediate indicators with baselines and targets was agreed on with the Government during project preparation. The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist was recruited two (2) years after the start of project's implementation. The PIU maintained communication channels and met regularly with implementing partners, who also contributed by providing information for the compilation of the quarterly reports.

The Project has largely met its quarterly reporting intervals since effectiveness and reports were disseminated to partners, the SC, the World Bank and Blue Bond investors. However, the PIU has been unable to comply with the requirement, set out in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), to produce annual progress reports. In addition to requirements of the PIM, the Project has also reported (7 memoranda/ information notes) to the Cabinet of Ministers for updates and purposes of inter-ministerial coordination and decision-making.

The Annual Work Plan Budgeted (AWPB) has been used by the PIU and partners for Project tracking and planning since project preparation began in 2016 and it forms the basis for preparing the procurement plan each year. Spanning all years from project preparation to the closure date, the AWPB captures completed activities, activities under implementation in the current year and activities planned for years forthcoming. While components and subcomponents have largely remained unchanged since inception, some sub-headings (groupings) and activities

have changed over time as the Project adapts to current context, partner priorities and needs in marine conservation, fisheries and the blue economy.

IV.2.3 Performance of the Blue Bond placement

Was the government effective in mobilizing resources from the Blue Bond placement?

The performance of the Blue Bond placement is rated Highly Satisfactory. The Government of Seychelles, World Bank and partners announced the launch of the World's first sovereign Blue Bond on October 29th, 2018[2]. The Seychelles blue bond is partially guaranteed by a US$5 million guarantee from the World Bank (IBRD) and further supported by a US$5 million concessional loan from the GEF which will partially cover interest payments for the bond. The innovative financial transaction, which concluded earlier that month of October, raised US$15 million from international investors (Calvert Impact Capital, Nuveen and U.S. Headquartered Prudential Financial, Inc.) to support marine conservation, a transition to sustainable fisheries and investment in the blue economy under the framework of SWIOFish3. Disbursement of the proceeds of the Blue Bond to SeyCCAT and DBS, to capitalise the BGF and BIF, respectively, began in 2019.

IV.3 Performance of the Blue Grants Fund

The performance of the Blue Grants Fund is rated Satisfactory.

Was the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) effective in the management of the Blue Grants Fund (existence of operations and procedures manual, communication strategy, selection committee, Board approval, number of beneficiaries, type, sector of activity, etc)?

Results achieved

The Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) is an independent, public-private trust fund committed to advance policies and investment around marine conservation, the blue economy, and climate change. SeyCCAT was established in 2015 to manage an innovative debt for nature restructure between the Government of Seychelles (GoS) and the Paris Club of creditors, supported by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), notably the development of a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for its 1.35 million km2 Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

The Blue Grants Fund (BGF) is one of the flagship grant programs of SeyCCAT. It was launched by SeyCCAT in 2017 using proceeds of the debt restructuring deal ($21.6m), with the 1st call for proposals issued earlier that year. Subsequently, the 2nd (2018), 3rd (2019), 4th (2020), 5th (2021), 6th (2022), 7th (2023) and 8th (2024) calls for proposals made available Blue Bond proceeds through the BGF. Since its inception, the BGF has funded 87 projects and allocated a total of SCR 63,094,126.24 (approx. USD 4.7 million) across all 5 strategic objectives and funding streams. The number of BGF applications received by SeyCCAT has increased over time as communication and awareness of the fund developed. Grants have been awarded to a wide range of civil society organisations, academic institutions, MDAs, businesses, and individuals. Further details of the projects funded by the BGF using Blue Bond proceeds, in terms of how they relate to SWIOFish3 components, is provided below. SeyCCAT has financed 48 projects using Blue

[2] https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/10/29/seychelles-launches-worlds-first sovereign-blue-bond

Bond proceeds (12 small size, 15 medium size, and 21 large size) from the 2nd to the 7th call for proposals.

Table 12: Numbers of BGF projects funded by Blue Bond proceeds by call for proposals, grant size and SWIOFish3 component.

Year	Call for proposals	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Total
2018	BGF 2	2	1	1	**4**
2019	BGF 3	3	6	5	**14**
2020	BGF 4	1	1	3	**5**
2021	BGF 5	2	4	1	**7**
2022	BGF 6	9	0	0	**9**
2023	BGF 7	1	5	3	**9**
	Total	**18**	**17**	**13**	**48**
	Small	3	6	3	**12**
	Medium	7	4	4	**15**
	Large	8	7	6	**21**

A total amount of US$3 million of Blue Bond proceeds had been disbursed to SeyCCAT as per the subsidiary agreement. The Subsidiary Agreement with the Government of Seychelles ended on December 31st, 2023. There is an unspent balance of SCR 10,435,302.00 (USD 745,378.00) from the Blue Bond proceeds. A total amount of USD2,658,550 has been awarded in terms of grant (42.9 percent for activities related to component 1, 29.6 percent to component 2, and 27.5 percent to component 3).

Figure 3: Breakdown of the funds awarded by SWIOFish3 component in percent.

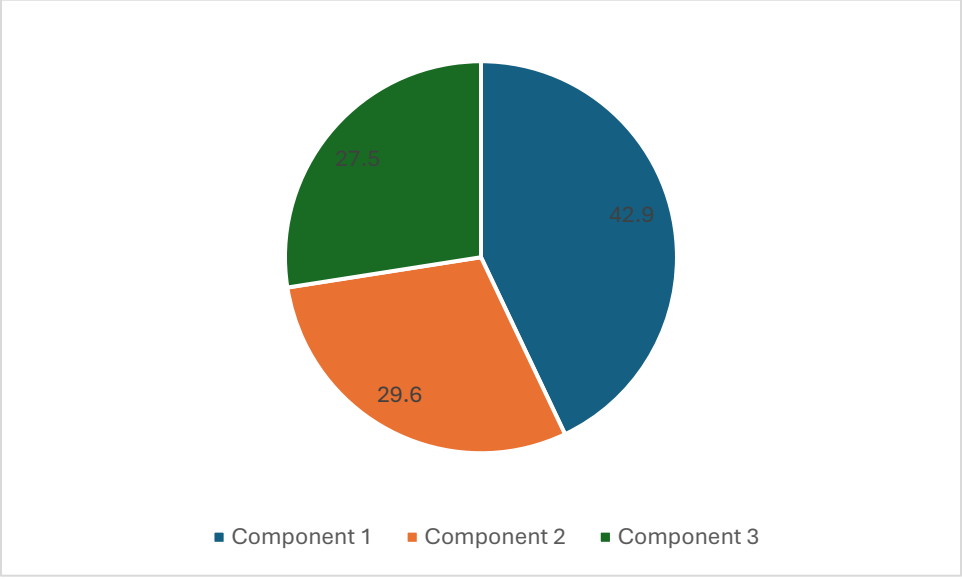
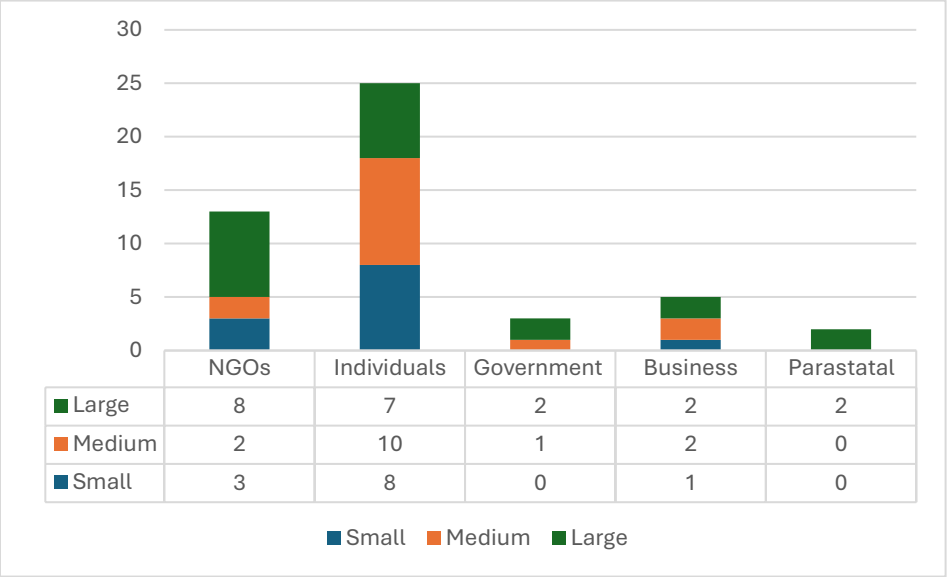


Figure 4 below depicts the number of projects funded by type of beneficiaries. It shows that individuals (25 projects) and NGOs (13 projects) are most of the beneficiaries. The total number of projects funded for men (26) are more than those for women (22).

Figure 4: Breakdown of the number of projects funded by type of beneficiaries.



The 8th Cycle was launched on April 15, 2024, with a 6-week application window. BGF 8 accepted applications for projects supporting any of the three strategic objectives. A total of 51 applications were received during this call for proposals. The proposals are currently under review by the Grants Committee. Decisions are expected to be finalized by December 2024, and successful applicants will be notified by January 2025.

The fund has increasingly enabled CSOs, NGOs, MDAs, academia, individuals, and businesses to contribute to the strategic objectives of the BGF and the SWIOFish3 PDO and components. These include the provision of new biological and behavioural data on commercially important reef fish, seabird behavioural ecology to inform the SMSP, coastal habitat assessment and socioeconomics of small-scale fisheries. While conservation-orientated NGOs have demonstrated considerable success in accessing the fund and implementing projects, SeyCCAT and BGF beneficiaries have recognised some difficulties in engaging with small-scale fishing communities and fisher associations have also been less successful in accessing the fund. Several projects focusing on the blue economy (Component 3) have been supported by the fund but have faced implementation challenges during the pandemic when activities focused on capacity building, stakeholder engagement and internships. As of end December 2023, 18 out of 48 projects have been completed under the Blue Grants Fund.

Knowledge Management and Communications

In May 2022, SeyCCAT embarked on a consultancy to develop a comprehensive Blue Grants Award Strategy. The main objective was to formulate roadmap to align the SeyCCAT Blue Grants Fund with the critical needs and priorities outlined in Seychelles' Marine Spatial Plan 2022-2024. The strategy development process included conducting extensive background research and stakeholder consultations to identify:

- Key issues and gaps in marine conservation and climate adaptation funding.
- Priority geographic regions/zones for investment.
- High-impact initiatives warranting support.

- Modalities beyond traditional project grants.
- Refinements to the project cycle and monitoring mechanisms.

The resulting strategy delivers a targeted action plan enabling SeyCCAT to strategically invest Blue Grants Fund proceeds over 2023-2025 for maximum impact. By channelling funds towards the most pressing marine conservation and climate change adaptation interventions, the Blue Grants Fund will continue empowering local stakeholders to advance Seychelles' blue economy transition. The exercise has been very useful for SeyCCAT secretariat to adopt continuous improvement approach in how it performs.

In addition, SeyCCAT has media presence through website and social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram). It has made several publications, developed videos, and conducted training and workshops.

Monitoring and Evaluation

SeyCCAT continued employing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework during the year 2023 to track progress of Blue Grants Fund projects and provide supportive oversight of grantees. The monitoring and evaluation calendar guides regular data collection through grantee reporting, site visits, and performance review meetings. Over the year, the SeyCCAT team held site visits to physically inspect project implementation and conducted report review meetings to assess achievements and provide feedback. Additionally, four projects were completed in 2023, SeyCCAT conducted terminal evaluations on this subset to analyze results against original project proposals and document lessons learned to inform future funding decisions. Insights from monitoring and evaluation are systematically integrated to enhance SeyCCAT's granting processes, including the recent iterative improvements made to application forms, reporting templates, evaluation criteria and capacity building activities. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation remain essential to evaluate project efficacy, account for the prudent use of funds, and ensure the SeyCCAT Blue Grants Fund continues meeting national conservation and climate adaptation priorities.

Challenges

Despite the successes of the BGF, several challenges have been faced in administering Blue Bond proceeds through the BGF. These include:

- Since the outset, SeyCCAT have raised concerns that the level of management fees provided by Government of Seychelles is insufficient to cover their responsibilities for administration of the Blue Bond proceeds.
- For the first two calls for proposals, SeyCCAT had limited internal capacity or external support for communicating and raising awareness of the opportunities provided by the BGF and sharing information on how to successfully apply. This was partly addressed by SWIOFish3 support since 2019.
- Application process considered burdensome by some applicants. In spite of perceived complexity or burden, SeyCCAT has improved information and guidance, while enhancing capacity building on how to apply and streamlining the application process, inclusive of support provided by SWIOFish3.
- The BGF Grants Committee, comprising local experts providing their services voluntarily, has often raised concerns over the limited time afforded for reviewing

concept notes and proposals, and also the volume of work as the application rate increased.

- The quality of concept notes and full proposals varies greatly and can pose problems for evaluation and the potential for success. Targeted capacity building efforts have gone some way to improving quality, but variation is probably unavoidable given the wide range of targeted beneficiaries and limited capacity in Seychelles, particularly as civil society organisations are still inexperienced relative to the NGO sector.

Other key challenges and risks:

Delays in Reporting. A number of grantees have faced delays in submitting timely progress and final reports. This has held up review processes, disbursements to subsequent project stages, and full visibility into implementation status. Reasons ranged from limited organizational capacity, lengthy internal approvals, or external issues like COVID-19 or weather. This increased financial completion risks if current tranche payments are exhausted without oversight, along with project delays or results quality impacts from lack of monitoring. Strategies trialled include, Reporting Assistance Targeted one-on-one mentoring was provided by SeyCCAT staff to guide grantees facing reporting struggles. Personalized support in financial reporting, monitoring and evaluation, results frameworks, using SeyCCAT templates etc.

Delays in Internal Budget Approvals. When grantees needed to make adjustments across budget expenditures (e.g. shift funds from "Equipment" to "Personnel" costs due to project delays), the previous internal approval process at SeyCCAT was taking too long. This resulted in project delays when urgent budget shifts were pending that stalled activity execution. It also caused grantee frustration over slow turnarounds on critical fund reallocations. Secretariat has since streamlined the approval process depending on amount to be moved and this has significantly shortened the timeline for budget movements and has helped expedite the flow of funds.

Stakeholder Engagement. Multiple grantees noted difficulties when engaging government agencies and stakeholders during initial project development. Grantees have been advised to coordinate through SeyCCAT where such issues arise. This also indicates room for SeyCCAT to further foster buy-in and ownership within some national entities.

IV.4 Performance of the Blue Investment Fund

The performance of the Blue Investment Fund is rated Unsatisfactory.

Was the Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS) effective in the management of the Blue Investment Fund (existence of operations and procedures manual, communication strategy, selection committee, Board approval, number of beneficiaries, type, sector of activity, etc)?

Following the conclusion of the Blue Bond transaction in late 2018, the BIF was formally, launched in April 2019. The BIF uses 80% of the Blue Bond proceeds (US$12 million). Unlike the BGF, which had been launched by SeyCCAT prior to bond issuance, DBS required time to establish their internal operations for the BIF, while additional time was beneficial in allowing finalisation of a communication campaign and the conclusion of a study on value chains that informed the eligible activities under the fund. Several businesses had submitted applications for financing under the BIF.

Results achieved.

Five complete loan applications have been made to the BIF to date.

- The first application, for a fish processing facility, passed eligibility check and DBS finalised the credit agreement which was signed in Q1 of 2023. The PIU met with the investor soon after the ceremony to explain the safeguards requirements. The land parcel which is being leased from SFA was pledged as collateral and the investor has also make its personal contribution. The credit agreement for the loan which expired in April 2024 was renewed by the investor at a fee. First disbursement is expected to be made soon.
- The second application, for a fish processing facility, passed the eligibility check and was being assessed for administrative compliance by DBS. To date the applicant has not paid its application fee to DBS, so the project is on hold.
- In addition, DBS has also received the full business plan/cash flow for another applicant. In 2023, the file was forwarded to the Compliance department for customer due diligence, to obtain a compliance certificate while the promoter was finalising other outstanding issues. In Q3 of 2023, the application passed DBS internal compliance check. In Q4 of 2023, Certificate of compliance was issued, and PIU completed eligibility check and environmental and social screening. At June 2024, the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) had been finalised and approved by the World Bank. The application was with the BIF technical committee for review and approval before going back to DBS for financial appraisal and submission to the board.
- In Q1 of 2024, a new BIF application was submitted to PIU. At the end of Q1, the eligibility report was submitted to DBS for administrative compliance.
- In June 2024, another application had been made to DBS. However, some information is pending for DBS to conduct compliance check.

Several businesses expressing an interest have been allocated plots at Zone 14 of Ile Du Port and it was agreed that SWIOFish3 would finance a blanket Class 1 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for the newly demarcated fish processing zone. At the end of June 2024, the ESIA was completed and approved by the world Bank and the DOE.

The SWIOFish3 project financed another Class 1 ESIA for an aquaculture project. In Q1 2024, the ESIA report received a no objection from the World Bank and a notice of acceptance from the Department of Environment.

Challenges

The obstacles that had prevented the issuance of loans by the Blue Investment Fund (BIF) are the following:

- Format of proposal invitation. The BIF was launched, in April 2019, through a call for proposal format with an initial two-month application window, later extended by a month. Three applications were received in that first window. However, following concerns raised by other potential applicants that the format was not commensurate with the time needed for business plan development, the BIF was changed to an open format in December 2019, whereby applications could be made throughout the year.
- Applicant eligibility. One of the applications received after launch of the BIF was found to be ineligible as the business had not legally existed for two years. Recognising that was a barrier to start-ups or new joint venture companies, this eligibility criterion was removed in December 2019.
- Personal contribution. In 2020, the business community raised concerns that the personal contribution required by the BIF was not aligned with other concessionary loan schemes and that the Covid-19 pandemic had negatively impacted on their financial circumstances. Having initially been set at 20%, personal contribution was reduced to 10% in 2021.
- Perceived complexity of application and evaluation process. In addition to early concerns on the levee of personal contribution, some local investors also perceived that the fund was difficult to access because of a high administrative burden, including numerous, lengthy steps in evaluation and rigorous safeguards requirements. As evidenced by the increasing applications and expressions of interest received, direct outreach and capacity building support have helped in dispelling concerns. In addition, the project recruited a consultant to assist one BIF applicant with a Class 1 ESIA, with the same consultant also undertaking a blanket ESIA for all seven businesses allocated land at Ile Du Port.
- Communication strategy. Initial communications for the launch and early implementation of the BIF focused too broadly on conventional media and wider blue finance (i.e. synergistic BGF and BIF) opportunities for a broad audience. Starting in 2020, the communication strategy for the BIF was refined to target existing businesses and potential investors in the sector through direct outreach, which improved deeper understanding of fund requirements and benefits among those most likely to invest at scales commensurate with the unique loan offer of the BIF. Direct outreach and capacity building support has promoted better adherence with the BIF business plan and application formats, reducing the potential for delays that early applications encountered.
- Delays in the availability of land. Securing land for business development, in or near to ports for fish processing facilities, has proved problematic for investors. The

new government moved quickly to address this constraint after taking office in late 2020, with a competitive process established soon after to reallocate areas for development at Ile Du Port to committed investors. Several local businesses that have now been allocated land at the port are currently applying for loans or poised to do so.

- Leasehold arrangements. SFA hold the head-lease for most land and infrastructure at fishing ports. The legal process to transfer leases to investors is lengthy and has encountered problems (e.g. for long periods when SFA did not have a CEO). The absence of leases undermined early applicants to the fund. In part, this has been overcome at Ile Du Port, with agreement between DBS and Government that applications to the BIF can be processed on an early entry authorisation from SFA. However, leases will be required by DBS before any loans can be disbursed.
- Launching of the aquaculture sector. The BIF was intended as a key financing mechanism in support of aquaculture development in Seychelles. Delays in establishing the regulatory framework for aquaculture and formally launching the sector posed a barrier. The aquaculture sector has been launched and licenses are being issued, which was a prerequisite for loan applications.
- Investment climate. The investment climate in Seychelles was negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. With the local currency depreciating significantly and operations and markets disrupted by border closures, lockdowns, and other public health measures, the ability and confidence of businesses to invest in existing or new ventures were weakened by the pandemic.

IV.5 Performance of the Beneficiaries

The performance of the Beneficiaries is rated Satisfactory.

The following boxes present the outcomes of three successful projects financed through the Blue Grants Fund managed by SeyCCAT.

Box 16: Case study of a project under component 1 of the SWIOFish3 financed through the Blue Grants Fund

Grantee: Alphonse Foundation

Partners: Alphonse Group & Blue Safari

Grant size: Small

BGF funding: SCR 96,545.00

Co-financing in SCR: N/A

Project Summary: This project aimed to establish the first official inventory of fish species present in the shallow water marine habitats of the Alphonse Group. This area is made up of the Alphonse and St. Francois atoll, located 400km southwest of Mahé in the remote outer islands of Seychelles. The shallow water habitats in this region include coral reefs, sea grass beds and mangroves. Together, these highly interconnected ecosystems are among the most biodiverse on the planet, supporting over 25% of marine life. However, they face significant threats from climate change and resource exploitation. The project set out to survey and

catalogue fish diversity in these waters as a crucial step towards strengthening conservation efforts in the Alphonse Group.

Key Activities and Achievements: The project team spent 42 hours conducting photographic surveys of fish species across various shallow water locations. The images collected were analyzed to develop a photographic inventory that identified and catalogued the diversity of fish.

Key outputs delivered: - 479 fish species identified, indicating exceptionally high biodiversity. This included 9 species recorded for the first time in Seychelles' waters. - Documentation of range extension of the Pseudanthias parvirostris by 1,400km, previously only recorded as far west as Mauritius. - Photographic inventory developed and publication of complete species list found in survey area. - Stakeholders participated in training for fish species identification and survey methodology.

Outcomes: - Improved understanding and documentation of fish biodiversity in the shallow waters of Alphonse Group. Enhanced capacity in fish identification and underwater survey techniques for local conservation practitioners. - Increased national and global awareness of rich fish diversity around these outer island atolls, highlighting need for greater marine protection. - Recording of species threatened globally and locally with declining populations, including 3 Endangered/Critically Endangered and 9 vulnerable species as per IUCN criteria. Underscored urgency for safeguarding this near-pristine ecosystem.

By systematically documenting the marine life in these waters, this project delivered valuable biodiversity baseline data to strengthen management policies for marine conservation in the area. The engaged stakeholders are also better equipped to be stewards of the incredible fish diversity. Ongoing monitoring, education and protective measures will remain vital for securing the health of this ocean ecosystem.

Box 17: Case study of a project under component 2 of the SWIOFish3 financed through the Blue Grants Fund

Grantee: Keith Andre

Partners: James Michel Blue Economy Research Institute and University of Seychelles

Grant size: Large

BGF funding: SCR 533,000.00

Co-financing in SCR: 162,000.00

Project Summary: This project conducted an in-depth cost-benefit analysis of small-scale fisheries operations on Mahé Island, Seychelles. The analysis incorporated capital and operating costs along with revenue data to deliver an empirical baseline to inform stronger management of this vital economic sector. Complementing the financial analysis, value chain analysis mapped flows from fishermen to consumers, while a SWOT analysis compiled perspectives from fishers using a mobile app for data capture developed under the 'Abalobi' initiative.

Key Activities and Achievements: The project team pursued three core areas of analysis: - Cost-benefit analysis of Mahé Island's small-scale fisheries incorporating granular financial data. - Backward value chain analysis from consumers to fishermen focusing on popular fish species.

- SWOT analysis of Abalobi mobile app based on inputs from 30 local fishers. In addition, stakeholders were trained on using the data capture app Abalobi Lansiv.

Outputs: - Published cost-benefit analysis report on small-scale fisheries viability. - Peer reviewed paper published analysing climate change impacts on fisheries livelihoods. - Value chain analysis informing markets and pricing dynamics from fishermen to consumers.

Outcomes: - Comprehensive analyses delivered empirically grounded recommendations to improve governance of small-scale fisheries. - Evidence base to influence policy reforms presented to agencies like the Seychelles Fisheries Authority. - Spotlight on threats to fisheries sustainability from climate change and economic pressures. - Platform for stakeholder participation in sector governance provided through workshops.

Through leveraging data and engaging stakeholders across the spectrum from fishers to regulators, this project has delivered vital foundational insights for strengthening the management of artisanal fishing in Seychelles.

Box 18: Case study of a project under component 3 of the SWIOFish3 financed through the Blue Grants Fund

Grantee: Harmony Investments

Partners: Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA) Islands Development Company (IDC)

Grant size: Large

BGF funding: SCR 999,534.80

Co-financing in SCR: In Kind

Project Summary: This project pursued developing capacity for sea cucumber aquaculture in Seychelles through a collaborative effort between the grantee and the Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA). A smallscale research and development (R&D) hatchery was set up at SFA's Brood stock Facility to breed and propagate juvenile sea cucumbers. The project aimed to build technical expertise and produce protocols for the hatchery system as a stepping stone towards commercial scale production. Integrating sea cucumber aquaculture into existing systems was also explored using polyculture models.

Key Activities and Outputs: The main undertakings of the project included: 1. Design and setup of a microalgae culture lab to reproduce multiple isolated species as live feeds for the hatchery, along with documentation of standardized operating procedures. 2. Testing sustainable integrated multi-tropic aquaculture (IMTA) models to incorporate sea cucumber juveniles from the hatchery into current and future aquaculture systems. 3. Preparing a feasibility analysis on scaling up capacities for commercial sea cucumber farming in Seychelles.

Additional outputs delivered: - Hatchery handbook detailing technical configurations and specifications of equipment. - Compiled handbook on location-specific hatchery techniques for sea cucumber. - Hatchery experiment findings, particularly related to spawning rates.

Outcomes: The project succeeded in its primary deliverable - establishing a functioning sea cucumber R&D hatchery at SFA's Facility. This sets the stage for further pilots and refinement of propagation methods while building local skills. The assumption that overfishing from wild stocks threatens sea cucumber populations was also validated by a recent European Union scientific study. This underscores the need for alternative approaches like aquaculture to ensure sustainability. By driving innovation in this sector, demonstrable pathways have been paved for Seychelles to secure optimal value from its marine resources while also advancing blue economy growth.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 13. Recommendations of the mid-term evaluation and achievements

Recommendations	Achievements
Restructure SWIOFish3 for a one-year no-cost extension. The completion date would be revised from 30th June 2023 to 30th June 2024.	The project's completion date was revised from 30th June 2023 to 30th June 2024. This has allowed for implementation of all activities in the procurement plan and achievement of the PDO. The extra year has also allowed the project to put greater emphasis on communication of project results and outcomes.
During restructuring, prioritize and consolidate activities to improve the responsiveness and relevance of planned activities to the PDO and results framework as well as to the needs dictated by the current context and emerging priorities within the fisheries sector.	The AWPB was updated following the extension to cater for new emerging priorities in the fisheries sector and communication of the SWIOFish3 results.
Work with the Department of Fisheries and other partners to review strategies (Fisheries Policy and Strategy 2019) and develop an action plan for opening dialogue aimed at addressing pervasive drivers of overfishing (e.g. overcapacity, open access, subsidies).	This has been done. The project funded the review of the fisheries policy in 2022 as well as a study of the impact of climate change on the fisheries sector which was completed in June 2024. The results of the study will help the government to really understand the impact and make informed decisions to improve fish stocks. The project also funded a study to quantify public sector support to the fisheries sector. This provided the government with better understanding on the number and value of subsidies being provided and recommendations on ways to better manage these to avoid abuse and overfishing.
Develop a science to policy framework to promote enhanced uptake of outputs and results from activities and sub-projects supported by SWIOFish3.	To bridge the gap between scientific research and policymaking, ensuring that scientific findings are effectively translated into actionable policies and practices the project funded a communication campaign which had two main aspects related to this recommendation: 1. Producing one-page summaries for all assignments funded under the project. This has been

	uploaded on the MOFBE website and handed over to all partners for easy reference. 2. Communication of SWIOFish3 findings, results and activities funded.
As part of restructuring, revise the project results framework in terms of any changes to indicators and their measurement and targets as recommended in the MTR.	This was not done. But the project found ways to collect data for PDO that lacked data, particularly the PDO3 and PDO4.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Table 14 below summarizes the key lessons learned and recommendations of the evaluation. These lessons are all applicable to similar operations in the country and other countries.

Table 14. Key Lessons Learned and recommendations.

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
Relevance			
The project was linked with the country national priorities and beneficiaries needs	During the project's design, the World Bank held discussions with the beneficiaries and Government officials to identify their needs.	The project is aligned with the 2005 Fisheries Policy, 2019 Fisheries Policy, the Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023, the Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020. It is also a key contributor to Seychelles 2015 Intended Nationally Determined Contribution. These documents identify the country' needs, some of which are consistent with the project' activities. This has contributed to smoothening the implementation of the project activities.	The Government and the Bank should ensure that the project is linked to the national priorities and beneficiaries needs.
The project adopted a good approach in helping the country to deal with the negative effects of climate change.	The project development objective is clearly stated and oriented towards climate-smart ocean management. The components are strategically linked and contributed to the PDO.	Expanding the network of marine protected areas and promoting cautious management of fisheries are the two pillars of the project's ecosystem-based adaptation approach. In addition, the project intended to help the Seychelles diversify its economy and reduce its vulnerability to climate change by expanding the seafood value chains.	To ensure better impact, the project should take a holistic approach combining marine resources protection, management, and investment leading to greater value added of the fisheries sector and diversification.

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
The project's design has been particularly innovative.	The funding approach is appropriate for the intended results of the project.	The Project is built around the proceeds of the Seychelles Sovereign Blue Bond, the first of its kind issued globally, and mirroring green bonds that had been placed previously, but placed with impact investors who are specifically focused on addressing ocean challenges. Blending conventional project financing (IBRD loan, GEF grant) with the Blue Bond proceeds, Seychelles is supporting public and private sector and civil society collaboration towards meeting shared objectives for ocean conservation, improved fisheries governance, and sustainable blue economy growth.	Combine conventional project financing (loan or grant) with Blue Bond proceeds for effective resource mobilization and involve the private sector and the civil society in a collaborative manner for achievement of the intended results of the project.
Effectiveness			
The project has been successfully implemented.	A good and cohesive Project Implementation Unit with qualified and experienced staff has been established.	The PIU maintained a great working relationship with the implementing organizations and interacted with them regularly. The project had environmental and social safeguards which played a key role in weeding out unsustainable projects under the BGF and avoided time wasting.	Regularly assess project progress, identify areas for improvement, and adapt strategies based on challenges and constraints. Keep stakeholders informed and regularly assess alignment with their goals.
The aquaculture sector was taken to a next level of development	Critical funding was made available for the development of this important socio-economic sector. It was hard to	The project's document highlighted the challenges in the fisheries sector and the need to develop the aquaculture sector.	Ensure continuous engagement in the aquaculture sector with greater stakeholders' consultations to

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
	provide support to develop a new sector when the fisheries sector had recurring challenges, and all the focus and attention was still being placed there.	The project supported initiatives to strengthen the enabling environment for local investments in the aquaculture sector (environmental and social impact assessments, capacity building, and training courses and long-term human capital development plan).	understand their needs, expectations, and priorities. Document successes, challenges, and adjustments required. Use these insights for future projects.
No frequent air surveillance trips in sustainable-use marine protected areas.	The project has supported the establishment and the elaboration of management plans for the sustainable-use marine protected areas as part of the Seychelles Marine Spatial Planning Initiative (SMSP). However, no resources were allocated to air surveillance of these areas.	In the year 2023, no air surveillance trips were undertaken due to limited budget and availability of aircraft from SPDF.	The Government should allocate budget for air surveillance trips to be undertaken.
Capacity building activities contributed to the achievement of the PDO.	The project combined policy/strategy/plan development with institutional reforms and capacity building.	The capacity building activities were diverse covering multiple sectors including fisheries, aquaculture, seafood value-chain, maritime boundary delimitation, environment and social safeguards, data analysis, blue economy, financial management, and procurement. In addition, the beneficiaries were diverse including representatives from the government, civil society, NGOs, and private sector.	Capacity building is key for a successful project's implementation. It should be designed and conducted in close collaboration with all stakeholders.

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
Efficiency			
The project was implemented with some delays	The timelines were tight and disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.	The Government maintained an existing Project Implementation Unit within the MFTBE comprised of qualified and experienced personnel in adequate numbers. However, the delay in the recruitment of a procurement assistant significantly slowed the project's implementation. Resources of the Blue Bond were successful mobilized in a timely manner because of the close collaboration between the Government of Seychelles, the World Bank and other partners. The major bottlenecks that caused delays are the following: the underestimation of the time required for some activities; COVID-19 which was a major issue preventing stakeholder's consultations and travel; the change in key experts dedicated to work with the consultants; the lack of collaboration from some government officials to provide information to the consultants; some consultancies depending on inputs from other ongoing consultancies; VAT clearance on imported goods.	Avoid the launching of many activities at the same time as it overloads staff. Prioritize essential features and functionalities and schedule the activities timeline with possible delays. Activities should be given a reasonable time for implementation and close monitoring is needed. Ensure a clear sequencing of linked activities in the project's implementation plan. Improve the consultants' access to information by reinforcing the availability of technical staff to provide information and limiting the frequent turnover of key experts. Ensure agreements to clear VAT payments on any importation of goods as part of the project in a smoother way to ensure more efficient processes.

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
The project landed socio-economic benefits in a successfully completed innovative blue economy project.	The funding was adequate for the desired outcomes.	The project helped to bridge the knowledge gap in some specific areas. The project financed technical assistance for the elaboration/development of management plans, guidelines, regulations by involving all stakeholders. The TA provided on-the-job training for ownership which allows knowledge transfer. Funding from the SWIOFISH3 project contributed to research and innovation, capacity building, infrastructure development, and improved access to advanced technologies and expertise. The project contributed to enhance the positive public image of Seychelles for pursuing and following through with this innovative project for environmental protection and resources conservation. It facilitated the advancement of Seychelles' blue economy endeavors.	Ensure knowledge transfer, capacity building, research and innovation, infrastructure development, and access to advanced technologies for efficiency gains
Sustainability			
Stakeholder engagement and participation has ensured ownership of the project.	The project promoted multi-stakeholder consultation in all aspects.	The factors ensuring the sustainability of the project' results include the importance of stakeholder engagement and participation, the need for adaptive management approaches to address	Recommendations for sustaining the project' results include fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, investing in capacity building and knowledge sharing, promoting innovation and

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
		dynamic environmental and socio-economic factors, and the significance of integrating sustainable practices into policy frameworks.	technology adoption, and prioritizing long-term monitoring and evaluation to assess progress and adapt strategies accordingly. Additionally, emphasizing ecosystem-based management approaches and fostering resilience to climate change will be vital for ensuring the long-term sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture in the Southwest Indian Ocean region.
Limited funding is a key risk for sustainability	The project supported the elaboration of multiple plans, policies, and strategies which require resources to be implemented. In addition, specialized equipment was bought.	Additional funding is needed to implement recommendations from these reports and ensure the maintenance of the equipment.	The Government should allocate resources through the national budget and mobilize supports from development partners.
Impacts			
The project led to positive environmental and social impacts.	The project promoted community engagement to reflect their concerns.	Key lessons learned from the impacts of the project include the importance of conducting thorough social impact assessments prior to implementation to identify potential risks and develop targeted mitigation strategies. Additionally, meaningful stakeholder engagement and participation are essential for addressing community concerns and ensuring project activities align with local needs and priorities. Capacity building and training programs play a crucial role in empowering	Conflict resolution mechanisms should be established to address any disputes or tensions that may arise during project implementation promptly. Recommendations for future projects include prioritizing community involvement, implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to assess impacts continuously, and fostering transparent communication channels to maintain trust and

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
		communities to participate effectively in project activities and maximize the benefits.	accountability. Additionally, flexibility and adaptability are crucial for responding to changing social dynamics and ensuring project outcomes align with sustainable development goals.
Gender and youth impacts are positive	The project considered gender and youth dimensions as cross-cutting issues in all the project' components	The project supported specific activities on gender and the participation of youth in economic opportunities within the Blue Economy sector. In addition, the project supported capacity building activities taking into consideration gender aspects.	Consider gender and youth for greater impacts.
Performance of stakeholders			
The effectiveness of the BGF evaluation Committee has been limited.	The BGF Grants Committee comprised local experts providing their services voluntarily.	The volume of work of the BGF Grants Committee increased with the increased number of applications.	Recommend the correct representations and knowledgeable candidates to sit on evaluation committees/boards e.g. in the case of BGF for SeyCCAT, this will ensure the right competencies to be able to properly and fairly evaluate applications. Nominations should not be per post (e.g. heads of organizations) but qualifications and experience in the relevant fields.
The performance of the Government is satisfactory.	The Monitoring and evaluation of the project was effective	The government promoted stakeholder consultation and engagement throughout the project. The government platform provided opportunities for all to raise any concerns. The PIU maintained communication channels and met regularly with implementing	Importance of Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies and NGOs is

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
		partners, who also contributed by providing information for the compilation of the project quarterly reports.	crucial and leads to more effective and sustainable outcomes. Adaptive Management Approach: Flexibility and adaptability are essential when implementing complex projects Local Context Matters: Understanding the local context, including cultural, social, and economic dynamics, was essential for the successful implementation of the project Monitoring and Evaluation: Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical for assessing the effectiveness of project interventions, identifying challenges, and capturing lessons learned.
The performance of the BIF is unsatisfactory.	The poor performance was mainly due to the difficult access to land near to ports by investors.	Securing land for business development, in or near to ports for fish processing facilities, has proved problematic for investors. In addition, SFA hold the head-lease for most land and infrastructure at fishing ports. The legal process to transfer leases to investors is lengthy and has encountered problems (e.g. for long periods when SFA did not have a CEO).	Ensure that the facilities are readily available before launching a project if you want to make it successful.

Facts	Findings	Lessons	Recommendations
		The absence of leases undermined early applicants to the fund.	

The lessons and recommendations from the satisfactory performance of the Blue Grants Funds are the following:

- Project Monitoring and Evaluation: Close monitoring and consistent evaluation of all grants projects has proven essential to keep track of progress, quickly identify issues, and take corrective actions when needed. Collecting detailed metrics will continue to be a priority.
- Grantee Capacity Building: Taking time to build the capacity of grantees through customized training sessions and one-on-one guidance has been very valuable, leading to better quality proposals and project execution. Capacity building of local partners will remain a cornerstone of our approach.
- Flexibility with Timelines: Providing no-cost extensions to grantees facing delays has allowed several projects to get successfully back on track. While maintaining timeliness, SeyCCAT must retain flexibility to adapt to unforeseen challenges that partners face.
- Multi-Stakeholder Participation: Facilitating workshops, forums and meetings with diverse stakeholders has led to greater collaboration, alignment, and information sharing. Bringing more voices to the table will continue to be emphasized.
- Communication and Visibility: Proactive communication about funded projects and grantees through media channels, videos, publications, and events has been beneficial both for transparency and to broaden awareness. Maintaining a focus on outward communication and visibility will be imperative.
- Continual Improvement: Iterating on processes based on past experience - whether modifying applications or reporting templates - has helped streamline operations. Regularly incorporating lessons learned to refine operational aspects will carry on.
- Project Proposal Timelines: Applicants invited to submit full project proposals should be given more than the current six weeks to complete their submission. We have observed delays and complaints that the timeframe is too short.
- One-on-One Guidance: Conducting one-on-one sessions with applicants have proven very helpful for the secretariat to provide elaboration on the application process and guidance.

- Targeted Capacity Building: Capacity building sessions conducted by the secretariat targeting stage two applicants have been very valuable. Sharing past BGF experiences and best practices enhances proposals.
- Streamlined Applications: Amendments made to streamline application forms (concept note and full proposal) have reduced repetition and provided more clarity to applicants.
- Grants Committee Enhancements: The secretariat has conducted several capacity building and refresher sessions with the committee to improve the evaluation process. Induction sessions were held for new members to aid integration. This has resulted in a more active, empowered and engaged committee.
- Reporting Process Improvements: Reporting templates have been amended to facilitate easier reporting for grantees after receiving feedback.
- Ongoing Grantee Support: The secretariat has taken initiative to continuously build capacity and provide guidance to grantees through organized capacity building sessions and one on one session to discuss progress reports.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation concludes that the project was a success with an overall Satisfactory rating (see table 15 below). Despite delays in the implementation of some activities due to the COVID19 pandemic, project implementation was efficient. Strong stakeholders' ownership, efficiency of support from the World Bank, a well-functioning PIU, and a participatory approach to project implementation were all elements that contributed to the success of the project. The partnership approach through the Steering Committee and many project activities is commendable. The project has greatly contributed to improve management of marine areas and fisheries in targeted zones and strengthen fisheries value chains in the Seychelles.

Table 15. Overall project final evaluation rating

Criteria	Rating
RELEVANCE	**High**
Relevance of project development objective	High
Relevance of project design	High
EFFECTIVENESS	**Substantial**
Development Objective (DO)	Substantial
EFFICIENCY	**Substantial**
Timeliness	Substantial
Cost-benefit analysis	Substantial
SUSTAINABILITY	**Substantial**
Financial sustainability	Modest
Strengthening of capacities	High
Ownership and sustainability of partnerships	Substantial
IMPACTS	**Substantial**
Gender	Substantial
Youth	Substantial
Institutional strengthening	High
Mobilizing private sector financing	High
Environment	Substantial
Social	Substantial
PERFORMANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS	**Satisfactory**
Performance of the World Bank	Satisfactory
Performance of the Government	Satisfactory
Performance of the Blue Bond placement	Highly Satisfactory
Performance of the Blue Grants Fund	Satisfactory
Performance of the Blue Investment Fund	Unsatisfactory
OVERALL PROJECT EVALUATION RATING	**Satisfactory**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

National Strategy

Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023, Department of Economic Planning Ministry of Finance, Trade, Investment and Economic Planning, Republic of Seychelles

Seychelles Fisheries Sector Policy and Strategy, Republic of Seychelles, 2019

Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020, Republic of Seychelles

The Fisheries Policy of Seychelles, Republic of Seychelles, 2005

World Bank documents

Bank Guidance, Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) for Investment Project Financing (IPF) Operations, December 9, 2021

Country Partnership Framework (FY 2018 - FY 2023), Report No. 122493-SC, June 18, 2018

2017 Systematic Country Diagnostic (report number 114289-SC, dated June 23, 2017)

Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3) (P155642), Implementation Status & Results Report, 19-Feb-2024

World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (FY 2012-2015), Report No. 66919-SC, February 22, 2012

Project Documents

The World Bank, Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3), Project Appraisal Document (PAD), Report No: PAD2156, September 8, 2017

Loan Agreement between the REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES and INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT, LOAN NUMBER 8779-SC, October 15, 2017

Restructuring Paper, Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3), REPORT NO.: RES56027

Reports from the project

Development of Seychelles' Seafood Sector Value Chains, Advance Africa Management Services, November 2018

Environmental and Social Management Framework for SWIOFish3 Project, Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning, Republic of Seychelles, March 2017

Gender Assessment in the Blue Economy Sector, Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, Department of the Blue Economy, Republic of Seychelles, September 2023

Survey of Perceptions on Ocean Governance, Fisheries Management and the Blue Economy, University of Seychelles

Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust, Blue Grants Fund (BGF) Projects Supported by Blue Bond Financing, Annual Progress Statement, January to December 2023

SWIOFish3 Annual report for the year 2023

SWIOFish3 Mid-Term Review report, 2022

The Fisheries Sector: A Policy Note for the Republic of Seychelles, 7 James R. Wilson, Ph.D., January 2017

The Marine Scholarship Programme Interim Report, Wiseoceans, SeyCATT, gvi, October 2023

Youth participation in Economic opportunities within the Blue Economy Sector, Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy & Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Family, December 2021

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. BACKGROUND

1. Background

The Republic of Seychelles is currently implementing the Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3), which became effective in April 2018. The SWIOFish3 project is being implemented through a blended finance approach, primarily financed by the World Bank (IBRD) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), combined with the investment in a Blue Bond issued by the Government of Seychelles (GoS) to private investors.

The SWIOFish3 is a 6-year fisheries project (2018-2023) which aims to support the Government in strengthening its policy and governance framework for a transition to sustainable fisheries and expansion of the fisheries value chains in Seychelles. There are four components to the project, namely:

- Component 1: Expanded sustainable-use marine protected areas;
- Component 2: Improved governance of priority fisheries;
- Component 3: Sustainable development of the blue economy and;
- Component 4: Project management and coordination.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of performance, outcomes and results by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) were considered core components of the project design and constitute a basis for progress reporting to the National Steering Committee and World Bank implementation support missions. This offers opportunities for learning, improvements and lessons learnt to be shared. Altogether, this will contribute towards increased project accountability and transparency.

Similar to any donor funded project, the final project evaluation was identified as a mandatory activity to be undertaken upon project closure. It aims to help the Government of Seychelles, the World Bank and other stakeholders to review in detail the design, implementation, lessons learned and impact of the SWIOFish3 project. The results of the final evaluation will therefore serve as a reference document that could offer guidance for the development and implementation of similar programmes.

The Department of Blue Economy (DBE) is therefore seeking to recruit a consultant to conduct the SWIOFish3 Project's final evaluation.

2. Purpose/objective of the assignment

The overall purpose of the final evaluation is to:

i. review and report on progress made against the project development's objectives and results outlined in the SWIOFish3 project document and M&E framework;

ii. to report on challenges faced by the PIU in successfully implementing the project;

iii. take stock of SWIOFish3 project's achievements;

iv. review activities and analyze the extent to which their outcomes have accomplished planned targets, and;

v. to provide lessons learned and recommendations (both technical and operational) for similar projects.

Specifically, the final evaluation will assess the implementation of the SWIOFish3 in terms of its;

(i) Relevance
(ii) Effectiveness
(iii) Efficiency
(iv) Sustainability
(v) Impact
(vi) Coordination and Cooperation
(vii) Effectiveness of the Programme M&E System

The project's final evaluation will therefore provide an independent assessment of the project's achievements and in turn add the elements of accountability and transparency to the exercise. It will include specific sections analysis about the implementation of the mid-term evaluation report.

3. Scope of work

The evaluation will cover the entire project period between 2018 and June 2024 and all four projects components should be included in the final evaluation.

The consultant shall undertake the following tasks:

- Review of progress against the Project Development Objective Indicators (PDOIs) and Intermediate Results Indicators (IRIs) in the SWIOFish3 results Framework and measurement of progress against the GEF Core Indicators;
- Review existing project documents including the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), AWPB, quarterly progress reports, and so on to facilitate reporting on project performance;
- Review of progress achieved under the two funds supported by the SWIOFish3, the Blue Investment Fund (BIF) and Blue Grants Fund (BGF);
- Review of the progress of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in managing and delivering the objectives of SWIOFish3;
- Analyse the risks that weigh on the sustainability of the results;

- Conduct meetings, consultation and interviews with project partners, PIU team, SC members, WB and other key stakeholders to ensure that the review is done in a participatory manner;
- Evaluate the efficiency of project management, including the delivery of outputs and activities in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness and cost efficiency;
- Assess national, regional and global trends that have impacted the relevance and implementation of SWIOFish3;
- Provide insight into how the 1-year project extension has positively or negatively impacted on the projects ability to deliver on its PDOI;
- Review the procurement management over the project lifetime;
- Analysis of the log frame indicators including if the targets were reached or not. If not, what was the main problem. Also, the contractor will analyze the suitability of the indicators and make suggestions for similar projects.

4. Methodology

The final evaluation is expected to be undertaken and delivered remotely, adopting a mixed review methodology. In the inception phase of this assignment, the consultant will have to develop a full evaluation methodology based on consultation with PIU and other stakeholders which will be subsequently reviewed and approved by the assignments' Steering Committee. The evaluation methodology should include:

- clear description of the proposed evaluation methodology, as well as a description of the methodologies to be utilized and how they will meet the final evaluation research questions, such as assessing progress toward and/or achievement of anticipated goals;
- a mixed methods approach, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources, as well as quantitative and qualitative data, and desk review. The quantitative data collection should be conducted with the project's direct beneficiaries and should be statistically representative. The proposal should include sampling design, sample size, and expected margin of error;
- proposed number of focus group discussions with direct and in-direct beneficiaries and in-depth interviews with the project management, implementation teams and project stakeholders;
- a description of the proposed analytic strategy (how data will be analyzed) and why, as well as how each planned analysis will answer evaluation research questions, generate crucial findings, and guide recommendations and evaluation deliverables;

- an evaluation matrix as well as the primary evaluation questions to be used during the final evaluation.

The methodology should also be guided by standards found in the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria[3].

5. Key deliverables

The key deliverables for this assignment include:

- Inception Report outlining the specific review questions, evaluation framework, specific methodologies to be applied and proposed timeframe;
- Draft Evaluation Report including the below sections;
    - Objectives
    - Executive Summary
    - Methodology
    - Findings
    - Responses to the Evaluation Questions
    - Analysis of the Mid-Term Evaluation Recommendations
    - Conclusion
    - Lessons Learned and Recommendations
    - Annexes and Bibliography
- A Power-Point presentation of the preliminary findings of the evaluation which will be presented to the project steering committee, key project partners and stakeholders;
- Final Evaluation report, incorporating feedback from SWIOFish3 PIU, the project steering committee, the World Bank, as well as the latest financial and non-financial updates as at June 2024 (to be confirmed with the WB team).

6. Duration

The consultant will be recruited by the Department of Blue Economy for a period of 2 months.

Activity/Deliverable	Timeline/Deadline
Phase 1 (to be paid by the project)	**2 Months**
Contract Signing	25th March 2024

[3] https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

Inception report including Evaluation Methodology	30th April 2024
Draft MTE report	15th June 2024

7. Supervision responsibility

The consultant will report directly to the Project Implementation Unit of the SWIOFish3 and specifically work in close collaboration with Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist of the Project Implementation Unit. An evaluation team will be set up by the PIU to review all deliverables.

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Criterion	Scope of Evaluation	Detailed Questions	Evidence	Source	Methods
Relevance	Establish the link between the Project Development Objective, the government and the Bank priorities, and the beneficiaries needs and draw up lessons on Project Design	– How is the SWIOFish3 project objective aligned to the Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019-2023, the Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020, the 2005 Fisheries Policy, the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (2012-2015), and the Country Partnership Framework (2018-2023)? – To what extent is the intervention in line with the beneficiaries needs? – Are the proposed solutions appropriate for the identified problems? Were there adjustments/changes during project's implementation to ensure achievement of the project objectives? – Are the interventions logical and their "strategic fit" in the desired causality chain? Are the links between the project's interventions, outputs, intermediate results, and desired outcomes valid? What are the underlying assumptions? – Is the funding approach appropriate for the intended results of the project (combination of loan from IBRD, grant from GEF; and Blue Bond placement supported by an IBRD guarantee and a GEF Non-Grant Instrument Pilot; management of the Blue Grants Fund by the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust SeyCCAT; management of the Blue Investment Fund by the Development Bank of Seychelles DBS)?	Objectives and activities of SWIOFish3 are aligned to the SNDS, SDS, and Bank's CSP, CPF Interventions reflect the needs of the beneficiaries. Solutions are appropriate for the identified problems. Interventions are logical with clear causal linkages that are linked to project objectives. Funding approach and perceptions by stakeholders on its appropriateness	SWIOFish3 Project Appraisal Document SNDS, SDS, and Bank's CSP, CPF Beneficiaries Implementing units/agencies MDAs CSOs NGOs Private sector Academia PIU World Bank Development partners	Key Informant interviews Literature review Focus group discussions

		– Are the chosen partnerships appropriate to deliver on the results? – To what extent are the roles of the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Blue Economy; Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Energy; and World Bank; clearly articulated in the project document? – What are the key lessons and recommendations on relevance of the project?	Partnerships established are appropriate. Roles of the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Blue Economy; Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy; the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Energy; and World Bank are clearly defined		
Effectiveness	Assess the level of achievement of the expected outputs, outcomes and development results including the number of beneficiaries Consult and engage with beneficiaries with a view to assess the delivery of expected project results. Identify main project activities that had impact on the performance of the beneficiaries. Identify factors during the preparation and	– What project activities have been implemented? which had the greatest effects on the beneficiaries? – What results have been achieved in terms of the PDO-level and intermediate-level indicators compared to targets? – To what extent the project has built capacity of the beneficiaries? What is the total number of beneficiaries disaggregated by sex compared to planned targets? – What are the key factors during the preparation stage or issues related to quality at entry that affected implementation and outcomes? – What are the key factors during the implementation that affected implementation and outcomes? The factors may be distinguished by: (a)	Activities implemented Activities identified by stakeholders as most important Achieved results in terms of outcomes and outputs compared to targets and beneficiaries Perceptions among stakeholders on strengthened capacity Perceptions among stakeholders of the key factors that affected project implementation and outcomes	Project Implementation Unit (Coordinator, M&E Officer) SWIOFish3 Progress Reports SWIOFish3 Mid-Term Review Report Beneficiaries Implementing units/agencies MDAs, CSOs, NGOs, Private sector, Academia World Bank Development partners	Key Informant interviews Literature review Focus group discussions

	implementation that affected implementation and outcomes	factors subject to the control of the government and/or implementing entities control, (b) factors subject to World Bank, and (c) factors outside the control of government and or implementing entities. – What are the key lessons and recommendations on effectiveness of the project?			
Efficiency	Measure efficiency in the use of resources Assess the implementation of the project with respect to timing of fulfilment of disbursement conditions, and effectiveness in start-up, disbursement, auditing, and management Identify implementation bottlenecks	– What is the project implementation cost compared to the planned cost? Did reallocation of resources happen during project's implementation? – Did the benefits of the project exceed project cost? – Was the funding adequate to meet the needs of the beneficiaries? – To what extent does the project institutional structure facilitate linkages with other supports to the beneficiaries? – To what extent did the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Blue Economy consistently respect timing of effectiveness, fulfilment of first disbursement conditions, project's launching, disbursement, auditing, and management? – To what extent was the project implemented according to agreed timelines? – What bottlenecks were experienced (political, social, economic, capacity, bureaucracy of government and World Bank, frequent Staff turn-over, procurement issues and delays, etc)?	Perceptions of stakeholders on adequacy of resources and efficiency in resources use. Adequacy of the funding compared to the needs Additional gains from the project institutional framework identified Effectiveness happened on time Disbursement made at agreed times Auditing made at agreed times Implementation timelines match project time schedule Perceptions of stakeholders on factors that have caused delays in implementation	Project Implementation Unit (Coordinator, M&E, Procurement, and Financial Management Officers) SWIOFish3 Project Appraisal Document SWIOFish3 Progress Reports Beneficiaries Implementing units/agencies MDAs, CSOs, NGOs, Private sector, Academia World Bank Development partners	Key Informant interviews Literature review Focus group discussions

		– What are the key lessons and recommendations on efficiency of the project?			
Sustainability	Identify mechanisms in place ensuring the continued flow of benefits after project completion	– What mechanisms have been put in place ensuring continued financing of remaining activities or upcoming program of activities? – What activities of the project supported strengthened capacities? What measures were put in place ensuring their sustainability in the long term? – What mechanisms have been put in place during project's preparation, appraisal and implementation guarantying ownership of the project activities by all stakeholders? – What partnerships with regional or local institutions have been developed during project's implementation? – What are the factors/risks (technical, financial, social, economic, political, environmental, or related to governmental/stakeholders' ownership and commitment) that could undermine sustainability and their mitigation measures? – What are the key lessons and recommendations?	Measures put in place for financial and institutional sustainability Beneficiaries continue to benefit from interventions Measures put in place for strengthened capacities Measure degree of implication of all stakeholders in different project phases Identify established partnerships Perceptions of factors/risks that undermine sustainability Mitigation plan in place for risks to sustainability	Project Implementation Unit (Coordinator, M&E) SWIOFish3 Project Appraisal Document SWIOFish3 Progress Reports Beneficiaries Implementing units/agencies MDAs, CSOs, NGOs, Private sector, Academia World Bank Development partners	Key Informant interviews Literature review Focus group discussions
Impacts	Identify impacts on gender	– To what extent the project raised awareness of the relevant gaps between males and females in implementing agencies, and closed gender gaps related to human endowments, jobs,	Gender inequality reduced	SWIOFish3 Progress Reports SWIOFish3 Mid-Term Review Report	Key Informant interviews Literature review

		ownership/control of assets, voice, and agency? – To what extent the project contributed to increasing women's assets, income earning and employment opportunities, and meaningful participation in key project activities? – Did the project contribute to increased risks of gender-based violence, unpaid work of women and girls, displacement of women from access to assets or livelihoods, others?		Beneficiaries Implementing units/agencies MDAs, CSOs, NGOs, Private sector, Academia World Bank Development partners	Focus group discussions
	Identify impacts on youth	– To what extent the project contributed to increasing youth's assets, income earning and employment opportunities, and meaningful participation in key project activities?	Improved conditions for youth in the fisheries sector		
	Identify impacts on institutional strengthening	– What activities of the project supported institutional changes? – What measures were put in place ensuring their sustainability in the long term?	Institutional changes brought by the project for a long-term		
	Identify impacts on mobilizing private sector financing	– Did the guarantee helped to mobilize private sector financing? – What are the key risks that the guarantee helped to address? – What role and value the guarantee played in improving the overall sustainability of the transaction (Blue Bond placement)?	Private sector financing mobilized		
	Identify environmental impacts	– What are the environmental impacts (positive or negative) of the project? – What mechanisms have been put in place to minimize or mitigate potential adverse environmental effects of the project?	Limited environment impacts		
	Identify social impacts		Positive social impacts		

		– What are the social impacts (positive or negative) of the project? – What mechanisms have been put in place to minimize or mitigate potential adverse social effects of the project? – What are the key lessons and recommendations?			
Performance of stakeholders	Measure performance of stakeholders involved in the project Draw up lessons to be learnt and recommendations with regard to project preparation, implementation and management	– To what extent services provided by the World Bank ensured the operation's quality at entry (the extent to which the Bank identified, facilitated preparation of, and appraised the operation)? – To what extent services provided by the World Bank supported effective implementation through appropriate supervision (Focus on development impact, Supervision of fiduciary and safeguard or environmental and social aspects; Adequacy of supervision inputs and processes (including missions, location, and availability of key Staff); Candor and quality of performance reporting; Role in ensuring adequate transition arrangements project's closing? – To what extent has the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Blue Economy and the Project Implementation Unit fulfilled their roles in project identification, appraisal, negotiation, implementation (Monitoring and Evaluation, financial management, procurement) and completion? – Was the institutional framework for project coordination performant in giving opportunities for all concerned stakeholders to provide	Role and efficiency of the World Bank Role and efficiency of the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Blue Economy and the PIU M&E system and Fiduciary management put in place by the project are effective Perceptions of stakeholders on reporting and implication in project	Project Implementation Unit (Coordinator, M&E, Procurement, and Financial Management Officers) SWIOFish3 Progress Reports SWIOFish3 Mid-Term Review Report Annual work plans Steering Committee meetings minutes Evaluation of the Blue Bond Placement Evaluation of the Blue Grants Fund Evaluation of the Blue Investment Fund Beneficiaries Implementing units/agencies MDAs, CSOs, NGOs, Private sector, Academia	Key Informant interviews Literature review Focus group discussions

		comments/feedback in planning, monitoring and evaluation? – Is the operation's theory of change clear? – Were adequate indicators identified in the results framework to monitor progress toward the PDOs using effective M&E arrangements? – Were M&E data collected and analysed in a methodologically sound manner? – Were M&E data on performance and results progress used to inform project management and decision-making? – To what extent is reporting from the Project Implementation Unit timely and considered informative by stakeholders? – Was the government effective in mobilizing resources from the Blue Bond placement? – Was the SeyCCAT effective in the management of the Blue Grants Fund (existence of operations and procedures manual, communication strategy, selection committee, Board approval, number of beneficiaries, type, sector of activity, etc)? – Was the DBS effective in the management of the Blue Investment Fund (existence of operations and procedures manual, communication strategy, selection committee, Board approval, number of beneficiaries, type, sector of activity, etc)? – What are the impacts on your businesses of the financing received from the Blue Grants Fund and/or the Blue Investment Fund (equipment, production and demand	planning, monitoring and evaluation Clarity of the theory of changes Blue Bond placement effectiveness Blue Grants Fund effectiveness Blue Investment Fund effectiveness Businesses positively impacted by the Blue Grants Fund and the Blue Investment Fund	World Bank Development partners	

		of products, revenue generated, expenses, profitability, repayment, employment created, sustainability, etc)? – What are the key lessons and recommendations?			

ANNEX 3: KEY INFORMANTS GUIDE

Relevance

- How is the SWIOFish3 project objective aligned to the Government's national development strategy?

- To what extent is the intervention in line with your needs?

- Are the proposed solutions appropriate for the identified problems? Were there adjustments/changes during project's implementation to ensure achievement of the project objectives?

- Are the partnerships with other institutions/businesses appropriate to deliver on the results?

- Is the funding approach (loan, grant) appropriate for the intended results?

- What are the key lessons and recommendations on relevance of the project?

Effectiveness

- What project activities have been implemented? which had the greatest effects?

- What results have been achieved?

- To what extent the project has built the capacity of your institution/business?

- What is the total number of beneficiaries of the support provided by the project disaggregated by sex?

- What are the key factors (positive or negative) that led to the results achieved?

- What are the key lessons and recommendations on effectiveness of the project?

Efficiency

- What are the benefits brought by the project?

- Was the funding adequate to meet your needs?

- To what extent does the project facilitate linkages with other supports to your institution/business?

- To what extent was the project implemented according to agreed timelines?

- What bottlenecks/problems were experienced (political, social, economic, capacity, bureaucracy of government and World Bank, procurement issues and delays, etc)?

- What are the key lessons and recommendations on efficiency of the project?

Sustainability

- What mechanisms have been put in place ensuring continued financing of remaining activities or upcoming program of activities of your institution/business?

- What activities of the project supported strengthened capacities of your institution/business? What measures were put in place ensuring their sustainability in the long term?

- What mechanisms have been put in place guarantying your ownership of the activities?

- What partnerships with regional or local institutions have been developed during project's implementation?

- What are the factors/risks (technical, financial, social, economic, political, environmental, or related to governmental/stakeholders' ownership and commitment) that could undermine sustainability of the results and their mitigation measures?

- What are the key lessons and recommendations on sustainability of the project?

Impacts

- To what extent the project contributed to increasing women's assets, income earning and employment opportunities, and meaningful participation in key project activities?

- Did the project contribute to increased risks of gender-based violence, unpaid work of women and girls, displacement of women from access to assets or livelihoods, others?

- To what extent the project contributed to increasing youth's assets, income earning and employment opportunities, and meaningful participation in key project activities?

- What activities of the project supported institutional changes? What measures were put in place ensuring their sustainability in the long term?

- What are the environmental impacts (positive or negative) of the project?

- What mechanisms have been put in place to minimize or mitigate potential adverse environmental effects of the project?

- What are the social impacts (positive or negative) of the project?

- What mechanisms have been put in place to minimize or mitigate potential adverse social effects of the project?

- What are the key lessons and recommendations on the impacts of the project?

Performance of stakeholders

- To what extent services provided by the World Bank supported effective implementation of the project?

- Was the institutional framework for project coordination through the Government performant in giving opportunities for all concerned stakeholders to provide comments/feedback in planning, monitoring, and evaluation?

- To what extent is reporting from the Project Implementation Unit timely and considered informative by your institution/business?

- Was the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) effective in the management of the Blue Grants Fund?

- Was the Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS) effective in the management of the Blue Investment Fund?

- What are the impacts on your businesses of the financing received from the Blue Grants Fund and/or the Blue Investment Fund (equipment, production and demand of products, revenue generated, expenses, profitability, repayment, employment created, sustainability, etc)?

- What are the key lessons and recommendations on the performance of stakeholders?

ANNEX 4. LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

	Name	Position/Title	Organization/Ministry
1	Phillianne Ernesta (Mrs.)	Principal Secretary	DBE
2	Sheriffa Morel (Ms.)	Director General	DOF
3	Stephanie Radegonde (Ms.)	Principal Policy Analyst	DOF
4	Ashley Dias (Ms.)	Director- Biodiversity and Conservation Section	DOE
5	Jean Preira (Ms.)	Chief Executive Officer	DBS
6	Margaret Ally-Nourrice (Mrs.)	Head of Department- Product Development and Quality Assurance	SFA
7	Aubrey Lesperance (Mr.)	Head of Department- Aquaculture Department	SFA
8	Juliette Lucas (Mrs.)	Head of Department- Statistics and Fisheries Economics	SFA