

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Independent evaluation of:

**Evidence-based and Policy Coherent Oceans  
Economy and Trade Strategies (United Nations  
Development Account Project 1819K)\***

Independent Evaluation Unit

May 2024

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BTB	Belize Tourism Board
CARICOM	Caribbean Community (and Common Market)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DOALOS	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
EA	Expected Accomplishment
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EDF	Environmental Defense Fund
EEZ	Economic Exclusive Zone
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Climate Resilience
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated (fishing)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OETS	Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
PAGE	The Partnership for Action on Green Economy
SAMOA	Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDG 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
SICA	Central American Integration System

SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMART	Specific · Measurable · Achievable · Relevant and · Time-Bound
SPS	Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary
TAB	Trade Analysis Branch
TED	Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Branch
ToC	Theory of Change
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UMOJA	Corporate ERP (Enterprise resource planning) system
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDA	or DA, United Nations Development Account
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WTO	World Trade Organization

## Executive summary

### Overview

Ocean-based sectors contribute today to 13% of developing countries' GDP while providing employment to over 300 million and sustaining the livelihoods of more than two billion people in developing countries. Deriving sustainable benefits from these economic frontiers should occur within integrated and effective legal and institutional frameworks for the sustainable governance of oceans. In view of the strong interrelation of ocean issues, efforts are needed to support the development of integrated ocean governance frameworks and to strengthen coherent capacity building efforts, to enable the development of a sustainable ocean economy and address Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14<sup>1</sup>.

In response to this, the "Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS)" project aimed at strengthening the capacities of coastal developing countries, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in elaborating, adopting and implementing evidence-based and policy coherent OETS to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework. The OETS project supported Barbados, Belize, and Costa Rica in realizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources within the UNCLOS framework, that sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.

The expected accomplishments of the OETS project were as follows:

- O1. Improved capacity of national stakeholders to assess and identify promising products and/or services in key ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework;
- O2. Strengthened capacity of stakeholders in defining policy options and implementing priority actions to support sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors in beneficiary countries;
- O3. Increased understanding at the regional level on how to design and implement OETS as tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework.

### Evaluation purpose, objective, scope, users

This evaluation of the OETS project, implemented between February 2018 and July 2022 in Barbados, Belize, and Costa Rica, aims to assess its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as its mainstreaming of United Nations cross-cutting issues.

The specific objectives of this evaluation were to (1) assess the degree to which the desired project results have been realized, including the extent of environmental, gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming; and (2) identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources"

The evaluation primary users are the management of both UNCTAD and OLA/DOALOS, the Capacity Development Programme Management Office/Development Account of DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.

## **Methodology**

The evaluator used a mixed-method approach to support its findings. An online survey, as well as in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and a thorough document review that incorporated and reflected various sources of information and perspectives, provided the foundation for rigorous triangulation, supporting the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation started with an inception phase, during which the inception report and data collection tools were agreed upon and developed. During the subsequent data collection phase, the evaluator carried out an in-depth document review and 18 key-informant interviews. The evaluator also collected data from 14 respondents out of 60 contacted through an online survey. Data from different sources were then carefully analyzed and triangulated to produce this report.

The evaluator encountered the following challenges when conducting the evaluation: 1) difficulties to engage with stakeholders, 2) impossibility to carry out group interviews as planned, and 3) virtual rather than face-to-face interactions. To reduce the risks generated by the above limitations, the evaluator had regular contact with the UNCTAD staff based in Geneva. The OETS project team was able to provide additional support by reaching out to specific stakeholders which helped to boost response rates.

## **Key findings and conclusions**

- **Relevance:** The OETS project design, activities and deliverables was relevant to Barbados', Belize's and Costa Rica's needs and priorities, taking into account the mandates of both UNCTAD and DOALOS. It exploited synergies on the joint implementation of SDG 14 by UNCTAD and DOALOS with mutual learning opportunities on ocean governance, economy and the multilateral trade system.
- **Effectiveness:** The OETS project achieved all planned objectives, outputs and outcomes in Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica, enhancing to some extent the development of capacities of the project participants. Nonetheless, as not required by the UN Development Account, specific indicators to measure the achievement of expected outcomes beyond the lifetime of the project were not fully developed nor monitored, preventing the assessment of medium and long-term objectives.
- **Efficiency:** The OETS project successfully utilized the available resources to implement its activities in a timely manner, despite a slow start in the implementation due to COVID-19. Particularly, the project management highly contributed to the efficient implementation of the project and to the delivery of additional outputs possible due to savings on travel.



- Sustainability: The OETS project is likely to sustain beyond the end of the project, thanks to the commitment of beneficiary countries. Measures to promote sustainability have been incorporated to the extent possible. However, it is the responsibility of beneficiary countries to allocate sufficient resources to build upon the project results.
- Cross-cutting issues: The OETS project satisfactorily integrated environmental and gender considerations. Disability considerations could have been applied to a certain extent.
- Response to COVID-19: The OETS project responded to COVID-19 to a great extent, adapting its activities to the needs of beneficiary countries and constraints induced by the global pandemic.

### **Lessons learned**

The following lessons learned and good practices have been identified:

1. The definition and co-design of project outputs with beneficiary countries foster sustainability of project intermediate results, through stakeholder engagement and support both during implementation and after closing of project activities.
2. The successful co-implementation of the project by two UN agencies relies on constant communication, tailored working methods and practices adaptation.
3. Flexibility with the original project document is necessary in order to allow the activities to adapt to unpredicted changes, local conditions as well as interests of the key stakeholders. In this sense, good practices have been identified, including the project activities adaptation to COVID-19 constraints, the flexibility in reallocating the budget, as well as the assessment of emerging needs related to the pandemic.
4. Close cooperation and coordination with appointed focal points in beneficiary countries is an important success factor to ensure stakeholder organizations ownership, buy-in and the sustainability of the results.
5. Exchanging good practices and lessons learned at the regional level is proven to be beneficial for the different stakeholders involved.

### **Recommendations**

After a thorough analysis of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project, the evaluation formulated the following recommendations to UNCTAD:

- A. Initial quality assessments of available documents and data critical to the beneficiary's participation in the project should be realized during the design phase and be included as an eligibility criteria , especially for projects relying on scientific and evidence-based information for analysis.

- B. Managing expectations of indirect stakeholders is key to ensure a smooth implementation of activities, particularly when the project seeks the opinions of a wide range of stakeholders. In that sense, the project milestones and deliverables, as well as respective roles and responsibilities of all project stakeholders, should be defined and shared from the start to managing expectations and ensure a smooth implementation of activities, particularly when the project involves a wide range of stakeholders.
  
- C. UNDA should ensure that SMART indicators are defined, and Monitoring & Evaluation systems are in place, for measuring both immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes, especially those that are expected beyond the lifetime of the project. These indicators should be linked to the overall UNCTAD results framework.

## 1. Introduction

The “Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies” project, also referred as the OETS project, and herein simply referred to as the project, was an initiative contributing to the development of enabling national policy and regulatory frameworks for the sustainable economic management of the oceans in the Caribbean and Central American region, within the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) framework. The OETS project was funded through the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) whose management team is located in the Capacity Development Programme Management Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

The OETS project was jointly implemented by the Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch of the Division on International Trade and Commodities (DITC) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) in three target countries, namely Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica. The project started its implementation in February 2018 and was completed by 31 July 2022 (extended from 31 December 2021). The overall budget for the project was US\$650,000.

For the UNDA 11<sup>th</sup> tranche, the projects to be evaluated were selected by each DA implementing entity in March 2021 based on: the strategic importance and relevance of each project to the entities’ mandates; pressing knowledge gaps; and/or the application of an approach or element with the potential for replication or scaling-up to generate evaluative evidence for decision-making. The OETS project was selected for evaluation by UNCTAD according to these criteria.

In line with UNCTAD’s Evaluation Policy<sup>2</sup> and Development Account Project Evaluation Guidelines<sup>3</sup>, and following the UNEG Ethical guidelines<sup>4</sup>, and UNEG norms and standards<sup>5</sup> for evaluation, the independent evaluator Mr. Alexandre Daoust undertook the final evaluation of the OETS project between August and February 2023, covering the duration of the project from February 2018 to June 2022. The evaluator integrated human rights, gender equality and disability<sup>6</sup> perspectives in the evaluation to the extent possible<sup>7</sup>, and ensured a complete, fair, engaging, unreserved, and unbiased assessment.

The specific objectives of this evaluation were to (1) assess the degree to which the desired project results have been realized, including the extent of environmental, gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming; and (2) identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance implementation of related interventions.

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<sup>2</sup> “Evaluation Policy” of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), December 2011. December 2011, [http://unctad.org/Sections/edm\\_dir/docs/osg\\_EvaluationPolicy2011\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/Sections/edm_dir/docs/osg_EvaluationPolicy2011_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> “[UN Development Account Project Evaluation Guidelines](#)” (October 2019)

<sup>4</sup> “[Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#)”, UNEG (2020); “[UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System](#)” (2008)

<sup>5</sup> “[UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#)”, UNEG (2016)

<sup>6</sup> Disability criterium has recently been added as a cross cutting-issue, based on the evaluation requirements of the UN Secretariat. Disability was not directly mandated by the legislative bodies during the formulation of the project.

<sup>7</sup> “Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations” by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2014): <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616>. The UNEG Handbook on “Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations: Towards UNEG Guidance” by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2011): <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980>.

The evaluation aimed at providing credible and useful assessments as well as practical and constructive recommendations to UNCTAD management, the primary user of the evaluation, with the goal of optimizing results of future projects, including on operational and administrative aspects.

## **2. Description of the Project**

### **2.1 Background**

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The oceans economy, also known as the blue economy, constitutes an essential element in addressing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 entitled “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources”, seeking to sustainably expand the economic frontiers of coastal countries beyond their land territories in order to provide new economic, social and environmental benefits. The economic dimension of oceans includes the use of ocean spaces and resources, as well as the international trade of marine resources and other natural resources and services. Trade is an enabling factor shifting ocean-based economic activities from niche to mainstream global markets, particularly for developing countries where domestic markets remain small. Ocean-based sectors contribute today to 13% of developing countries’ GDP while providing employment to over 300 million and sustaining the livelihoods of more than two billion people in developing countries.

However, rather than growing sustainably going forward, these critical economic contributions to developing economies are at risk of declining significantly unless efforts to conserve and sustainably use oceans and their resources are strengthened. Deriving sustainable benefits from these economic frontiers should occur within integrated and effective legal and institutional frameworks for the sustainable governance of oceans in accordance with UNCLOS and related instruments. To date, national strategies on oceans economy are particularly rare, developed and practiced in only a few countries<sup>2</sup>, and often narrow in scope.

Given the diversity of ocean-based economic sectors, their respective legal and institutional frameworks tend to be structured in isolation from each other. In view of the strong interrelation of ocean issues, efforts are needed to support the development of integrated ocean governance frameworks and to strengthen coherent capacity building efforts, and thus enable the development of a sustainable ocean economy.

Major existing and prospective trade-related ocean-based economic sectors include: sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood processing; BioTrade marine products; marine bio-prospecting and biotech industries; tidal and off-shore energy; water treatment for ocean-inflowing effluent streams; sustainable marine transport systems and related infrastructure; and sustainable coastal tourism, including ecotourism.

### **2.2 Project objectives and expected accomplishments/results**

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The main objective of the OETS project was to strengthen the capacities of coastal developing countries, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in elaborating, adopting and implementing evidence-

based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade strategies to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework.

In particular, this project aimed to support developing countries in realizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources within the UNCLOS framework, that sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. Focusing on the Caribbean and Central American region due to the shared marine ecosystems of the Caribbean basin, the value of the Mesoamerica biodiversity corridor, and the number of SIDS in this region, the OETS was implemented in Barbados, Belize, and Costa Rica.

The expected accomplishments of the OETS project were as follows:

- O4. Improved capacity of national stakeholders to assess and identify promising products and/or services in key ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework;
- O5. Strengthened capacity of stakeholders in defining policy options and implementing priority actions to support sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors in beneficiary countries;
- O6. Increased understanding at the regional level on how to design and implement OETS as tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework.

## **2.3 Project strategies and key activities**

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To achieve its objectives, the OETS project was implemented in three main phases, namely (1) the assessment and formulation phase, (2) the validation and implementation phase, and (3) the dissemination phase. The project activities were based on research, dialogue and capacity building and implemented as country-owned activities in a transparent and inclusive way in order to not leave anyone behind.

- **Phase 1:** Assessment and formulation phase

In the three countries of intervention, a preliminary analysis of the ocean economy sectors was conducted, including the production of data factsheets and a mapping of legal and institutional issues. Based on these assessments, and in each country, two key ocean-based sectors were selected for further analysis during the first multi-stakeholder workshop. Then, the three OETS reports presenting recommendations were drafted based on the Ocean Economy pillars, namely Economic, Environmental, Social, Scientific and Governance.

- **Phase 2:** Validation and implementation phase

A second multi-stakeholder workshop was held in each of the three countries of intervention for the review and validation of OETS findings and recommendations by national stakeholders. To support and advise their actual implementation, Plans of Action were developed in each beneficiary country, identifying key objectives and areas of actions in the selected sectors.

- **Phase 3:** Dissemination phase

A regional experience sharing online workshop, as well as multilateral events, were held to foster understanding and lessons sharing. Additionally, several videos and a training toolkit presentation deck were produced as part of the project’s communication material.

## 2.4 Beneficiaries and target countries

The OETS project focused on a single region in order to maximize synergies, share similar experiences, create opportunities for joint action and optimize use of resources. The beneficiary countries of the OETS project were Barbados, Belize, and Costa Rica. These three countries were selected based on several criteria, including the formulation of an official request and appointment of national focal points, the geographical and development type (coastal or insular and SIDS), parties to UNCLOS, the potential partners and cooperating agencies, and the synergies observed with other UNCTAD or DOALOS programmes. Particularly, the country of Saint Lucia informally expressed its interest and was kept as a replacement optional beneficiary country at the beginning of the project.



Figure 1. OETS beneficiary countries

## 2.5 Key partners and other key stakeholders

Throughout the OETS project, UNCTAD and DOALOS facilitated consultations and workshops with key private and public stakeholders, including UN agencies and partners, international and intergovernmental organizations, governmental national agencies and technical bodies, the private sector as well as members of the civil society.

**Error! Reference source not found.** below describes the role of the stakeholders' groups in the OETS project.

Table 1. OETS Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Role in the project
<b>United Nations</b> Agencies and Partners	
<p><u>Implementing Agencies</u>            UNCTAD/DITC/Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch            OLA/ DOALOS</p> <p><u>Funding Programme</u>            UNDA</p>	<p>UNCTAD is the executing entity (project management lead), in cooperation with OLA/ DOALOS (international legal framework and related instruments).            An implementing task force (composed of 2 UNCTAD and one DOALOS officers) was in charge of the project implementation.</p>
<p><u>UN Cooperating partners</u>            FAO, UNDP, ILO, Resident Coordinator Offices in beneficiary countries</p> <p><u>UN cooperation frameworks and tools</u>            PAGE, UNSDCF, UNDAF, UNINFO</p>	<p>FAO, UNDP and ILO, from within the UN System, co-operated in specific activities under the project.            UN-PAGE, UNSDCF, UNDAF/MANUD, and UNINFO are UN partnerships, frameworks and tools involved in the project on occasional basis (knowledge transfer).</p>
<b>Non-UN Partners</b>	Contributed to co-organizing workshops, providing speakers to the project, partnering for the 2022 Ocean Conference

<p>Environmental Defense Funds (EDF), United States Monterey Bay Aquarium, United States</p> <p><i>Fundación para la Paz y la Democracia (FUNPADEM)</i>, Costa Rica National Chamber of Fishery Products Companies (CANEPP), Costa Rica</p> <p>International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI)</p>	
<p><b>Governments</b> National agencies and Technical bodies (listed below)</p>	<p>Governmental agencies and technical bodies identified and designed needed policy, regulatory and institutional reforms to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors consistent with the UNCLOS framework.</p>
<p><u>Costa Rica</u></p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Trade Costa Rica (COMEX) <b>(Focal point)</b>; Ministry of Agriculture, livestock and fisheries (MAG); Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce (MEIC); Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (MIDEPLAN); Costa Rican Institute for Fisheries and Aquaculture (INCOPESCA) <b>(Focal Point)</b></p> <p><u>Belize</u></p> <p>Ministry of Economic Development, Petroleum, Investment, Trade and Commerce; Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration; Directorate General for Foreign Trade (DGFT); Customs and Excise Department Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, and the Environment; Belize Fisheries Department <b>(Focal Point)</b>; Aquaculture Unit; Cooperative Department; Agriculture Health Authority Belize Port Authority; Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI); Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU), under Ministry of Finance Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation; Belize Tourism Board (BTB); Office of the Attorney General; National Climate Change Office (NCCO); University of Belize</p> <p><u>Barbados</u></p> <p>Ministry of Maritime affairs and the Blue Economy; Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment Ministry of Environment and Natural Beautification <b>(Focal point)</b>; Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Water Resource; Fisheries Division <b>(Focal Point)</b> Ministry of Tourism and International Transport; Coastal Zone Management Unit (ICZM)</p>	



<b>Private sector</b> (SMEs)	Partnerships established in order to participate in ocean-based economic sector, add value and expand markets
<b>Civil Society</b> (Communities, Labour unions, NGOs, etc.)	Provided inputs to governments and the private sector on labour and resource capacity which can be employed in production
<b>Intergovernmental Organizations</b> (see below)	Worked with governments to identify and respond to needs for additional capacity-building activities in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework

	<b>Costa Rica</b>	<b>Belize</b>	<b>Barbados</b>
Caribbean Community (CARICOM)		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
The Commonwealth Secretariat		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
Central America Regional Fisheries Organisation (OSPECA)	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	
Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development (OLDEPESCA)	<b>x</b>		
International Commission on the Conservation of the Atlantic Tuna (ICATT)		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
World Bank (Marina Conservation and Climate Adaptation - MCCAP)		<b>x</b>	

## 2.6 Resources

The overall budget from the UN Development Account allocated to the OETS project was US\$650,000. The main costs and expenses were for the consultants (two per country of intervention), travel of staff, contractual services, operational costs, supplies and materials, and grants. 96,88% of the overall budget was disbursed by the end of the project implementation. UNCTAD also dedicated one P-4 level staff full time, and half the time of one P-3 and one G-5 over the duration of the project. Details of the OETS budget movements are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. OETS financial information

Description	Budget (USD)	Revisions (USD)	Total Expenditure (USD)
<b>Consultants</b>	238,000.00	+ 94,000.00 + 33,550.00 - 2,000.00  <b>= 363,550.00</b>	<b>344,989.00</b>  <b>94,89%</b>
<b>Travel of Staff</b>	189,000.00	- 93,000.00 + 7,000.00 + 3,556.57  <b>= 106,556.57</b>	<b>94,959.96</b>  <b>89,12%</b>
<b>Contractual services</b>	42,000.00	+ 12,000.00 + 9,450.00 + 343.43  <b>= 63,793.43</b>	<b>63,793.43</b>  <b>100%</b>
<b>General Operation Expenses</b>	112,750.00	- 1,980.00 - 83,000.00 - 4,000.00  <b>= 23,770.00</b>	<b>26,366.13</b>  <b>110,92%</b>
<b>Supplies and materials</b>	0	+ 1,980.00  <b>= 1,980.00</b>	<b>1,980.00</b>  <b>100%</b>
<b>Workshops/Study tours (Grants and Contributions)</b>	68,250.00	+70,000.00 - 46,000.00 - 1,900.00  <b>= 90,350.00</b>	<b>82,113.06</b>  <b>90,88%</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>650,000.00</b>	<b>650,000.00</b>	<b>629,701.68</b> <b>96,88%</b>
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## 2.7 Link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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The OETS project was expected to provide a direct contribution to the implementation and advancement of trade, economic and governance-related targets of SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainable use oceans, seas and marine resources), especially the following targets:

- Target 14.4: Sustainable fishing  
*“By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.”*
- Target 14.6: End subsidies contributing to overfishing  
*“By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) fisheries subsidies negotiation.”*
- Target 14.b: Support small scale fishers  
*“Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.”*
- Target 14.7: Increase the economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources  
*“By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.”*
- Target 14.c: UNCLOS framework  
*“Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want.”*

## 2.8 Innovative elements

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The main innovative element of the OETS project, that can be further scaled up and replicated broadly in other development projects, is the co-implementation of the project by both UNCTAD and DOALOS.

Indeed, the OETS project is the first technical assistance initiative assigned in a cooperative manner and jointly implemented by the agencies together at the country level.

DOALOS is not currently one of the implementing entities of the UN Development Account and had no previous joint activity with UNCTAD. The project presented an opportunity for UNCTAD to include DOALOS and explore synergies on the joint implementation of SDG 14 with mutual learning opportunities on the law of the sea, ocean economy and the multilateral trade system. The two entities reported the experience as mutually enriching in terms of learning and cooperation and should be replicated in future.

The technical project teams from the two United Nations bodies successfully co-managed the OETS project and built on common and complementary knowledge to provide guidance and implementation support with a tailored approach in each of the beneficiary countries.

### 3. Evaluation objectives, scope and questions

#### 3.1 Purpose and objectives

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The OETS project was selected for evaluation by UNCTAD and the UNDA based on: the strategic importance and relevance of each project to the entities' mandates; pressing knowledge gaps; and/or the application of an approach or element with the potential for replication or scaling-up to generate evaluative evidence for decision-making.

The specific objectives of this evaluation were to (1) assess the degree to which the desired project results have been realized, including the extent of environmental, gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming; and (2) identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

The evaluation aimed at providing accountability to the management of both UNCTAD and OLA/DOALOS, the Capacity Development Programme Management Office/Development Account of DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States with whom the present final evaluation report will be shared.

On the basis of these assessments and findings, the evaluation delivered credible and useful assessments and findings, drew conclusions, identified lessons learned and formulated practical and constructive recommendations to project stakeholders with a view towards optimizing results of future projects, including on operational and administrative aspects.

More specifically, the evaluation of the OETS project was able to:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
- Highlight, as appropriate, any specific achievements that provide additional value for money and/or relevant multiplier effects;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the implementation of the project while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action;

- Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how work in this area can be further strengthened in order to address beneficiaries' needs and create synergies through collaboration with other UNCTAD divisions, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations), and other international organizations and development partners, as well as relevant international forums; and
- Draw lessons of wider application for the replication of the experience gained in this project in other projects/countries.

## **3.2 Evaluation scope, criteria and questions**

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This terminal evaluation covers the duration of the project from February 2018 to July 2022 and the three beneficiary countries of the OETS project. The evaluation assessed the project performance against the following six criteria: relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability; gender, human rights and disability; environment; and responses to COVID-19. The following key evaluation questions have been used by the evaluator and guided the overall assessment. Each evaluation question was answered by way of specific methodological choices, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures. They are presented in the Evaluation Matrix in Annex 3.

### **Relevance**

R1. To what extent the project design, choice of activities and deliverables properly reflect and address the development needs and priorities of participating countries, taking into account the mandates of UNCTAD and DOALOS?

- R1.1. How does the project respond to the priorities of the participating countries governments?
- R1.2. How does the project address the needs of local stakeholders?
- R1.3. How does the project integrate in the mandate of both UNCTAD and DOALOS?

R2. To what extent has the work of the project been complementary to that of initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors by other UN and non-UN actors in the target countries?

R3. What adjustments will be needed to make the project more relevant to the participating countries in supporting their efforts to achieve the targets of SDG 14?

- R3.1. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target 4?
- R3.2. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target 6?
- R3.3. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target b?
- R3.4. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target 7?
- R3.5. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target c?

## **Effectiveness**

Effe1. Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document and outcomes (intended or unintended), in particular against relevant SDG targets?

Effe2. To what extent have the project participants from each targeted country gained knowledge and skills through the project's activities to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework?

Effe3. What are enabling and limiting factors that contribute to/ hinder the achievement of results?

- Effe3.1. What enabling factors contributed to the achievement of results?
- Effe3.2. What limiting factors hindered the achievement of results?
- Effe3.2. Especially, to what extent did the project partnerships contribute to, or hinder, the achievement of results?

## **Efficiency**

Effi1. To what extent have the project resources been utilized to ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes in a timely manner?

- Effi1.1. Has the project management been adequate?
- Effi1.2. How efficient was the project in utilizing financial resources?
- Effi1.3. Have the expected outcomes been achieved in a timely manner?

## **Sustainability**

S1. What is the likelihood that the project results and benefits will continue after the end of the project?

- S1.1. Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project?
- S1.2. What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes?
- S1.3. Have there been catalytic effects from the project both at the national and/ or regional levels?
- S1.4. What additional measures could be taken to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes over time? Especially, what adjustments could be made to increase the responsiveness of beneficiary countries to emerging challenges?

## **Gender, human rights, and disability**

GHRD1. To what extent were an equity-focused approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention, and can results be identified in this regard? How could future similar projects consider disability mainstreaming?

## **Environment**

Env1. To what extent have environmental considerations been mainstreamed in the project?

- Env1.1. How have environmental considerations been integrated in the design of the project?
- Env1.2. How have environmental considerations been integrated in the implementation of the project?

## **Responses to COVID-19**

Co1. To what extent did the adjustments made in response to COVID-19 situation affect the project and its beneficiaries?

- Co1.1. To what extent did the project adjustments respond to the new priorities of Member States that emerged in relation to COVID-19?
- Co1.2. How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results as stated in its original results framework?

## 4. Methodology

The final evaluation of the OETS project assessed the results of the project as specified in the Project Document, and their value to identified stakeholders at different levels. The evaluation systematically and objectively assessed the project design, project management, implementation, the extent of gender, disability, and human rights mainstreaming, and the overall project performance. The evaluation was utilization-focused to ensure that the assessment of the intervention was based on its usefulness to its intended users. Such an approach focused on actual and specific users and uses, in order to enable decision making amongst the stakeholders that will make use of the findings of the evaluation.

To assess the intervention logic and effectively address the evaluation questions, the evaluation was framed by a theory-based approach, examining the project design and assessing how the overall project proposed theory of change was operationalized. The evaluator used a mixed-method design, meaning he utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to support his findings. Several lines of evidence that incorporate and reflect various sources of information and perspectives provided the foundation for rigorous triangulation, supporting the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. Both secondary and primary data were collected, meaning the evaluator used data provided by the project team as well as data available in the documentation, and also collected additional data through individual interviews and an online survey.

The evaluator realized an extensive desk review in order to capture all relevant qualitative and quantitative data from relevant documentation, including but not limited to the project documentation (Project Document, progress reports, workshop reports, publications, communication products such as videos, website content and social media, meeting reports), the national strategies of the countries of intervention, the Sustainable Development Goals documentation, and other relevant documentation. Additionally, the evaluator attended the online workshop on the implementation of priority actions on sustainable trade of swordfish and other longline fisheries under the Barbados Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies held on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were held with representatives from UNCTAD and DOALOS, as well as project focal points and other relevant stakeholders to ensure to the extent possible a representative and balanced sample of respondents. The evaluator used tailor-made semi-structured questionnaires to guide KIIs, available in Annex 4. KIIs took place between October and December 2022. The evaluator interviewed 18 key informants in total, 67% of whom were women.

An online survey was also developed, using the online software Qualtrics. The online survey was undertaken to gather perspectives from a larger sample of respondents, given the diversity of stakeholders in the project. The survey was launched on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 and closed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2023. The survey was available in English and in Spanish and was disseminated to government representatives, OETS partners, private sector, and the civil society. The English transcription of the survey can be found in Annex 4.

In total, 19 respondents out of the 60 that were invited took part in the survey (representing a response rate of 32%). However, 5 respondents were removed from the final data set as they completed less than



25% of the survey, leading to a total response rate of 23%. It is also to be noted that among the remaining responses, 5 did not finish the survey.

Regarding demographics, the survey was completed by individuals from Belize (43%), Costa Rica (36%) and Barbados (14%). In terms of representativity, 29% of the respondents were self-identified as women and one respondent declared having a disability. Lastly, respondents were mainly from national governments (57%), followed by other organizations representatives (21%) and the civil society and private sector (21%).

## **Evaluation limitations**

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The evaluation encountered several limitations in its process.

The evaluator encountered some difficulties in engaging with the project stakeholders during the data collection phase, including through the KIIs and the online survey. Consequently, the evaluation reflects the project stakeholder's perceptions and points of view to a limited extent only. It is to be noted that the project team highly supported the evaluator in reaching out to participants, closely following up and engaging with them for collaboration. Thanks to their contribution, a decent number of respondents for the KIIs and the online survey were reached. In addition, the evaluation mitigated potential bias by triangulating data from the KIIs, the open-ended questions in the online survey, and the documents provided by the project team.

As a direct result of the limitation mentioned above, the evaluator was unable to carry out grouped interviews. A single one was conducted and gathered the members of the project team. Additionally, the evaluator organized several interviews with two stakeholders from the same organization to enhance dialogue, but in all cases only one of them responded to the questions.

Finally, the evaluator did not conduct field missions to have face-to-face interactions with the different stakeholders. As a result, the evaluator relied heavily on the interactions with the project team as well as the different focal points and experts involved in the project.

## 5. Findings

### 5.1. Relevance

**Relevance:** *The Relevance criterion examined the extents to which (1) the project design, choice of activities and deliverables properly reflected and addressed the development needs and priorities of participating countries, (2) taking into account the mandates of UNCTAD and DOALOS, (3) the work of the project was complementary to that of initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors by other UN and non-UN actors in the target countries, and (4) adjustments were needed to make the project more relevant to the participating countries in supporting their efforts to achieve the targets of SDG 14.*

#### 5.1.1 Development needs and priorities of participating countries

The OETS project is consistent and builds on national policies' directions, namely the Country Strategies (2009-2013, 2015-2018) and the National Strategic Plan of Barbados (2006-2025)<sup>8</sup>, the Horizon 2030 Belize's National Development Framework and the Belize Marine Fund Investment Strategy (2019-2021)<sup>9</sup>, and the National Development Plans (2015-2018, 2019-2022)<sup>10</sup> of Costa Rica, among others (see Table 3 below on selected development goals to which the OETS project contributed).

Table 3. Selected Development Goals on beneficiary country strategies

National Strategic Plan of Barbados (2005-2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure effective conservation of the island's coastal and marine ecosystems and living resources, while improving their quality</li> <li>• Substantially increase output, especially in the tradable sectors such as tourism and fisheries</li> <li>• Rationalize and regulate the fishing fleet and market infrastructure to ensure Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) compliance and adherence to Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles</li> </ul>
The Horizon 2030 Belize's National Development Framework and the Belize Marine Fund Investment Strategy (2019-2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Sustainable Fisheries and Build Sustainable and Responsible Tourism</li> <li>• Help fishers access new fishing techniques and increase local value added</li> <li>• Assist fishers who want alternative livelihoods to explore and plan for viable alternatives</li> </ul>
National Development Plans (2015-2018, 2019-2022) of Costa Rica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of coastal and aquaculture communities for the sustainable execution of their productive activities</li> <li>• Strengthen the growth of added fishing and aquaculture value through the sustainable use of resources for the benefit of communities and the fishing sector.</li> <li>• Promotion of the marketing and safety of fishery and aquaculture products for the benefit of producers and consumers</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> See: <https://extranet.who.int/mindbank/item/2272>

<sup>9</sup> See: <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/blz163501.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> See: <https://documentos.mideplan.go.cr/share/s/L4VKAES3TyOWyPR9BAB-qA>

The participation in the OETS project being demand-driven by the beneficiary countries, its objectives can be defined as aligned with the development needs and priorities identified by Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica. Additionally, evidence collected shows that the three countries of intervention validated the relevancy of the OETS project against their national needs and development orientations.

In each country, the national governments were entrusted with both the pre-selection and selection of the strategy for key oceans-based sectors, among the twelve sectors suggested by UNCTAD. An iterative and participative decision process was conducted through national stakeholder workshops, gathering representatives from governmental institutions, the private sector, academia and international organizations. It is to be noted that the balance of stakeholders' participation improved during the course of the project, leading to a better representativity of the stakeholders' groups in the discussions, particularly in the national implementation phase and in regional and international events<sup>11</sup>.

### 5.1.2 Alignment with UNCTAD and DOALOS mandates

The OETS project was aligned with the overall goal of UNCTAD, which is “to support developing countries efforts to use trade, investment, finance, and technology as vehicles for inclusive and sustainable development”. Particularly, the OETS project contributed to UNCTAD’s mandate presented in the 2016 Nairobi “Maafikiano”<sup>12</sup>. Indeed it supported “developing countries, in particular SIDS, in the advancement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in the design and implementation of national economic development strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources seeking to promote sustainable trade in ocean-based economic sectors including through analysis of fisheries subsidies that lead to overcapacity and overfishing and subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and the challenges they pose to developing countries, particularly in connection with the conservation of marine resources and food security”<sup>13</sup>.

During the conception of the project, trade and development plans and policies were not used as a tool to enable sustainable use of marine resources and to harness growth in ocean-based sectors. UNCTAD brought its expertise to this issue, as the UN focal point on trade and development, on the design and implementation of trade policies, value addition, value chain integration and compliance with international trade agreements and standard as well as with deep linked to local sustainable development.

The OETS project was also aligned with the overall goal of DOALOS. Indeed, the latter serves as the secretariat of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement and “provides information, advice and assistance to States with a view to providing a better understanding of the Convention and the related Agreements, their wider acceptance, uniform and consistent application and effective implementation”<sup>14</sup>. These two sets of mandates and expertise was

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<sup>11</sup> See: <https://unctad.org/meeting/oceans-economy-and-trade-strategies-oets-caribbean-and-central-american-experience-sharing>

<sup>12</sup> “Agreement” in Swahili

<sup>13</sup> Nairobi Maafikiano, From decision to action: Moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development, Fourteenth session, UNCTAD, July 2016.

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Legal/Pages/UnitedNationsConventionOnTheLawOfTheSea.aspx>

reported as complementary and mutually supportive particularly in relation to regulatory and economic policy.

### 5.1.3 Complementarity with other initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors

Many projects and initiatives related to marine biodiversity, blue economy and coastal management are taking place in the Caribbean region. These include the regional project “Towards a Blue Revolution: Catalyzing Private Investment in Sustainable Aquaculture Production Systems” led by FAO and implemented in Barbados, the “Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation” project led by the World Bank and the “Fishing Sustainability Training” project led UNDP in Belize, or the “Blue Smart Strategy” and the PROBLUE portfolio led by the World Bank in Costa Rica.

According to 71% of the survey respondents, OETS activities have been complementary, harmonized and/or coordinated with the other interventions in their country or region. Evidence collected through interviews confirmed the complementary of the OETS project with other initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors, including the UNCTAD-OECS Blue BioTrade project (2020-2022), UNDP Costa Rica's National Action Plan for Large Pelagic Fisheries (2018), the World Bank MCCAP project and the FAO Climate Change Adaptation of the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector Project (CC4FISH).

### 5.1.4 Contributions to SDG 14

Interviewees reported that the project has contributed to the better management of marine resources, development of deeper economic and governance links among ocean-based sectors and access for small scale fisheries to marine resources, and to building resilience vis a vis external shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. Multiple partnerships developed under the project were also reported to having contributed to expanding the knowledge, resources and outreach base of the support offered in line with SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 13 (Climate Action).

Evidence collected through the desk review, including of the project reporting, and interviews shows that the OETS project supported the countries of intervention in achieving SDG 14 targets 4 (sustainable fishing), 6 (ending subsidies contributing to overfishing), 7 (increasing the economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources), B (supporting small scale fishers) and C (implementing and enforcing international sea law), as presented in Table 4 below.

*Table 4. Planned OETS project contribution to the advancement of SDG 14*

<p><b>Target 14.4: Sustainable fishing</b></p>	<p>The all-ocean sectors selected by beneficiary countries for their respective OETS were linked to the objective of making their fisheries more sustainable, competitive, and socially inclusive. The OETS project research and recommendations sought to improve the status quo through a collective fish and seafood trademark on responsible fisheries, a Finfish management plan resilient to climate change, as well as market intelligence and the testing sustainable fishing methods.</p>
<p><b>Target 14.6: End subsidies contributing to overfishing</b></p>	<p>Fisheries subsidies and their impacts were analyzed in the OETS reports and specific recommendations on the matter were made and validated by</p>

	all stakeholders. An online briefing <sup>15</sup> was organized in 2019 to directly respond to questions by focal points and partners. In July 2022, the WTO reached an Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies. UNCTAD, DOALOS and FAO plan to continue supporting a wider understanding of this Agreement.
<b>Target 14.7: Increase the economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources</b>	This target was at the core of the OETS project. In the sector assessment phase, economic and legal research was undertaken in sectors with more economic, environmental, and social potential in each of the beneficiary countries. Beside fisheries, sectors such as aquaculture, seafood processing, coastal and marine tourism and coastal and coastal and marine environmental services were analyzed for the potential of economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources and ecosystems. Impacts and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic were assessed in all relevant oceans economic sectors.
<b>Target 14.B: Support small scale fishers</b>	In most of the fisheries value chains selected (e.g., tuna, mahi-mahi, sword fish, lobster, queen conch and other coastal fish), the main actors were medium and small-scale fishers. Specific recommendations towards them were included in all OETS reports as well as in the action plans.
<b>Target 14.C:</b> Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS	The project analysed the legal framework and implementation of UNCLOS and other relevant multilateral and regional agreements in relevant oceans economic sectors. Countries Development Plans, policy priorities and needed regulatory reforms were considered and recommendations to fill law of the sea and fisheries regulatory gaps were presented in the OETS reports.

Given the time, budget and scope of the OETS project, some of these targets, including 14.6 and 14.B were addressed to a lesser extent, but have still been taken into consideration in the developed strategies and action plans. It is to be noted that the OETS project aimed at providing the beneficiary countries with a tailored and concrete strategy and action plan to improve their ocean-related practices with regards to both economic, social and environmental considerations. In this sense, direct contributions to SDG 14 cannot be assessed yet, as the OETS project finished less than a year ago, and the application of the strategies is ongoing.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://unctad.org/meeting/online-briefing-wto-negotiations-and-implications-design-oceans-economy-and-trade>

## 5.2. Effectiveness

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**Effectiveness:** *The Effectiveness criterion examined the (1) achievement of the planned objectives and outcomes, (2) the actual development of capacities of the OETS project participants, and (3) the enabling and limiting factors that contributed to the achievement of results, including the partnerships.*

### 5.2.1 Achievement of planned objectives and outcomes

The project's final objective was to "strengthen the capacities of coastal developing countries, particularly SIDS, in elaborating, adopting and implementing evidence-based and policy coherent OETS to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework". Based on the results framework presented in Annex 2, the expected outcomes were:

- EA1. Improved capacity of national stakeholders to assess and identify promising products and/or services in key ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework
- EA2. Strengthened capacity of stakeholders in defining policy options and implementing priority actions to support sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors in beneficiary countries
- EA3. Increased understanding at the regional level on how to design and implement OETS as tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework

The project measured the achievement of the above outcomes with a set of indicators presented in the result framework in Annex 2. Some of these indicators were monitored by means of surveys to the participants after the activities (i.e., workshops).

Table 5 below is based on self-reported data and shows that the project reached most of the targets set per indicator. Moreover, some of the results were better than expected, including the percentage of workshop participants reporting an increased understanding of both key principles and obligations under UNCLOS for developing oceans economic sectors and on how to design and implement OETS as a tool to promote sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework. Specific information on knowledge enhancement and capacity building provided is provided in section 5.2.2 below.

Particularly, the expected number of additional countries formally showing interest in obtaining further support to develop OETS tripled, underlining the high relevance of such strategies for SIDS. Additionally, expressions of interest from international organizations such as the Central America Regional Fisheries Organisation (OSPECA) and the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) were informally received, opening up the potentiality of OETS development in six additional countries in Central America and eighteen countries in the Pacific. However, UNCTAD has not been able to secure extrabudgetary funding to pursue these.

Among all countries that have directly or indirectly, and officially or unofficially expressed interest in developing their OETS, eighteen are both UN members and SIDS, namely Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica,

Grenada, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Table 5. Outcomes (or Expected Accomplishments) achievement, OETS final report

Outcome	Indicator	Level	Baseline	Target	Result	Achievement
<b>EA1.</b>	IA1.1 Potential goods and/ or services are identified by national stakeholders in each of the participating countries	<i>Regional</i>	0	6	6	<b>100%</b>
		Barbados	0	2	2	100%
		Belize	0	2	2	100%
		Costa Rica	0	2	2	100%
	IA1.2 Responding participants in the National Stakeholders Workshops indicate that they have a better understanding of key principles and obligations under UNCLOS for developing oceans economic sectors	<i>Regional</i>	-	70%	85%	<b>121%</b>
		Barbados	-	70%	85%	121%
		Belize	-	70%	85%	121%
		Costa Rica	-	70%	85%	121%
<b>EA2.</b>	IA2.1 OETS and Plans of Action are validated by two national ministries in each of the beneficiary countries	<i>Regional</i>	0	3	3	<b>100%</b>
		Barbados	0	1	1	100%
		Belize	0	1	1	100%
		Costa Rica	0	1	1	100%
	IA2.2 Priority actions derived from the OETS to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors are implemented in each beneficiary country	<i>Regional</i>	1	3	3	<b>100%</b>
		Barbados	1	2	1	75%
		Belize	0	2	2	100%
		Costa Rica	0	1	1	100%
<b>EA3.</b>	IA3.1 Responding participants in the regional workshop acknowledged to have an increased understanding on how to design and implement OETS as a tool to promote sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework	<i>Regional</i>	-	70%	85%	<b>121%</b>
		Barbados	-	70%	85%	121%
		Belize	-	70%	85%	121%
		Costa Rica	-	70%	85%	121%
	IA3.2 Additional countries show interest in obtaining further support to develop OETS	<i>Global</i>	1	3	9	<b>300%</b>



## 5.2.2 Knowledge enhancement and capacity building

Evidence collected both during the project (see Box 1) and the project evaluation shows that OETS project activities have increased the participants' capacities to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based sectors, to assess and identify promising products and/ or services, and to define policy options and implement priority actions. Particularly, 80% of the evaluation survey respondents declared that the project activities have greatly improved their understanding on the design and implementation of oceans economy and trade strategies, underlining the achievement of the OETS project general objective.

*Box 1. Selected examples of feedback on lessons related knowledge enhancement and capacity building in evaluations (anonymous survey comments from regional workshop)*

- *It showed how to make ocean's value chains sustainable and lucrative.*
- *Negotiate and choose carefully what is your priority development area that is of most benefit to your country.*
- *The countries have different ocean-based economic priorities which mostly focus on wild caught fisheries. Countries need to look beyond the extraction of raw living marine resources and promote other sustainable sectors e.g., energy, mariculture, blue BioTrade, etc.”*
- *The project helped clarify the importance of a bottom-up approach and options on fisheries and ecosystem management.*
- *The fish basket approach linking species availability, commercial use and climate vulnerability proved to be a very useful contribution.*
- *Linking production by small fishers with potential local high markets in restaurants and hotels as well with recreational tourism was a good angle.*
- *It was important to learn about performance indicators, reference points, harvest and control measures and their importance in achieving a sustainable fishery.*
- *Teamwork with constituents and local stakeholders is key.*

Also, social media, news items and videos produced during the life of the project contributed to increase awareness, enhance knowledge and capacity building in a much wider audience than the originally audience of workshops. More than 45 news items, press releases, interviews, and videos were produced and disseminated by the United Nations and local media sources on the project.

COVID-19 and natural disasters hindered the engagement and participation in project activities by stakeholders in the second half of the project in face-to-face activities. However, the project team adapted rapidly proposed and implemented specific project amendments aimed at overcoming these challenges. Consultations and technical assistance were held online to respond to the new challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic to the project stakeholders in order to learn and exchange views on their respective response measures,

### 5.2.3 Enabling factors

Evidence shows that factors having enabled the achievement of results – from the most frequently mentioned to the least frequently mentioned among the online survey responses – were (a) the quality of the experts, (b) the nature and design of project activities, the project team knowledge and knowledge sharing, (c) both the breadth of stakeholders’ representativity and the stakeholder buy-in, the focal points’ engagement, and the partnerships, (d) the project management, (e) the communication tools, and (f) the adaptation to COVID-19 and the United Nations network and events.

Overall, the technical knowledge delivered by the project and management capacities of the project team highly contributed to the achievement of planned results. Most of the experts engaged in the project produced valuable deliverables and the reliability of some of the focal points in governments facilitated a smooth implementation of activities. To a lesser extent, the United Nations network and events allowed the completion of international outreach activities, a factor that did not appear not to be known by all project participants, as only beneficiary countries and partners were involved.

### 5.2.4 Challenges

Evidence shows that factors having hindered the achievement of results – from the most frequently mentioned to the least frequently mentioned among the online survey responses – were (a) the unavailability of data, (b) the human and financial resources, (c) COVID-19 and stakeholders’ resistance<sup>16</sup>, and (d) communication and project management.

Particularly, the unforeseen lack of data for background and working documents serving as a basis for the project implementation highly impacted the expected quality of deliverables. It appears in the project documentation that the project had been misinformed on the availability of such data at the beginning of the project, leading to less qualitative research products in Belize, and to a lesser extent in Barbados. Nevertheless, some of these data gaps were filled by additional research by UNCTAD staff, consultant efforts, partner agencies (e.g., FAO, UNDP and CRFM). This included research on internal market sales, prices of the output, labor and gender participation in the value chain, cost structure and value and related services and export and import of services such an environmental one. In many countries, this data is not gathered and there are no reports at the multilateral level.

Additionally, the pandemic situation detailed in section 5.5.3 below, the country-specific long-line fisheries sector context in Costa Rica at the time of the implementation directly challenged the achievement of expected results. Indeed, as mentioned in the project documentation and during interviews, the long-line fisheries sector reform in Costa Rica and related challenges led certain long-liners<sup>17</sup> groups to try to impose their viewpoints in the OETS Project discussion space, including to repeat

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<sup>16</sup> Stakeholder resistance can be defined as the reluctance to take part in the implementation of a project, due to diverse interests, values, and expectations involved. In the context of the mentioned online survey, some respondents from Barbados and Costa Rica identified stakeholder resistance as a factor hindering the implementation and results of the OETS project.

<sup>17</sup> Long liners are a special type of fisheries usually of medium sizes vessels for selective fishing of big pelagiids. They commonly have conflicts of interest overfishing zones, monitoring requirements, and fuel prices and

their positions to the government. This considerably affected the participation of certain groups of long-liners in terms of expected contributions.

Generally speaking, the project faced recurring difficulties in liaising and engaging some representatives of the project stakeholders' organisations over the life of the project. This was partly explained by the high turnover rates, limited financial, technical and human capacities observed in such organizations (not limited to this project), factors which were amplified during the pandemic. Particularly, these affected the timely implementation of activities and delayed the validation of the OETS Barbados report.

### 5.2.5 Partnerships

Several partnerships contributed to the results of the OETS project. Firstly, the partnership between UNCTAD and DOALOS to co-implement the project fostered knowledge sharing and complementarity in technical approaches between the two organizations. Particularly, inter-sectoral knowledge gaps between international law of the sea and trade law were spotted and addressed during the implementation of the project through knowledge-sharing sessions among the project team, enabling them to improve their common understanding and to deliver a more integrated approach. Moreover, several partnerships including with UNDP Costa Rica, FAO, the World Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) led to financial leveraging for the OETS project, contributing to the implementation of activities and reaching of expected results. These partnerships were reported to enable more solid research, greater stakeholder participation, wider perspectives, joint implementation, a wider resource base, more legitimacy, and greater outreach.

It is to be noted that some partnerships and liaising could have been deepened, especially within the United Nations sphere. Despite the project team efforts to create synergies around the OETS project, some United Nations representatives based in the region appeared not to engage in the OETS project activities and communication channels. It is unclear how this would have impacted the results of the project, but the mobilization and recognition of such potential partners is an important value of the United Nations system and way of working.

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competition with industrial fleets. They usually expect more government support than what the government can provide. Specifically, in the case of their engagement with this project's activities, they wanted to utilize the project as a platform to lobby the government and place their interests at the centre of the discussions, even if sometimes these were not relevant or within the scope of the project. The United Nations' duty was to remain impartial, and the project team could not favor a particular set of stakeholders. This sometimes caused resistance in participation by this group.

### 5.3. Efficiency

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**Efficiency:** *The efficiency criterion examined the extent to which the project resources have been utilized to ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes in a timely manner. The assessment of the efficiency criteria focused on (1) the adequacy of the project management, 2) the use of financial resources, and 3) the timely achievement of outcomes.*

#### 5.3.1 Project management

Evidence shows that the OETS project was adequately managed. The project was coordinated through a Management Committee of UNCTAD and DOALOS staff and an implementation task force with the participation of focal points. Decisions were always taken by consensus. While multiple administrative and reporting obligations specific to the UN system were perceived at times to slow down implementation, the OETS project benefitted from a responsive and highly motivated team. Indeed, the good leadership of the project team was commended by project stakeholders. Particularly, the collaboration between UNCTAD and DOALOS staff itself appears to have led to an efficient operationalization of the project, highlighting their complementary approaches in this specific field of intervention.

In terms of communication material, the OETS project activities and deliverables were regularly covered by the project time during implementation and timely disseminated among key stakeholders. The steady use of online portals and platforms, such as the UNCTAD and DOALOS webpages and UNCTAD social media, to share the achievement of milestones and communication materials (i.e. videos) to a broader audience as well, enhanced the good communication and overall advocacy of the project. Moreover, experience from the evaluation process demonstrated the ability of the project team members to maintain close communication, to the extent possible, with the project stakeholders in the three countries of intervention. For example, decisions related to project adjustments, COVID-19 challenges or implementation priorities were taken jointly with focal points.

Overall, the OETS project was well monitored and consistently reported. The project team has undertaken several surveys to support the tracking of perception indicators in the three countries of intervention. Nonetheless, the project results framework presented in Annex 2 did not allow for a precise monitoring of the medium and long term outcomes of the project. This is in part due to the requirements of the UN Development Account, which stipulate that the project outcomes should be achievable within the project's timeframe. Indeed, most of the indicators relied on the actual production of deliverables and milestones, generating more granular yet relevant information about the overall progress of activities, such as the number of consultations realized, the number of reviews done by stakeholders, or the number of visits/ views of the communication platforms and products. However, as is often the case with projects with development objectives, changes in e.g. government policies or the legal framework take time and usually do not occur within the lifetime of the project.

### 5.3.2 Financial resources

Table 6 below displays the progress in the OETS project expenditure through the years of implementation, as a supplement of the financial information presented in Table 2 of the present report.

Evidence shows that the distribution of the project budget has been adjusted three times to better adapt to the needs and contextual factors affecting the implementation of activities, including COVID-19. The implementation rate reached 96,9% of the budget at project close, highlighting an appropriate and fair management of the financial resources available. With regards to the results of the OETS project, it appears that the financial resources were used very efficiently. UNCTAD and DOALOS also contributed regular budget staff time to the project, specifically one P.5 (20 per cent), two P4s (75 per cent), two P3s (30 per cent) and one G5 staff (50 per cent) over the course of the project. Internal coordination among project partners, focal points and other UN entities and consultations with stakeholders took more time than foreseen due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related project amendments.

Additionally, the project team succeeded in securing sponsorships and various types of support for project partners, including meeting facilities and other logistical support as well as consultancy and service provision fees, for an estimated total of US\$108,600.00, that is 16,7% of the overall budget.

Table 6. OETS project expenditure timeline, in USD

Year	Planned expenditure	Actual expenditure	Implementation Rate	Cumulative
2018	208,025.00	88,859.04	13,7%	13,7%
2019	150,950.00	113,484.52	17,3%	31%
2020	200,775.00	88,671.51	13,8%	44,8%
2021	90,250.00	338,686.61	52,1%	52,1%
2022	-			
<b>Total</b>	<b>650,000.00</b>	<b>629,701.68</b>	<b>96,9%</b>	<b>96,9%</b>

Note: Implementation rate = Total expenditure/ Total Budget

### 5.3.3 Timely achievement of outcomes

The project started in February 2018 and was initially planned to be completed by 31 December 2021. However, due to COVID-19, an extension of the project duration was approved and the project was operationally completed in July 2022. Specific information related to COVID-19 consequences on the project activities is provided in section 5.5.3 below.

Particularly, activities in Barbados and Costa Rica were delayed due to the resistance and/or non-responsiveness of some stakeholders in the decision and validation processes. Moreover, issues in Barbados led to the cancellation of a contract for unexpected poor performance of the consultant. To overcome the resulting delays in this instance, the project team conducted the work originally intended for the consultant to advance and finalize activities on time. Whilst this allowed for timely implementation, it may have contributed to resistance from some of the project beneficiaries, who perceived it as a deviation from the original plan of action and valued the use of a local consultant for the integration of local knowledge and expertise (stakeholders' resistance is explained in section 5.2.4 above).

Additionally, and as a consequence of both COVID-19 and delays induced by the above mentioned factors, dissemination and outreach activities were postponed against their initial planning. This has not prevented their successful implementation during the extension period granted by the UN Development Account.

## 5.4. Sustainability

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**Sustainability:** *The sustainability criterion examined the extent to which the project's results and benefits are likely to sustain beyond the end of the project. More specifically, this criterion looked at (1) the commitment of the beneficiary countries, and (2) the measures built and/or to be built to promote sustainability.*

### 5.4.1 Commitment of the beneficiary countries

Evidence shows that beneficiary countries are willing to commit to their OETS strategy and action plan and more generally to the achievement of SGD 14 targets.

Particularly, despite initial delays, Barbados appeared to be highly engaged in sustaining the results of the project, as some activities are being carried out after the project closure, and one of the main stakeholder groups has undergone a change in management and is more committed to implementing the OETS and action plan. Evidence collected relays a genuine willingness to build on the OETS project results.

In Costa Rica, the government seized the opportunity of the OETS project to design, develop, implement, and operationalize the first collective trademark for all sustainable harvested and farmed fish, crustaceans and mollusks products in the country and the Caribbean and Central America region. This success is one of the ways in which the government intends to contribute to poverty reduction among others, highlighting their full commitment and comprehensive approach to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework. The OETS of Costa Rica also highlights the close relationship of its actions with SDG 14 and some of its targets, particularly the sustainable fishing (14.4), the end of subsidies contributing to overfishing (14.6) and the support to small-scale fisher (14b).

In Belize, despite the important difficulties and challenges caused by hurricane Lisa that struck the country in November 2022, the government representatives stated a strong commitment to pursue efforts towards the objectives of the OETS project.

#### 5.4.2 Measures for sustainability

To enhance the sustainability of results built through the OETS project, several studies were developed by UNCTAD and DOALOS in parallel to the implementation of activities. Moreover, workshops on specific topics took place with the general objective to both strengthen and sustain the knowledge and capacities of beneficiary organizations from the three countries of intervention.

Evidence from interviews shows that some activities could have been designed to complement existing activities and holistically cover the promotion of sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors, such as the identification of policy instruments to strengthen trade constraints in the fisheries sector.

Additionally, sustainable strategies for governments could have been more extensively reflected on together with the project team in order to identify sources of funding to facilitate the implementation of the strategies and action plans. Indeed, some beneficiary organizations' representatives expressed their need for financial resources to ensure the continuation of activities.

## 5.5. Cross-cutting themes

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**Cross-cutting themes:** *This section examines whether the OETS project was able to mainstream gender equality, disability, and human rights into the design and implementation of the activities. This section also looks at the environmental aspect as well as the response to COVID-19.*

### 5.5.1 Gender, Disability, and Human Rights

Evidence shows that gender was included to the extent possible in the project implementation, through the monitoring of women representativeness during activities, essentially workshops. Additionally, 57% of the evaluation survey respondents considered that the OETS project contributed to women's participation and influence making in ocean-based sectors.

By enhancing the economic reinforcement of the selected ocean-based sectors, the project is likely to contribute to a better inclusion of women among these sector value chains. All OETS reports included social, employment and gender considerations in their assessment based on available data and inputs received. The project showed greater female participation in value chain addition related activities such as processing, sales, and distribution, while primary activities are mainly conducted by men. In the case of Belize and Costa Rica a large segment of the value chain, particularly on the small-scale fisheries is still dominated by informal practices. Options for formalization, labor and social security protection, and social inclusion were provided in the action plans of each of the beneficiary countries.

Fishing is closely linked to disability: ocean-related activities can produce a very high probability of accidents and injuries leading to various forms of disability. Several ways of integrating disability in similar projects were mentioned during the evaluation process. For instance, specific actions along the fisheries value chains could be realized by disabled people (i.e. sea food inspection, packing and storing activities).

Generally speaking, project activities could be made more accessible to disabled people, from the physical accessibility (i.e. access ramps, adapted conference facilities) – that was checked by the project team – to the understanding accessibility (i.e. sign language translation for the deaf participants). However, this was not expressed as a necessity from survey respondents nor interviewees during the evaluation process.

### 5.5.2 Environment

Each activity of the OETS project considered directly or indirectly environmental issues. More than 75% of respondents of the online survey declared that environmental considerations were integrated in the OETS project, and this was confirmed by key informants interviewed. Although it is not the primary focus of the project objective, the environment is intrinsically linked to the different themes of the strategies and the sustainable management of natural resources appears to be promoted throughout the OETS project.



### 5.5.3 COVID-19

To respond to the urgent needs of the beneficiary countries related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its negative impact on the specific ocean-sectors value chains, the OETS project undertook several activities such as country consultations, pandemic-related workshops<sup>18</sup> as well as the development of a study to highlight paths for selected values chains redevelopment in the post-COVID-19 period. It is to be noted that COVID-19 effects on ocean economy is mentioned in the OETS of Belize, as it was drafted and published after the outbreak of the pandemic.

The project also adapted its activities to COVID-19 requirements and switched from physical to virtual consultations and workshops. Online consultations were carried out to assess the impact of measures take to respond to COVID-19 and to prepare research on the impact and implications of COVID-19 for the ocean economy and trade strategy <sup>19</sup>. Particularly, these adjustments fostered an increased communication of the project activities and adjusted milestones.

Nonetheless, it is to be noted that travel to and within the region of intervention were hindered by the pandemic, limiting the interactions with the project stakeholders and challenging the timely implementation of activities. The UN also issued staff travel restrictions and beneficiary countries suspended travel operations from April 2020 onwards for a year or more. The slowdown of national governments operations caused by the pandemic also affected their ownership of the project and timely validations. Foreseen face-to-face workshops such as the Belize adaptive multispecies training workshop, the regional OETS experience exchange workshop and the launch of the Costa Rica collective trademark were postponed until June, September, and November 2021 respectively.

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<sup>18</sup> Including during the regional exchange workshop

See: <https://unctad.org/meeting/oceans-economy-and-trade-strategies-oets-caribbean-and-central-american-experience-sharing>

<sup>19</sup> See <https://unctad.org/publication/impact-and-implications-covid-19-ocean-economy-and-trade-strategy>

## 6. Conclusions, Lessons learned and Recommendations

### 6.1 Conclusions

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Through the use of mixed-methods of quantitative and qualitative sources and techniques, this evaluation has assessed the OETS project against six criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, integration of Cross-Cutting themes, and responses to COVID-19.

The evaluation has reached a series of conclusions drawn on the various lines of evidence from the findings:

- **Relevance:** The OETS project design, activities and deliverables was relevant to Barbados', Belize's and Costa Rica's needs and priorities, taking into account the mandates of both UNCTAD and DOALOS. It exploited synergies on the joint implementation of SDG 14 by UNCTAD and DOALOS with mutual learning opportunities on ocean governance, economy and the multilateral trade system.

The OETS project aligned with the national policies and development frameworks of the beneficiary countries, including Barbados, Belize, and Costa Rica. The project's objectives were consistent with the development needs and priorities identified by these countries. National governments were actively involved in the selection of strategies for key ocean-based sectors, ensuring a demand-driven approach. The OETS project was also complementary, harmonized, and coordinated with other initiatives led by organizations such as FAO, the World Bank, and UNDP, among others, are working alongside the OETS project to address various aspects of marine biodiversity, blue economy, and coastal management.

The OETS project contributed to UNCTAD's goal of using trade, investment, finance, and technology for inclusive and sustainable development, with a particular focus on SDG 14, and aligned with DOALOS' role as the secretariat of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The mandates and expertise of both UNCTAD and DOALOS were complementary and mutually supportive, particularly in terms of regulatory and economic policy.

The OETS project has made substantial contributions to SDG 14, emphasizing the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources. It actively supported key aspects of this goal, including sustainable fishing (14.4), ending subsidies that lead to overfishing (14.6), increasing economic benefits from marine resources (14.7), supporting small-scale fishers (14.B), and implementing and enforcing international sea law (14.C).

- **Effectiveness:** The OETS project reached or exceeded most of the short-term targets set in its results framework. Workshop participants reported an increased understanding of both key principles and obligations under UNCLOS for developing oceans economic sectors and on how to design and implement OETS as a tool to promote sustainable trade in products and services in

ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework. Eighteen countries have officially or unofficially expressed interest in developing their OETS. Overall, the technical knowledge delivered by the project and management capacities of the project team contributed to the achievement of planned objectives. Most of the experts engaged in the project produced useful deliverables and the reliability of some of the focal points in governments facilitated a smooth implementation of activities. However, the unavailability of data for background and working documents serving as a basis for the project implementation negatively impacted the expected quality of deliverables. Additional research was required to fill some of these data gaps by UNCTAD staff, consultants and partner agencies.

Since the results framework did not include indicators for medium to long term results (for example on implementation of the action plans or the effect on the economy), this data was/is not systematically collected. There is evidence of some recommended actions being undertaken after the project closure (e.g., in Barbados and Costa Rica). However, given the nature of UNDA projects, providing only short-term funding for pilot projects, and the requirement of the UNDA to include project outcomes that are achievable within the project's timeframe, the monitoring and evaluation of medium to long term results can only happen if the project is included in the overall M&E framework of the implementing entities, and/or if the UNDA commissions follow-up evaluations further down the line. This evaluation can only conclude, based on the evidence collected, that medium to long term results are likely to be achieved given the sustainability measures in place and the commitment of the beneficiary countries to implementing the OETS and action plans.

- Efficiency: The OETS project successfully utilized the available resources to implement its activities in a timely manner, despite a slow start in the implementation due to COVID-19. Particularly, the project management highly contributed to the efficient implementation of the project and to the delivery of additional outputs possible due to savings on travel.

Effective collaboration between UNCTAD and DOALOS staff was noted, which enhanced the project's operationalization. Communication and dissemination of project activities were consistent, and close communication was maintained with project stakeholders. Moreover, the project exhibited flexibility in adjusting the budget to adapt to changing needs and contextual factors, including the impact of COVID-19. The implementation rate reached nearly 97% of the budget, indicating efficient financial resource management. The project experienced some delays, primarily due to resistance and non-responsiveness of stakeholders in decision and validation processes in Barbados and Costa Rica. Delays also occurred due to the cancellation of a contract with a consultant in Barbados. However, the project team adapted to these challenges and managed to advance and finalize activities on time. The COVID-19 pandemic further contributed to delays, but the project ultimately achieved its outcomes within an extended timeline, as approved by the UN Development Account.

- Sustainability: The OETS project is likely to sustain beyond the end of the project, thanks to the commitment of beneficiary countries. Barbados has shown a strong commitment to sustaining

the results of the OETS project. Some activities are being continued even after the project closure, and there is evidence of a genuine willingness to build on the project's outcomes. Changes in management within key stakeholder groups have contributed to a higher level of commitment. Costa Rica has also demonstrated a high level of commitment to the OETS project. The government seized the opportunity to develop and implement a collective trademark for sustainable fish and seafood products, aligning with SDG 14 targets and highlighting their comprehensive approach to promoting sustainable trade in ocean-based economic sectors. Despite challenges caused by the hurricane in November 2022, the government representatives in Belize have expressed strong commitment to pursuing the objectives of the OETS project.

Measures to promote sustainability have been incorporated to the extent possible. These measures included the development of studies and workshops designed to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of beneficiary organizations in the three countries of intervention. Moreover, the results of the project were widely disseminated through news items, press releases and videos to inform relevant multilateral, regional and national processes and through UN news, social media, and various local television and press outlets. There is room for improvement in terms of designing activities that complement existing efforts and holistically address the promotion of sustainable trade in ocean-based economic sectors, including the identification of policy instruments to address trade constraints in the fisheries sector.

Collaboration between beneficiary organizations and the project team for identifying sources of funding to facilitate the implementation of strategies and action plans is essential for sustainability. Financial resources are needed to ensure the continued success of the project, and addressing this need is important for sustaining the progress achieved. However, it is the responsibility of beneficiary countries to allocate sufficient resources to build up on the project results.

- Cross-cutting issues: The OETS project satisfactorily integrated environmental and gender considerations. Disability insights could have been applied to a certain extent.

The project made efforts to include gender considerations in its implementation by monitoring women's representativeness during activities, especially workshops. Social, employment, and gender considerations have also been incorporated into project assessments based on available data and input received. The OETS project integrated environmental issues into its activities, directly or indirectly. While the primary focus of the project may not be the environment, it is intrinsically linked to the various themes of the strategies, and the project promoted the sustainable management of natural resources throughout its implementation.

Suggestions were made during the evaluation process for integrating disability considerations in similar projects, such as involving disabled individuals in specific actions along the fisheries value chain – such as seafood inspection, packing, and storing activities – although it was not expressed as a necessity.

- Response to COVID-19: The OETS project responded to COVID-19 to a great extent, adapting its activities to the needs of beneficiary countries and constraints induced by the global pandemic. The project demonstrated adaptability by shifting to virtual activities and conducting research related to the pandemic's impact. However, it also faced difficulties related to travel restrictions and disruptions in government operations, leading to postponed face-to-face workshops and affecting interactions with project stakeholders. Induced restrictions having implications for the project's operations and engagements with the beneficiary countries, and national government operations themselves being affected by the pandemic, COVID-19 impacted their ownership of the project and the timely validation of project-related activities.

## **6.2 Lessons learned and good practices**

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The following lessons learned and good practices have been identified:

6. The definition and co-design of project outputs with beneficiary countries foster sustainability of project intermediate results, through stakeholder engagement and support both during implementation and after closing of project activities.
7. The successful co-implementation of the project by two UN agencies relies on constant communication, tailored working methods and practices adaptation.
8. Flexibility with the original project document is necessary in order to allow the activities to adapt to unpredicted changes, local conditions as well as interests of the key stakeholders. In this sense, good practices have been identified, including the project activities adaptation to COVID-19 constraints, the flexibility in reallocating the budget, as well as the assessment of emerging needs related to the pandemic.
9. Close cooperation and coordination with appointed focal points in beneficiary countries is an important success factor to ensure stakeholder organizations ownership, buy-in and the sustainability of the results.
10. Exchanging good practices and lessons learned at the regional level is proven to be beneficial for the different stakeholders involved.

## **6.3 Recommendations**

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After a thorough analysis of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project, the evaluation formulated the following recommendations to UNCTAD/UNDA:

- A. Initial quality assessments of available documents and data critical to the beneficiary's participation in the project should be realized during the design phase and be included as an eligibility criteria, especially for projects relying on scientific and evidence-based information for analysis.

- B. Managing expectations of indirect stakeholders is key to ensure a smooth implementation of activities, particularly when the project seeks the opinions of a wide range of stakeholders. In that sense, the project milestones and deliverables, as well as respective roles and responsibilities of all project stakeholders, should be defined and shared from the start to managing expectations and ensure a smooth implementation of activities, particularly when the project involves a wide range of stakeholders.
  
- C. UNDA should ensure that SMART indicators are defined, and Monitoring & Evaluation systems are in place, for measuring both immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes, especially those that are expected beyond the lifetime of the project. These indicators should be linked to the overall UNCTAD results framework.

## Annexes

### 1. Evaluation TORs

CONFÉRENCE DES NATIONS UNIES SUR  
LE COMMERCE ET LE  
DÉVELOPPEMENT



UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

#### Terms of Reference (TOR)

#### External Evaluation of Development Account Project 1819K: Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies

#### I. Introduction and Purpose

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the independent final project evaluation for the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded project titled “*Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies*”.

The evaluation will provide accountability to the management of both UNCTAD and OLA/DOALOS, the Capacity Development Programme Management Office/Development Account of DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.

The evaluation will provide assessments that are credible and useful, and also include practical and constructive recommendations. In particular, the evaluation will systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, implementation, the extent of gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming and overall project performance. On the basis of these assessments, the evaluation will formulate recommendations to project stakeholders, in particular to UNCTAD and/or the Capacity Development Programme Management Office/Development Account of DESA, and OLA/DOALOS with a view towards optimizing results of future projects, including on operational and administrative aspects.

- **Context of the evaluation**

The oceans economy (also known as the blue economy) is an integral part of today's development paradigm, emphasizing more sustainable and inclusive economic development paths consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, Goal 14 (oceans). It seeks to sustainably expand the economic frontiers of coastal countries beyond their land territories in order to provide new economic, social and environmental benefits. Furthermore, deriving sustainable benefits from these economic frontiers should occur within integrated and effective

legal and institutional frameworks for the sustainable governance of oceans in accordance UNCLOS and related instruments.

The economic dimension of oceans includes the international trade of marine resources and other natural resources and services. Trade is an enabling factor shifting ocean-based economic activities from niche to mainstream global markets, particularly for developing countries where domestic markets remain small. By virtue of trade, ocean-based sectors<sup>20</sup> already today contribute to 13 per cent of developing countries' GDP while providing employment to over 300 million and sustaining the livelihoods of more than two billion people in developing countries. However, rather than growing sustainably going forward, these critical economic contributions to developing economies are at risk of declining significantly unless efforts to conserve and sustainably use oceans and their resources are strengthened.

Capacity building has been identified as critical for the sustainable management of the oceans economy. The Rio+20 Outcome Document, *The Future We Want* highlights “the importance of building the capacity of developing countries to be able to benefit from the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and their resources” (para 160). It also invites UNCTAD to further “enhance mainstreaming of sustainable development in its mandates, programs, strategies and decision-making processes, in support of all countries in particular developing countries' efforts in the achievement of sustainable development” (para 91). For its part, the Samoa Pathway reiterates the need for the integration of relevant capacity building in the priorities and work programmes of all United Nations agencies (para 109c).

Major existing and prospective trade-related ocean-based economic sectors where strengthened capacity building efforts are needed include: sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood processing; BioTrade marine products (e.g., algae production under a sustainable criteria for food or cosmetic purposes); marine bio-prospecting and biotech industries; tidal and off-shore energy; water treatment for ocean-inflowing effluent streams; sustainable marine transport systems and related infrastructure; and sustainable coastal tourism, including ecotourism. Furthermore, the OECD has estimated that the global output of oceans-related sectors may double by 2030, revealing a significant growth rate for these sectors over the next 15 years<sup>21</sup>.

Given the diversity of ocean-based economic sectors, their respective legal and institutional frameworks tend to be structured in isolation from each other. In view of the strong interrelation of ocean issues, an effort is needed to support the development of integrated ocean governance frameworks to enable the development of a sustainable ocean economy.

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<sup>20</sup> For the purposes of this project, "sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors" are those where harvesting of living marine resources (e.g. micro-organism, algae and fish) has taken place in the lower end of a value chain and or the harnessing of oceans forces or ecosystem services is undertaken to produce and provide oceans based services (e.g. tourism or tidal offshore wind energy). While activities on non-living marine resources (seabed minerals, oil & gas) can be part of the oceans economy, the project may not probably undertake the analysis of these activities due to the controversial sustainability nature and impact over ecosystems.

<sup>21</sup> See UNCTAD, 2016, [Oceans economy offers untapped opportunities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of marine resources and ecosystems](#).



UNCLOS recognizes that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole, and provides for the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. It is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, and it is at the center of a broad and complex international legal framework for oceans, which includes its two implementing agreements – the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of UNCLOS (Part XI Agreement) and the Fish Stocks Agreement – and a wide array of international legal instruments at the global and regional levels covering many aspects of ocean use, including the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources. Integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions is thus at the core of UNCLOS, and effective implementation of UNCLOS can make a significant contribution to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and, as such, is critical to the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.

- **Subject of the evaluation**

The main objective of the project is to strengthen capacities of coastal developing countries, particularly SIDS, in elaborating, adopting and implementing evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework.

In particular, this project aims to support developing countries in realizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources within the UNCLOS framework. It assists coastal developing countries, particularly SIDS, in promoting the sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors by analyzing, elaborating and adopting evidence-based and policy-coherent OETS and contribute to building national implementing capacities. Relevant legal and institutional issues under UNCLOS, which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, are addressed in order to support the development of an integrated national ocean governance framework. The project thus contributes to developing enabling national policy and regulatory frameworks for the sustainable economic management of the oceans consistent with UNCLOS, to further the implementation of SDG 14. To date, national strategies on oceans economy are particularly rare, developed and practiced in only a few countries (e.g., Mauritius and Seychelles). This project assists other interested countries to build their own national strategies.

The project has a focus on the Caribbean and Central American region due to the shared marine ecosystems of the Caribbean basin, the value of the Mesoamerica biodiversity corridor, and the number of SIDS in this region. No country in this region has an Oceans Economy and Trade Strategy or the like. The criteria used for country selection in the Caribbean and Central American Region include the existence of official request, if it is a coastal or insular developing country, if it is a SIDS, if it is a Party to UNCLOS, and the existence of potential partners and cooperating agencies. Based on these criteria, Barbados, Belize, and Costa Rica are the selected target countries.

. The expected accomplishments of the project are as follows:

- EA1: Improved capacity of national stakeholders to assess and identify promising products and/or services in key ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework;

- EA2: Strengthened capacity of stakeholders in defining policy options and implementing priority actions to support sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors in beneficiary countries;
- EA3: Increased understanding at the regional level on how to design and implement OETS as tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework.

Some of the main outputs and activities include:

- Publication of 2 sectoral factsheets per country based on data analysis and stakeholder mapping of the potential products and services in ocean-based economic sectors and a preliminary desk study on relevant legal and institutional in accordance with UNCLOS;
- A national stakeholders workshop per participating country to discuss, identify, and select key promising ocean-based products and services for further analysis;
- Producing a draft OETS report on the selected ocean-based products and services. This will take the form of a report based on data, research, interviews and inputs from national stakeholders;
- Convening one National Stakeholder Validation Workshop per participating country for the draft OETS report.
- Providing demand-driven advisory services in cooperation with one international expert to support OETS implementation on two national priority actions per participating country;
- Organizing training workshops to build national capacities to implement the two priority actions identified.
- One regional experience sharing workshop with the participation of three participating countries and five other countries from the region;
- Disseminating the outcomes of the OETS process in relevant UN conferences and meetings, such as at UNCTAD 15 Conference.

The OETS project will provide a direct contribution to the implementation and advancement of trade and economic targets of SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainable use oceans, seas and marine resources), namely target 4 (Fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing), conservation and management of marine living resources), 6 (phasing out certain fish subsidies), b (providing access for small-scale artisanal fishermen to marine resources and markets) and 7 (enhancing the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources) and 14c (enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources).

The project is implemented jointly by UNCTAD's Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch and the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. UNCTAD has the project management lead and is responsible for

financial matters including financial reporting. UNCTAD also provides substantive inputs on all economic and trade matters. DOALOS provides substantive inputs on issues related to the international legal framework for oceans set out in UNCLOS and, as appropriate, applicable related instruments. The project has also collaborated with agencies and programmes such as FAO, UNDP, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and CRFM for instance to transfer knowledge and experiences in workshops, and to assist with the peer review of the OETS and technical assistance activities.

The project started in February 2018 with an approved budget of \$650,000 and was scheduled for completion by 31 December 2021. To allow sufficient time to coordinate with national focal points from Barbados the design and implementation of two national-level activities (demand-driven advisory services and training workshop), the project requested and was granted an extension to 30 June 2022.

- **Evaluation scope, objectives and questions**

This final evaluation of the project has the following specific objectives:

Assess the degree to which the desired project results have been realized, including the extent of environmental, gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming; and

Identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

The evaluation will cover the duration of the project from February 2018 to December 2021.

The evaluation is expected to address the following questions under the below criteria (to be further developed in the inception report, as appropriate):

*a) Relevance*

- To what extent the project design, choice of activities and deliverables properly reflect and address the development needs and priorities of participating countries, taking into account the mandates of UNCTAD and DOALOS?
- What adjustments are needed to make the project more relevant to the participating countries in supporting their efforts to achieve the targets of SDG 14, including responding to emerging challenges?

*b) Effectiveness*

- Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document and outcomes (intended or unintended), in particular against relevant SDG targets?
- To what extent have the project participants from each targeted country utilized the knowledge and skills gained through the project's activities to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework?

- What are enabling and limiting factors that contribute to the achievement of results and what actions need to be taken to contribute towards sustainability of the results?

*c) Efficiency*

- How efficient was the Project in utilizing project resources and has the project management been adequate to ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes in a timely manner?
- To what extent has the work of the project been complementary to that of initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors by other UN and non-UN actors in the target countries?

*d) Sustainability*

- Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project and/or have there been catalytic effects from the project both at the national/regional levels?
- What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes? What additional measures could be taken to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes over time?

*e) Gender, human rights and disability*

- To what extent an equity-focused approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention, and can results be identified in this regard?

*f) Responses to Covid-19*

- What adjustments, if any, were made to the project as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, and to what extent did the adjustments allow the project to effectively respond to the new priorities of Member States that emerged in relation to COVID-19?
- How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results as stated in its original results framework?

- **Methodology**

The evaluation will adopt a utilization-focused<sup>22</sup> approach. It will be guided by the results framework of the project and ensure a gender, human rights and disability sensitive evaluation. The evaluator is

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<sup>22</sup> Utilization-focused evaluation is a framework that evaluations should be planned and conducted in ways that enhance the likely utilization of both the findings and of the process itself to inform decisions

required to use a mixed-method approach, including qualitative as well as quantitative data gathering and analysis as the basis for a triangulation exercise of all available data to draw conclusions and findings. Contribution analysis could be undertaken in particular to assess project results.

In view of the current global pandemic situation, innovative methods for data collection are required. Hence, methods for data gathering for this evaluation include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Desk review of project documents and relevant materials;
- Collect and analyze relevant web and social media metrics related to the outputs of the project;
- Observe a sample of virtual meetings, webinars and other activities<sup>23</sup> to be implemented by the project, as appropriate;
- Telephone/online interviews with relevant UNCTAD and DOALOS staff, and with a balanced sample of project participants, project partners and other relevant stakeholders;
- Online surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders, as may be required; conduct follow-up interviews as may be necessary;
- Virtual focus group discussions.

As part of the desk review, which will lead to an Inception Report, the evaluator will use the project document as well as additional documents such as mission reports; progress reports, financial reports, publications, studies - both produced under the project as well as received from national and regional counterparts. A list of project beneficiaries as well as other partners and counterparts involved in the project will be provided to the evaluator.

The evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology in the Inception Report, determining thereby the exact focus and approach for the exercise, including developing tailor-made questions that target different stakeholders (based on a stakeholder analysis), and developing the sampling strategy and identifying the sources and methods for data collection. The methodology should follow the UNCTAD Inception Report Guidelines.

The evaluator is required to submit a separate final list of those interviewed in the Annex of the evaluation report. The evaluator is to ensure a wide representation of stakeholders, bearing in mind the need to include those in a disadvantaged or minority position as appropriate.

- **Organization of the evaluation**

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and improve performance

([https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/utilization\\_focused\\_evaluation](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/utilization_focused_evaluation))

<sup>23</sup> The evaluator will be invited to attend (virtually) and observe a regional workshop planned for September, and national workshops planned for Belize and for Costa Rica in November.

## Deliverables and Expected Outputs

The evaluation, on the basis of its findings and assessments made on the above criteria, should draw conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of the project.

More specifically, the evaluation should:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
- Highlight, as appropriate, any specific achievements that provide additional value for money and/or relevant multiplier effects;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the implementation of the project while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action;
- Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how work in this area can be further strengthened in order to address beneficiaries' needs and create synergies through collaboration with other UNCTAD divisions, international organizations and development partners, and other international forums;
- Draw lessons of wider application for the replication of the experience gained in this project in other projects/countries;

Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation (following EMU templates):

- i. An inception report<sup>24</sup>;
- ii. A draft evaluation report; and
- iii. The final evaluation report<sup>25</sup>

The inception report should summarize the desk review and specify the evaluation methodology, determining thereby the exact focus and scope of the exercise, including the evaluation matrix, the sampling strategy, stakeholder mapping analysis and the data collection instruments.

The final report of the evaluation must use the template for Development Account project evaluation reports, which is composed of the following key elements:

- i. Executive summary;
- ii. Introduction of the evaluation;

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<sup>24</sup> The quality of the inception report should meet those standards set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception Reports:

[http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=608](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=608)

<sup>25</sup> The quality of the evaluation report should meet those standards set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607>

- iii. A brief description of the projects, including project objectives, expected accomplishments, strategies and key activities;
- iv. A clear description of the evaluation objectives, scope, and questions as well as evaluation methodology used;
- v. Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section IV of this ToR, with a comparison table of planned and implemented project activities and outputs; and
- vi. Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.
- vii. Annexes including a list of documents consulted, interviewed stakeholders, evaluation matrix, data collection instruments and this TOR.

All the evaluation assessments must be supported by facts and findings, direct or indirect evidence, and well-substantiated logic. It follows that proposed recommendations must be supported by the findings and be relevant, specific, practical, actionable, and time-bound recommendations.

### **Description of Duties**

The UNCTAD Evaluation Unit, in close collaboration with the Project Team from both UNCTAD and DOALOS, will facilitate the evaluation as undertaken by an independent evaluator.

The evaluator reports to the Chief of the UNCTAD Evaluation Unit. S/he will undertake the evaluation exercise under the guidance of the EMU and in coordination with the project managers for UNCTAD and OLA/DOALOS. The evaluator is responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, analysis and reporting as provided in this TOR.

The evaluator shall act independently, in line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and in her/his private capacities and not as a representative of any government or organisation that may present a conflict of interest. S/he will have no previous experience of working with the project or of working in any capacity linked with it.

The evaluator should observe the UNEG guidelines, standards<sup>26</sup>, and norms<sup>27</sup> for evaluations in the UN system, as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy<sup>28</sup>, in the conduct of this assignment. The evaluator needs to integrate human rights, gender equality and disability perspectives in evaluations to the extent

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<sup>26</sup> "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Standards (2005); [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=22](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22);

<sup>27</sup> "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Norms (2005); [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=21](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=21);

<sup>28</sup> "Evaluation Policy" of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), December 2011. December 2011, [http://unctad.org/Sections/edm\\_dir/docs/osg\\_EvaluationPolicy2011\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/Sections/edm_dir/docs/osg_EvaluationPolicy2011_en.pdf).

possible.<sup>29</sup> The evaluator needs to ensure a complete, fair, engaging, unreserved, and unbiased assessment. In case of difficulties, uncertainties or concerns in the conduct of the evaluation, the evaluator needs to report immediately to the Chief of Evaluation Unit to seek guidance or clarification.

The project team will support the evaluation, by providing desk review documents (following Evaluation Unit desk review documents guidelines), contact details of project stakeholders as well as any additional documents that the evaluator requests. It is the responsibility of the project managers to ensure senior management engagement throughout the evaluation and timely feedback in the quality assurance and factual clarification process coordinated by the Evaluation Unit. The project team will review and provide comments on the inception, draft and final reports with a view on quality assurance and factual accuracies.

The UNCTAD Evaluation Unit acts as clearing entity during the main steps of this evaluation. It endorses the TOR and approves the selection of the proposed evaluator. The UNCTAD Evaluation Unit reviews the evaluation methodology, clears the draft report, performs quality assurance of the final report and participates in disseminating the final report. The UNCTAD Evaluation Unit engages the project team throughout the evaluation process in supporting the evaluation and validating the reports.

## **Timetable**

The evaluation will take place over the period 1 August to 15 November 2022.

## **Monitoring and Progress Control**

The evaluator must keep the Evaluation Unit informed of the progress made in the evaluation on a regular basis.

The evaluator will submit the first draft of inception report by 8 August 2022. The Report should include draft data collection instruments for review.

The first draft of the report should be presented to the Evaluation Unit by 30 September 2022 for quality assurance purposes (approximately 1 week). The revised draft report will then be shared with the project team for factual clarification and comments (approximately 2 weeks).

The deadline for submission of the final report will be 31 October 2022.

The contract concludes, and payment issued, upon satisfactory receipt of the final report.

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<sup>29</sup> "Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2014): <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616>. The UNEG Handbook on "Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations: Towards UNEG Guidance" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2011): <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980>.



## **Qualifications and Experience<sup>30</sup>**

**Education:** Advanced university degree in economics, trade, development, public administration, rural development, or related field.

**Experience:** At least 10 years of experience in conducting evaluations, preferably on interventions in the areas of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building. Solid understanding of the UN context and the Sustainable Development Goals. Experience conducting public policy and/or development programme evaluations. Solid understanding of gender responsive and equity-focused evaluation design, data collection and analysis methods. Ability to develop clear, realistic, feasible recommendations.

**Language:** Fluency in oral and written English.

## **Conditions of Service**

The evaluator will serve under a consultancy contract as detailed in the applicable United Nations rules and regulations. The evaluator will not be considered as staff member or official of the United Nations but shall abide by the relevant standards of conduct. The United Nations is entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights deriving from this exercise.

- **Evaluation communication and dissemination plan**

The final evaluation report and key findings will be disseminated widely to all relevant stakeholders such as the funding partners, UNCTAD management, etc. through the following possible mediums:

- A workshop (possibly online or face-to-face) with all relevant stakeholders to present the key findings, recommendations and lessons learned.
- A copy of the final evaluation report will be made available publicly on UNCTAD website.
- An Evaluation Brief will be produced that presents a brief summary of the key evaluation findings, highlighting the results of the project in particular, and lessons learned and
- Other communication briefs and products will be produced as appropriate.

## **Annex 1. Requirements for the evaluation report**

Refer to the template for Development Account project evaluation reports.

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<sup>30</sup> The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

## 2. Project Results Framework

Intervention logic	Indicators	Means of verification
<p><i>Objective</i></p> <p><b>To strengthen capacities of coastal developing countries, particularly SIDS, in elaborating, adopting and implementing evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework</b></p>		
<p><b>EA1</b></p> <p><b>Improved capacity of national stakeholders to assess and identify promising products and/or services in key ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework</b></p>	<p><b>IA 1.1</b></p> <p>Two potential goods and/or services are identified by national stakeholders in each of the participating countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of sectors selected</li> <li>• Meeting reports</li> <li>• Data fact sheets and preliminary desk study on legal and institutional issues</li> </ul>
	<p><b>IA 1.2</b></p> <p>70 per cent of responding participants in the National Stakeholder Workshops indicate that they have a better understanding of key principals and obligations under UNCLOS for developing oceans economic sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Feedback</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activities under EA1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Activity A1.1:</b> Data analysis and stakeholder mapping of the potential products and services in ocean-based economic sectors and a preliminary desk study on relevant legal and institutional frameworks in accordance with UNCLOS</li> <li>• <b>Activity A1.2:</b> Convening one National Stakeholders Workshop per participating country to discuss, identify, and select key promising ocean-based products and services for further analysis</li> <li>• <b>Activity A1.3:</b> Producing a draft OETS report on the selected ocean-based products and services</li> </ul>	
<p><b>EA2</b></p> <p><b>Strengthened capacity of stakeholders in defining policy options and implementing priority actions to support sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors in beneficiary countries</b></p>	<p><b>IA 2.1</b></p> <p>One Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) and action plan is validated by two national ministries in each of the beneficiary countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A draft OETS report and its final version</li> <li>• Letter of endorsement by beneficiaries</li> <li>• Validation by participants in the National Validation Workshop</li> <li>• Meeting reports</li> <li>• New items</li> </ul>

	<p><b>IA 2.2</b> One priority action derived from the OETS to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors is implemented in each beneficiary country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory services and training activities respond to OETS priority actions</li> <li>• Any relevant regulatory, policy or administrative documents produced through the project</li> <li>• Survey and focal point feedback</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activities under EA2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Activity A2.1:</b> Convening one National Stakeholder Validation Workshop per participating country for the draft OETS report</li> <li>• <b>Activity A2.2:</b> Providing demand-driven advisory services in cooperation with one international expert to support OETS implementation on two national priority actions per participating country</li> <li>• <b>Activity A2.3:</b> Organizing training workshops to build national capacities to implement the two priority actions identified</li> </ul>	
<p><b>EA3</b> <b>Increased understanding at the regional level on how to design and implement OETS as a tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework</b></p>	<p><b>IA 3.1</b> 70 percent of responding participants in the regional workshop have acknowledged to have increased understanding on how to design and implement OETS as a tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey and focal point feedback</li> <li>• List of participants in the activities of the project</li> </ul>
	<p><b>IA 3.2</b> Three additional countries how interest in obtaining further support to develop OETS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters of request</li> <li>• Feedback from potential beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activities under EA3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Activity A3.1:</b> Convening one regional experience sharing workshop with the participation of the three participating countries and five other countries from the region</li> <li>• <b>Activity A3.2:</b> Disseminating the outcomes of the OETS process in relevant UN conferences and meetings, such as at UNCTAD 15 Conference in 2020.</li> </ul>	

### 3. Evaluation matrix

<b>EQ 1: R1. To what extent the project design, choice of activities and deliverables properly reflect and address the development needs and priorities of participating countries, taking into account the mandates of UNCTAD and DOALOS?</b>			
<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
R1.1. How does the project respond to the priorities of the participating countries governments?	Degree of alignment between OETS project results and national governments' priorities and/ or national and regional programs	Project documentation National strategies and programming	Documentation review
	Participating countries governments' opinion	National key informants	KIIs
R1.2. How does the project address the needs of local stakeholders?	Participation/ representativity in workshops	Project documentation Project surveys National key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Local stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online Survey
R1.3. How does the project integrate in the mandate of both UNCTAD and DOALOS?	Degree of alignment between OETS project expected achievements and UNCTAD mandate	Project documentation UNCTAD strategy documents Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Degree of alignment between OETS project expected achievements and DOALOS mandate	Project documentation DOALOS strategy documents Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
<b>EQ 2: R2. To what extent has the work of the project been complementary to that of initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors by other UN and non-UN actors in the target countries?</b>			
	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
	Evidence of similar and/ or linked interventions led by UN actors in the target countries	Project documentation UN country and regional-levels programming reports and resources	Documentation review KIIs Online survey

<sup>31</sup> Project documentation include: Project Document, progress narrative reports, missions reports, concept notes, meeting minutes, workshop reports and surveys, publications, communication products such as videos, website content and social media, virtual meetings and webinars materials.

		Partner key informants National key informants	
	Evidence of similar and/ or linked interventions led by non-UN actors in the target countries	Project documentation Other country and regional-levels programming reports and resources Partner key informants National key informants	Documentation review KIIs Online survey
	Examples of synergies created	Project documentation Partner key informants Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Evidence of duplications observed	Partner key informants Project key informants	KIIs Online survey
	Stakeholders' opinion	Partner key informants National key informants	KIIs Online survey

**EQ 3: R3. What adjustments will be needed to make the project more relevant to the participating countries in supporting their efforts to achieve the targets of SDG 14?**

<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
R3.1. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target 4?	OETS activities and results against SDG 14.4 indicator(s)	Progress reports, including final report SDG indicators	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
R3.2. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target 6?	OETS activities and results against SDG 14.6 indicator(s)	Progress reports, including final report SDG indicators	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
	OETS activities and results against SDG 14.b indicator(s)	Progress reports, including final report SDG indicators	Documentation review

R3.3. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target b?	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
R3.4. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target 7?	OETS activities and results against SDG 14.7 indicator(s)	Progress reports, including final report SDG indicators	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
R3.5. What adjustments will be needed to make regarding Target c?	OETS activities and results against SDG 14.c indicator(s)	Progress reports, including final report SDG indicators	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs

**EQ 4: Effe1. Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document and outcomes (intended or unintended), in particular against relevant SDG targets?**

	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
	IA1.1 Two potential goods and/or services are identified by national stakeholders in each of the participating countries	Project documentation Progress reports and publications SDG targets	Documentation review
	IA1.2 70 per cent of responding participants in the National Stakeholder Workshops indicate that they have a better understanding of key principles and obligations under UNCLOS for developing oceans economic sectors	Project documentation Progress reports and publications SDG targets	Documentation review
	IA2.1 One Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) and action plan is validated by two national ministries in each of the beneficiary countries	Project documentation Progress reports and publications SDG targets	Documentation review
	IA2.2 One priority action derived from the OETS to promote sustainable trade of products and services in	Project documentation Progress reports and publications SDG targets	Documentation review

	ocean-based economic sectors is implemented in each beneficiary country		
	IA3.1 70 percent of responding participants in the regional workshop have acknowledged to have increased understanding on how to design and implement OETS as a tool to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework	Project documentation Progress reports and publications SDG targets	Documentation review
	IA3.2 Three additional countries show interest in obtaining further support to develop OETS	Project documentation Progress reports and publications SDG targets	Documentation review
	Evidence of unintended results/ outcomes	Project documentation Project key informants National key informants	Documentation review KIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	Project key informantation National key informants	KIs

**EQ 5: Effe2. To what extent have the project participants from each targeted country gained knowledge and skills through the project's activities to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework?**

	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
	Evidence of sustainable trade promotion by the project participants	Project documentation National key informants	Documentation review Online survey KIs
	Level of knowledge acquired by the project participants	Progress reports, including final report Project surveys National key informants	Documentation review KIs
	Level of application of skills acquired by the project participants	Project documentation National key informants Project key informants	Documentation review KIs

	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
<b>EQ 6: Effe3. What are enabling and limiting factors that contribute to/ hinder the achievement of results?</b>			
<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information<sup>31</sup></i>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
Effe3.1. What enabling factors contributed to the achievement of results?	Evidence of key factors that have enabled the achievement of the outcomes and outputs	Project documentation	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
Effe3.2. What limiting factors hindered the achievement of results?	Evidence of key factors that have hindered the achievement of the outcomes and outputs	Project documentation	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
Effe3.2. Especially, to what extent did the project partnerships contribute to, or hinder, the achievement of results?	Examples of results attributed to partnerships (UNCTAD/ DOALOS partnership, UN partnerships, other partnerships)	Project documentation	Documentation review
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
<b>EQ 7: Effi1. To what extent have the project resources been utilized to ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes in a timely manner?</b>			
<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information<sup>31</sup></i>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
Effi1.1. Has the project management been adequate?	Evidence of adequate management	Project documentation	Documentation review
	Quantity and quality of communication materials	Project documentation	Documentation review
	Availability and quality of M&E data	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs



	Project team's opinion	Project key informants	
Effi1.2. How efficient was the project in utilizing financial resources?	Planned VS actual expenditures, including incurred expenditures	Project documentation and budget	Documentation review
	Evidence of activities not implemented/ revised due to a lack of financial resources	Project documentation and budget Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Evidence of additional activities implemented within the project budget	Project documentation and budget Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Project team's opinion	Project key informants	KIIs
Effi1.3. Have the expected outcomes been achieved in a timely manner?	Evidence and reasons of delays in activities' implementation	Project documentation and budget Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	KIIs
	Project team's opinion	Project key informants	KIIs
<b>EQ 9: S1. What is the likelihood that the project results and benefits will continue after the end of the project?</b>			
<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
S1.1. Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project?	Evidence of actions taken by the beneficiary countries themselves to build on the project outcomes	National strategies and programming National key informants	Documentation review Online survey KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
	Project team's opinion	Project key informants	KIIs
S1.2. What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes?	Examples of measures taken by the project to sustain its outcomes	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	KIIs

S1.3. Have there been catalytic effects from the project both at the national and/ or regional levels?	Evidence of catalytic effects from the project at the national level	Project documentation National key informants Partner key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Evidence of catalytic effects from the project at the regional level	Project documentation National key informants Partner key informants	Documentation review KIIs
S1.4. What additional measures could be taken to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes over time? Especially, what adjustments could be made to increase the responsiveness of beneficiary countries to emerging challenges?	Examples/ recommendations of measures related to stakeholders' engagement	National key informants Partner key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
	Examples/ recommendations of measures related to follow-up activities funding	National key informants Partner key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
	Examples/ recommendations of other measures to ensure sustainability	National key informants Partner key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
	Examples/ recommendations of emerging challenges beneficiary countries are/ will be facing and related measures to strengthen the project outcomes	National key informants Partner key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
<b>EQ 10: GHRD1. To what extent an equity-focused approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention, and can results be identified in this regard?</b>			
	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
	Examples of equity-focused and/ or gender mainstreaming strategy in the design of the project	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Examples of equity-focused and/ or gender mainstreaming strategy in the implementation of the project	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs

	Evidence of equity-focused and/ or gender mainstreaming strategy results	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Evidence [or examples] of limiting factors for the inclusion of equity-focused and/ or gender mainstreaming	Project documentation Project key informants	
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	KIIs
	Stakeholders' awareness	National key informants	Online survey KIIs
<b>EQ 10: GHRD2. How could future similar projects consider disability mainstreaming?</b>			
	Examples of actions that could have been taken to better consider disability within the project design and implementation	National key informants Project key informants	Online survey KIIs
<b>EQ 11: Env1. To what extent have environmental considerations been mainstreamed in the project?</b>			
<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
Env1.1. How have environmental considerations been integrated in the project design?	Ratio of activities designed with an environmental lens (biodiversity, climate change)	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Evidence of environmental vulnerabilities assessments	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Example of vulnerabilities mitigation measures	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	KIIs
Env1.2. How have environmental considerations been integrated in the project implementation?	Evidence of partnerships mainstreaming an environmental consideration	Project documentation Project key informants Partner key informants	Documentation review KIIs

	Evidence of sustainable natural resource management promotion	Project documentation Project key informants National key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	KIIs
<b>EQ 12: Co1. To what extent did the adjustments made in response to COVID-19 situation affect the project and its beneficiaries?</b>			
<i>Sub-questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Source of Information</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>Data Collection Tools</i>
Co1.1. To what extent did the project adjustments respond to the new priorities of Member States that emerged in relation to COVID-19?	Examples of new priorities of Member States that emerged in relation to COVID-19	Project documentation National key informants Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Evidence of adjustments made to the project to address these priorities	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online Survey KIIs
Co1.2. How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results as stated in its original results framework?	Examples of positive effects from these adjustments on the project's expected results	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Examples of negative effects from these adjustments on the project's expected results	Project documentation Project key informants	Documentation review KIIs
	Stakeholders' opinion	National key informants	Online Survey KIIs

## 4. Data collection instruments

### *Key Respondent Interview Protocol*

<b>Interviewer</b>	
<b>Organization interviewed</b>	
<b>Name and function</b>	
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

#### Interview Notes:

**Background:** Interviewee's general background, nature and dates of interviewee's involvement with the project.

**Topics:** Record responses by topic with clear headings – using the EQs where possible, not necessarily in chronological sequence of discussion. Make clear when a direct quote is recorded. Add headings and sub-headings as needed and/or record against evaluation criteria.

***EQs: Relevance***

***EQs: Effectiveness***

***EQs: Efficiency***

***EQs: Sustainability***

***EQs: Gender, human rights and disability***

***EQs: Environment***

***EQs: Response to COVID-19***

#### ***Non-EQ specific notes***

**Data/documents provided/recommended:** Seek full reference for documents not already in evaluation library.

**Other proposed follow-up:** e.g. other interviewees recommended (obtain full contact details)/ proposals on consultation and dissemination etc.

Evaluation questions/Respondents	Project Key Informants	National Key Informants	Partner Key Informants
Could you please briefly describe your area of work and your relationship to the project?	x	x	x
What was the nature of your involvement with the project? How long for?	x	x	x
<b>RELEVANCE</b>			
1. How does the project respond to the priorities of your country?		x	
2. How does the project address your needs as a local stakeholder? a. Did you participate in some of the project's workshops?		x	
3. How aligned is the OETS project with the mandate of the executing agencies? a. UNCTAD? b. DOALOS?	x		
4. Could you provide examples of similar/ linked interventions in your/the country? a. Led by other UN actors? b. Led by non-UN actors?	x	x	x
5. According to you, to what extent has the work of the project been complementary to that of initiatives in ocean-based economic sectors? a. Have synergies been created? b. Have duplications been observed?	x	x	x
6. According to you, what adjustments are needed to make the project more relevant in supporting your efforts to achieve the targets of SDG 14? a. Target 4 regarding sustainable fishing? b. Target 6 regarding the end subsidies contributing to overfishing? c. Target b regarding the support to small scale fishers? d. Target 7 regarding the increase of economic benefits from marine resources? e. Target c regarding the international sea law?		x	
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>			
1. According to you, have the activities achieved or are likely to achieve the planned objectives and outcomes, in particular against relevant SDG targets (i.e. sustainable fishing, ending subsidies contributing to overfishing, support to small scale fishers, increase of economic benefits from marine resources)?	x	x	
2. Could you provide examples of unintended results and/ or outcomes of the project?	x	x	
3. How do you promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework?		x	

4. Could you describe the UNCLOS framework? How does it link with your activities?		x	
5. Could you provide examples of application of the skills acquired during the project?		x	
6. According to you, to what extent have you/ the project participants from each targeted country gained knowledge and skills through the project's activities to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors within the UNCLOS framework?	x	x	
7. According to you, what are enabling and limiting factors that have contributed to/ hindered the achievement of results? a. How did the project partnerships contribute to, or hinder, the achievement of results? UNCTAD/ DOALOS/ UN partners/ Other partners	x	x	
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>			
1. According to you, has the project management been adequate? a. What do you think of the project M&E system? b. What do you think of the project publications and communication materials?	x	x	
2. According to you, how efficient was the project in utilizing financial resources? a. Were some activities not implemented/ revised due to a lack of funding? b. Were some additional activities implemented within the project budget?	x		
3. According to you, have the expected outcomes been achieved in a timely manner? a. Were some activities delayed? Why?	x	x	
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>			
1. Is the/ your country committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project? a. What actions will/ have already been taken to build on the project outcomes?	x	x	
2. What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes?	x		
3. Have there been catalytic effects from the project? a. at the national level b. at the regional level	x	x	x
4. According to you, what additional measures could be taken to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes over time? a. related to stakeholders' engagement b. related to follow-up activities funding c. others (i.e. building on the existing partnerships)	x	x	x
5. What are the emerging challenges the/ your country face(s)?	x	x	x

a. What adjustments could be made to the project to increase your/ their responsiveness to them?			
<b>GENDER, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DISABILITY</b>			
1. According to you, to what extent an equity-focused approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention? a. Examples in the design b. Examples in the implementation	x		
2. Could you provide equity-focused and/or gender mainstreaming strategy results of the project?	x		
3. What do you think of gender strategies in ocean-based sectors? a. Focus on equity b. Gender mainstreaming	x	x	x
4. Has disability represented an aspect/challenge during the implementation of the project? a. How could it be mainstreamed in the future?	x	x	x
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>			
1. Have environmental vulnerabilities assessment (or similar) been conducted? a. Have mitigation measures been taken?	x		
2. According to you, how has environment been considered in the project design? a. Examples of activities	x	x	
3. Would you say that the OETS project promote the sustainable management of natural resources?		x	x
4. Would you say that your organization/ OETS partners organizations are environmental-focused? How?	x		x
5. According to you, what are the main environmental results of the project? a. How these results will/ can be sustain?	x	x	x
<b>RESPONSES TO COVID-19</b>			
1. According to you, to what extent did the project adjustments (including the consideration of the pandemic effects) respond to the new priorities of your country that emerged in relation to COVID-19? a. What are these priorities? b. What adjustments have been made by the project in response to these priorities?	x	x	
2. According to you, how did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results? a. Examples of positive effects? b. Examples of negative effects?	x	x	



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the online survey for the evaluation of the **Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS)** project. Project information can be found [here](#).

The e-survey is designed to provide useful information that will help improve future project design and provide constructive recommendations.

Your insights and responses are greatly appreciated and are valuable to the success of the current and future UNCTAD and DOALOS projects. Your individual feedback will be kept confidential to the evaluator. **The estimated time to complete this survey is 10 to 15 minutes.**

This survey was designed and is managed by Mr. Alexandre Daoust. You may contact him via email ([alexandre.daoust@baastel.com](mailto:alexandre.daoust@baastel.com)) if you have any questions about the survey.

We kindly request that you respond to this survey by **February 1st, 2023**.

We thank you in advance for your valuable contribution to this important evaluation exercise.

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## IDENTIFICATION

Q1 What country do you work in?

- Costa Rica
- Barbados
- Belize
- Other/ I work in the Region (please specify)

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Q2 What type of organization do you work in?

- National government
  - Regional Intergovernmental Organization
  - Private sector/ company/ boat owner
  - Civil society/ Fishers' associations/ NGO
  - Other OETS partner (please specify)
- 

Q3 What is your position?

---

Q4 Please specify which gender you identify with

- Female
  - Male
  - Other
  - Prefer not to say
- 

Q5 Do you identify yourself with disabilities? (The purpose of the questions on disability is to help understand the inclusiveness of project activities)

*Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory*

*impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

---

**RELEVANCE**

Q6 To your knowledge, are there programs, projects and/ or initiatives similar and/ or linked to the OETS project in place in your country or region?

- Yes
- No

---

*Display This Question:*

*If To your knowledge, are there programs, projects and/ or initiatives similar and/ or linked to the... = Yes*

Q7 Please name it/ them:

- United Nations intervention(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other intervention(s)  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

*Display This Question:*

*If To your knowledge, are there programs, projects and/ or initiatives similar and/ or linked to the... = Yes*

Q8 According to you, have OETS activities been complementary, harmonized and/ or coordinated with the other intervention(s) in your country or region?

Yes

No

*Display This Question:*

*If According to you, have OETS activities been complementary, harmonized and/ or coordinated with th... = Yes*

*And According to you, have OETS activities been complementary, harmonized and/ or coordinated with th... = No*

Q9 Please describe briefly:

---

Q10 Would you say that the Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) project has addressed/ considered:

	Greatly	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	I don't know
Your national development strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your (organization's) needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COVID-19 consequences on your activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 What were/ are the needs the OETS project addressed and/ or did not address?

Needs the OETS project addressed

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Needs the OETS project did not address

---

Q12 In your opinion, how has the OETS project supported your country/ organization in achieving..?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Greatly	I don't know
Sustainable fishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ending subsidies contributing to overfishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting small scale fishers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing economic benefits from marine resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Implementing an international sea law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 Why? How? Please explain briefly:

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GENDER, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DISABILITY

Q14

The survey refers below to **ocean-based sectors**.

This includes but is not limited to: sustainable fisheries; aquaculture; seafood processing; BioTrade marine products; marine bio-prospecting and biotech industries; tidal and off-shore energy; water treatment for ocean-inflowing effluent streams; sustainable marine transport systems and related infrastructure; and sustainable coastal tourism, including ecotourism

---

Q15 Do you consider that the OETS project has contributed to women's participation and influence making in the ocean-based sectors?

Yes

No

---

Q16 In your opinion, did the activities you participated in and the OETS strategy appropriately incorporate issues related to:

	Yes, it was appropriately incorporated	No, it was not appropriately incorporated	No, this topic was not relevant in the context of the activity(ies)/ OETS strategy
Gender balance (i.e. ensured that women participated in the project)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender mainstreamed in its concept/activities/ strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human Rights (i.e. in terms of inclusion, participation, fair power relations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability inclusion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

## ENVIRONMENT

Q17 According to you, to what extent have environmental considerations been integrated in the OETS project?

- Greatly
  - Somewhat
  - A little
  - Not at all
- 

## EFFICIENCY/ EFFECTIVENESS

Q18 Are you satisfied with the support you received from the OETS project's team?

- Yes
  - No
-

Q19 To what extent have OETS activities increased your organization/ country's capacities to promote sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based sectors?

- Greatly
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all
- Not applicable

Q20 According to you, to what extent have the following results been achieved?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Greatly	I don't know
Improved capacity to assess and identify promising products and/ or services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strengthened capacity in defining policy options and implementing priority actions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better understanding on the design and implementing of Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q21 According to you, what enabling factors contributed to these results?  
*Multiple answers possible*

- Project management
  - Nature and design of project activities
  - Project team knowledge
  - Communication tools
  - Partnerships
  - United Nations network and events
  - Focal points' engagement
  - Breadth of stakeholders' representativity
  - Stakeholder buy-in
  - Quality of the experts
  - Knowledge sharing
  - Adaptation to COVID-19
  - Other(s) (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

Q22 According to you, what hindering factors limited these results?

*Multiple answers possible*

- Project management
  - Nature and design of project activities
  - Partnerships
  - Focal points' engagement
  - Quality of the experts
  - Human and financial resources
  - Communication
  - Capacity of stakeholders
  - Stakeholders' resistance
  - Unavailability of data
  - COVID-19
  - Other(s) (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

Q23

What role(s) have partnerships played in the OETS project results?

*Multiple answers possible*

- Conveners
- Expertise and knowledge sharing
- Diversity of views for constructive debates
- Regional/ international recognition
- Co-construction of future projects
- Other(s) (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- I don't see added value from partnerships in the OETS project

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

Q24 To what extent is your organization/ your country committed to continue working towards the promotion of sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based-economic sectors within the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) framework?

- Greatly
  - Somewhat
  - A little
  - Not at all
-

*Display This Question:*

*If To what extent is your organization/ your country committed to continue working towards the promo... = Greatly*

*Or To what extent is your organization/ your country committed to continue working towards the promo... = Somewhat*

Q25 How? Please name actions (to be) taken to build on the OETS project results to date:

---

*Display This Question:*

*If To what extent is your organization/ your country committed to continue working towards the promo... = A little*

*Or To what extent is your organization/ your country committed to continue working towards the promo... = Not at all*

Q26 Why not?

---

Q27 According to you, what emerging challenges is/ will your country (be) facing in implementing Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies?

*Multiple answers possible*

- National engagement
- Political situation
- Lack of finance
- Staff turnover
- Lack of national data
- Knowledge and capacities gaps
- Cultural resistance
- Climate change effects
- Legal framework
- Other(s) (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Final remarks**

Q28 Do you have any final thoughts/comments about the project?

\_\_\_\_\_

-----

*Your responses are about to be submitted.*

*You have the possibility to go back to your answers by using the arrows down the screen.*

\_\_\_\_\_

## 5. List of individuals interviewed online

For the purpose of confidentiality, the names of evaluation respondents have been redacted.

## 6. Bibliography

### **Project Document**

1819K Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies, Concept note

Evidence-based and policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies, 1819K Project document, 11th tranche of the Development Account

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### **Costa Rica**



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### Belize

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Nairobi Maafikiano

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