



Ocean Country
Partnership
Programme (OCPP)
Monitoring, Evaluation
and Learning (MEL)

Interim Evaluation
of the OCPP

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) is a UK Government-led programme funded from the £500 million Blue Planet Fund (BPF), which is financed through the UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) and International Climate Finance (ICF) budget. The technical assistance programme supports eligible countries to reduce poverty through sustainable management of the marine environment. The programme's delivery partners include three Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs): the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Marine Management Organisation (MMO). The ALBs are responsible for the delivery and management of what is referred to as the 'bilateral programme', which provides technical assistance through partnering with country governments. In addition, OCPP also funds two multi-donor initiatives for the 'multilateral/strategic programme' of the OCPP – the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) and Friends of Ocean Action (FOA), which support partner countries in the development of global public goods relevant to the programme's objectives.

The NIRAS Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team were contracted by Defra to deliver MEL services to the OCPP from June 2023 until the end of September 2026, two years into OCPP's implementation. In December 2023 the revised MEL framework for the OCPP was approved, along with the OCPP MEL inception report. This interim evaluation is the first independent and comprehensive evaluation of OCPP, with the work of the ALBs and the two multi-donor initiatives both in scope. The purpose of the independent evaluation of OCPP is to both assess the performance and impact of OCPP, as well as to distil learning to support an adaptive management process that mainstreams evidence-based decision-making into OCPP and other similar BPF initiatives.

Methods

This interim evaluation is timely given that the programme has been running for almost two years, so it is ripe to provide feedback to Defra and delivery partners on the relevance and design of the programme, how the programme is being implemented, assessing the delivery modality and efficiency of implementation, as well as considering results from the early phase of the programme, and other lessons learned to inform programme improvement going forward. The temporal scope of this interim evaluation is from programme launch in July 2021 to the end of May 2024. The process-focused Evaluation Questions (EQs) primarily focused on the following dimensions:

- How well was OCPP and its components designed?
- How well is the programme being implemented? Is delivery of the programme being done in the right way (in terms of ALB, FOA and GOAP delivery, in-country presence, Value for Money (VfM))?
- How appropriate is the structure of the programme in terms of numbers of activities being supported versus depth of focus on a number of critical activities?
- Have the organisational structures, governance arrangements and management processes affected the achievement/likely achievement of intended programme outcomes and impact?
- How have the outcomes and impact been affected by the external context within which the programme was implemented?

This evaluation used a case-based approach to drill down into, describe and analyse OCPP's work in particular countries in order to ensure depth as well as breadth in the analysis of the portfolio. Five countries were selected for case studies – Belize, Ghana, Maldives, Mozambique, and Sri Lanka. The evaluation team conducted an extensive number of interviews with key stakeholders in order to inform the overall assessment of the portfolio and additionally at country level within the framework of the country level case studies. In total 152 stakeholder interviews were conducted (86 men and 66 women) and focus group discussions with 20 community members (13 men and seven women) were conducted in Sri Lanka and Belize. In addition, the evaluation team also reviewed an extensive number of secondary documentation from the programme.



Marine pollution on a beach in Belize. Source: Peter Kohler, OCPP programme team

Findings

Relevance

1) OCPP, through a demand-led and consultative process, is meeting the needs of partner county stakeholders, although the balance between use of demand-led and propositional approaches varies from country to country. The programme is filling important gaps in partner countries' expertise and capability to sustainably manage the marine environment. Overall, the bilateral programme is meeting the needs of the five case study country partners through a demand-led, consultative approach that is adjusted through ALB propositional offers. Both GOAP and FOA delivery were found to be highly relevant to their partner countries' needs, through a more direct demand-led model compared to the bilateral side of the OCPP. A majority of in-country partner stakeholders reported high levels of relevance and satisfaction with the programme meeting their countries' needs and policy priorities, and perceived that the stakeholder process was underpinned by co-development principles and a collaborative, demand-led approach.

2) ALB's in-country engagement and traction has been hindered by the intermittent presence delivery model. In-country partners prefer face to face working and continuity of engagement in-country. It was cited by multiple stakeholders in Belize, Ghana, and Mozambique as challenging the programme's relevance.

3) Country prioritisation for the bilateral component of OCPP leant heavily on the legacy ODA-funded Commonwealth Litter Programme (CLiP). The rationale for selection of the supported countries is not always apparent/fully clear to delivery partners, who struggled with the increase of country delivery under their remit. Multiple ALB interviewees noted that it was unclear why Defra chose certain countries for bilateral

delivery and it was also not clear why they pushed to roll out bilateral delivery in so many countries in such a short space of time. Interviews with delivery team members stated they felt this process was rushed, which decreased their ability to efficiently deliver the programme.

4) OCPP's bilateral partnerships have had limited strategic focus in their engagements with partner countries. FOA and GOAP display a strong strategic focus in their engagements. The first years of programme delivery were done without a robust MEL framework and multi-year planning. Planning processes from the beginning of the programme have been focused on planning at the activity-level with limited understanding of how activities will align and result in larger outcomes. In recognition of the lack of strategic direction present in the first two years of programme delivery, Defra and ALBs worked together to implement a more strategic approach in 2023 with the introduction of Cefas as a Tier One delivery partner in charge of consolidated management and coordination of the programme. As of May 2024, Tier One programme leadership had set multi-year milestones and targets against logframe indicators.

5) Although there are plans afoot to address critical gaps in Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) and safeguarding, the pace and momentum behind addressing them is somewhat slow and there is a lack of clear leadership on this issue. So far, the programme has paid limited attention to GESI and safeguarding considerations. Time is running out in this financial year (FY 2024/25) to take meaningful and measurable actions to address the shortcomings on GESI and safeguarding. The lack of GESI and safeguarding was identified as early as August 2023 and the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) Review was issued in November 2023. Since then, it appears as if all stakeholders involved (e.g. Defra and programme leadership across all delivery partners) are waiting for someone to take charge and lead on this issue, which points to a lack of a concerted effort to address this problem. There also appears to be confusion on who is driving this aspect and how to meet the respective obligations for both GESI and safeguarding in ODA-funded programmes.



Local fishers in Sri Lanka. Source: OCPP MEL team

Coherence

6) There is some evidence of disjointed work across the ALB delivery partners, although delivery of work across all delivery partners has been more joined up in West and East Africa. Efforts are underway to have a more joined up approach to planning and delivery of work across all the delivery partners. There are mixed findings for internal coherence across the programme and across the five case study countries. There are some positive indications of internal coherence from instances of joined up working across delivery partners or ALBs, the creation of regional and international linkages within the portfolio, and strong examples of the programme adhering to relevant national/international norms and standards in their delivery of technical assistance.

However, these positive instances are dampened by shortcomings due to the delivery model, the planning process, and governance arrangements.

7) External coherence is generally good and there are a number of examples of the programme and its delivery partners leveraging funding from other sources or collaborating with other donors or development partners. The programme demonstrates strong external coherence by being aligned with partner country policies at national (and for some countries international) level.

Efficiency

8) The bilateral programme delivery partners are delivering outputs and activities below their planned levels, while strategic partners FOA and GOAP are consistently delivering against their milestones. Local partner and delivery team member perceive the OCPP implementation by the ALBs as slow and inefficient (particularly in Ghana, Mozambique and Belize) with long periods of time between scoping and the start of activities, and delays to delivery on agreed workstreams. The quarterly reports of the strategic partners show they have consistently delivered as planned.

9) Past achievements by the ALBs and existing networks in partner countries have supported the efficient delivery of OCPP. Concurrently, recent changes in planning, management and coordination processes and mechanisms have improved the efficient delivery of OCPP to a certain degree. The bilateral component of OCPP built on the achievements of CLiP that worked in seven countries of the Commonwealth¹, all of which were absorbed into OCPP. The assignation of Cefas as the Tier One delivery partner in October 2023 has led to improved efficiency in both planning and delivery. In addition, the use of in-country and local partners has facilitated efficient delivery.

10) A range of factors have led to delays in OCPP implementation, reducing the efficiency of programme delivery. These include: lengthy delays in approvals (Defra) and procurement and planning (ALBs); ALB inexperience in sustainable development contexts; unclear communications and branding across the bilateral programme; and lack of a bilateral programme in-country presence. Defra, in its second Annual Review, acknowledges it should improve the turnaround time, but based on the interviews conducted little progress appears to have been made. According to interviewees the underlying reasons for the delays in decision-making by Defra were limited staff resources and high staff turnover during some periods of the programme. Stakeholders interviewed noted that the slower-than-expected progress of the OCPP may have been influenced by ALBs, which are scientific and marine regulator institutions rather than international development focused institutions. One of the delivery partners noted that unfamiliarity with working in developing countries has also been an obstacle to delivering activities, which concurs with some of the in-country stakeholders' observations. An interviewee in a coordination role noted that some of the individuals in the ALBs have experience delivering ODA initiatives, but institutionally they are not set up to deliver that type of programme. The lack of the bilateral programme's in-country presence hampers the continuity of activities according to a majority of in-country and delivery partner stakeholders. While ALB visits can galvanize action in-country, as soon as they leave there is a loss of momentum leading to delays in implementation or a loss of direction for the partners.

11) Misunderstandings on the remit, roles and responsibility of bilateral programme delivery partners is affecting the effectiveness of the programme's governance structures. Greater Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) oversight and improved communication on Tier One responsibilities are needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery. Despite this shortcoming in terms of consistent

¹ Belize, India, Maldives, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Vanuatu.

understanding of management roles and responsibilities across the bilateral programme delivery partners, the Tier One change process of 2023, initiated by Defra and the bilateral programme delivery partners, did introduce improvements to governance structures.

12) Delays to signing of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs)/absence of MoUs has affected the pace and efficiency of programme delivery in some countries. Accountability mechanisms in place with partner governments are weak, in the case of bilateral programme delivery.

13) Engagement of OCPP with local communities has been limited; in-country and local delivery partners are more strongly engaged by the strategic partners, however ALBs are increasingly utilising local delivery partners to support programme delivery. The extent of ALB engagement with partner country governments varies, depending on the country and the thematic area.

14) There have been a number of challenges to Value for Money (VfM) notably in relation to economy and efficiency. Nonetheless, good practice examples are emerging that can potentially drive stronger VfM going forward. Procurement has experienced delays and has been implemented at a slower pace than expected. This is anticipated to pick up in the coming financial year.

15) OCPP is already delivering results that, in time, are likely to deliver significant benefits. However, there is not enough evidence to conclude at this stage whether these have generated VfM returns above and beyond the amount spent. GESI reporting, or the cost of inclusion in the programme, has not yet been addressed by OCPP partners. VfM indicators need to be established to ensure VfM can be monitored and achieved.

Effectiveness

16) The level of effective implementation of OCPP varies across target countries and across delivery partners. The programme is beginning to move towards positive change: sufficient evidence exists that OCPP will make significant contributions to outcome level change for identified emerging achievements, as detailed in the main report. However, a concentrated effort to convert outputs to outcome level results is needed through careful strategic planning that considers the viability of activities delivered in country. The interim evaluation identified more than 23 key results across the intermediate outcome and outcome level. To date, five results have been identified at outcome level: two in Sri Lanka with the ban on plastics and the Emergency Response work, one result in Maldives in Emergency Response, one result in Belize with pollution monitoring, and one project from FOA (Supply Chain Risk Tool).

17) The achievement of bilateral programme objectives has been hampered by the intermittent presence model of delivery, the geographical breadth and thematic range of the portfolio, and the lack of an effective MEL system. Nonetheless, the dedication and motivation of the ALBs is recognised. When the ALBs are undertaking in-country visits, they tend to serve multiple objectives, and their use of hands-on approaches has been appreciated by in-country stakeholders. In addition, in-country stakeholders stated that the ALBs add value to stakeholders through their high calibre technical expertise and delivery of trainings. GOAP's delivery model has also been credited by interviewees as being effective.

18) While complementary initiatives in the donor and development community are creating an enabling environment for OCPP, delivery has been impacted by the fact that some in-country government personnel have limited availability to contribute to OCPP activities, exacerbated by political and economic factors. ALB personnel noted that this has sometimes resulted in OCPP supplementing government capacity rather than building it. The OCPP is not working in isolation in the programme countries, and there are

complementary initiatives active across programme sites. In-country government staff are a central component of programme delivery and can bring vital capacity to support programme implementation. However, they suffer from capacity constraints as well as other commitments and mandates that compete with OCPP for time.



Tilapia hatcheries supported by OCPP in Belize. Source: OCPP MEL team

Impact

Impact

Thus far, no baseline data was collected by the programme on its three impact indicators. **19) GOAP is demonstrating potential to deliver a strong contribution to impact indicator #1 (“Area of marine environment under sustainable management practices due to OCPP (ha)”)**. The ALBs can also potentially make a contribution, although likely results are contingent on more work being done for the impacts to be realised.

20) FOA has the most direct link to improvements in livelihoods and wellbeing. For the other components of OCPP, livelihood and well-being impacts are more indirect.

21) The geographical footprint of the programme is not well aligned with its ODA poverty reduction requirements and the skills profile of the delivery partners has been a constraint on integrating poverty reduction and GESI considerations into programming by all partners. Overall, OCPP has struggled to articulate how it will contribute to poverty reduction in its target countries. This issue was also noted in the recent ICAI Review of the BPF and is accepted by UK government. A rapid review of the global evidence for the effectiveness of nature-based solutions for poverty alleviation and environmental outcomes submitted in 2024 by Defra included marine sector interventions. Moreover, the extent and nature of OCPP’s socio-economic impacts, for example on women and vulnerable groups, is hard to unpack due to the absence of coverage of GESI dimensions in OCPP programming.

For OCPP’s impact indicator 3, all delivery partners can potentially deliver transformational change as defined by ICF KPI 15. **22) Of the delivery partners, GOAP demonstrates, at this point, the greatest potential to deliver transformational change.** Overall, the weighted scores of FOA and GOAP equate to a score of 4, which aligns with data reported by DESNZ² with most ICF programmes (28 out of a total of 55 programmes reviewed) having partial evidence that suggests transformational change is likely. On the other hand, the ALBs scored a 3, with the

² Data reported by a DESNZ representative at a webinar organised by Agulhas on measuring transformational change, 6 June 2024. [Agulhas at gLOCAL 2024: Measuring Transformational Change - Lessons from Climate Action on Vimeo](#)

assessment of the ALBs work inconclusive at this point as there is not enough evidence to indicate that transformational change is likely. This compares with 17/55 ICF programmes scoring a 3.

23) OCPP is supporting global microplastics monitoring harmonisation, approaches to measure progress in the sustainable use of marine resources and ocean accounting, and marine environment knowledge sharing, all of which have the potential for wider impact in the global marine sciences sector. This work is particularly relevant at this time with the move towards a global agreement on plastic pollution (United Nations Environmental Assembly – 5.2³).



Red mangroves at Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve in Belize. Source: OCPP MEL team

Sustainability

In order to assess the likely sustainability of OCPP programmes the NIRAS MEL team developed a multidimensional sustainability scorecard covering financial sustainability, operational sustainability, clarity of ownership, retention of trained people in the sector, policy alignment, consumables and equipment maintenance. **24) GOAP and FOA are assessed to have the greatest potential sustainability at this point and have given greater consideration to sustainability; the bilateral delivery partners less so.** All delivery partners are striving to develop capacity in their respective work areas to ensure partner countries can take this forward independently of their support. **25) Transition planning has not received sufficient attention, until recently.**

Conclusions

The programme has had three full years of implementation and is now in its fourth year with 21 months until closure. It is meeting the needs of stakeholders in partner countries and filling capability gaps, likely to be left unfilled without it. However, some of the shortcomings of OCPP's design that have been present right from the start, such as insufficient attention on poverty reduction and consideration of GESI in intervention designs, and some inefficiencies in the bilateral partner delivery model, continue to constrain OCPP's ability to deliver on the expectations set out in its Business Case.

It has taken until Year 4 of the programme for attempts to address these shortcomings in OCPP's design to gain traction and gather impetus among delivery partners and Defra. Defra and delivery partners agree – the programme does need to do more in these areas. There is now a growing appetite to address the issues with plans

³ UNEA-5.2 also became a historic moment as delegates agreed to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee with the mandate to forge an international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution by the end of 2024.

underway to address these gaps and some useful interventions such as hiring GESI experts within delivery partners, although the pace of change to address these critical shortcomings is a concern. It now seems likely that bilateral programming for FY 2024/25 will, like earlier years, continue to remain defective in this regard, leaving only one year remaining for the programme to address these major flaws. The complexity of the programme and the lack of development programming experience among delivery partners continue to constrain the ability of the programme to “reset” and focus on these well recognised and essential gaps.

The absence of an ongoing in-country presence by the OCPP in bilateral partner countries is affecting efficiency of delivery and in-country stakeholders are clear – they prefer in-country presence and programmes like OCPP cannot be delivered effectively and efficiently remotely with in-country missions from time to time. An ongoing in-country presence would serve as a platform for fostering close relationships with in-country stakeholders and advocating and catalysing change to policies and practice concerning sustainable, inclusive and equitable management of the marine environment. In this closing phase of the programme, to consolidate and harvest the results of earlier work and deliver on outcomes, such in-country presence could be instrumental and catalytic in OCPP’s realisation of its outcome level potential.



Lab equipment provided by the OCPP in Sri Lanka. Source: OCPP MEL team

To deliver systemic/transformational change in the management of the marine environment, policy influence is a must. At present, the current bilateral programme model is somewhat defective in driving forward with partner country stakeholder momentum behind key policy reforms/changes in practice. FOA and GOAP use different delivery models more aligned to systemic change ambitions and driving scalability/paradigm shifts – for example in mainstreaming use of ocean accounting. In the final phase of OCPP, it is important to take stock, consolidate and reflect on where can the programme influence policies/practices, building on its earlier work.

It is likely that OCPP will make useful contributions to outcomes in the partner countries supported by the bilateral partnerships. There are already a number of key results, from both bilateral and strategic partnership work, which show potential to mature into outcome level change, which bodes well in terms of the programme making a difference to managing the marine environment. GOAP, in particular, shows good potential to deliver strong impacts. MEL systems need considerably more investment and more capacity is needed to engage MEL from delivery partners. While the NIRAS MEL supplier have supported all delivery partners to develop and implement the MEL framework over the past year, the programme runs the risk of “missing” key results in its reporting because of the insufficient attention and no dedicated resources for MEL in the bilateral delivery partners. To piece together the story on what OCPP is doing in each country selected for case studies was a big challenge for the evaluation team as there was no systematic monitoring of outputs or results available from the ALBs.

While sustainability of FOA and GOAP’s work is assessed as good, likely sustainability is considered weak at this point for the ALBs work due to insufficient attention thus far, with the prevailing view that sustainability is something that should be considered at the end of a programme. For the OCPP Scholarships to make a lasting difference to the pool of expertise and capacity in partner countries the scholars will need to remain working in the sector in their own countries.

Overall, OCPP is a useful and valued programme with potential to deliver some significant results, with strong potential in evidence already in the case of GOAP. But the programme has suffered from starting delivery without being appropriately set up (particularly the bilateral partnerships) and from major design flaws in terms of its

consideration of poverty and GESI as an ODA programme. These issues need addressing without delay, alongside an injection of appropriate development and GESI expertise and strong leadership commitment, and a drive to make big changes.



FTIR-Microscope provided to the Hummingbird Analytical Laboratory at the University of Belize by the OCPP. Source: OCPP MEL team

Lessons learned and recommendations

The interim evaluation has identified lessons learnt by the programme thus far that are applicable to the wider Blue Planet Fund and other similar UK development aid interventions.

- 1) GESI analysis is critical to the design of all interventions. The International Development (Gender Equality) Act of 2014 requires that development assistance must be delivered in a way that is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. OCPP paid limited attention to GESI considerations in its design and delivery due to little GESI awareness. The lesson for other programmes is that if a delivery partner does not understand the implications of their intervention on gender and inclusion, then they should commission research to better understand it to ensure GESI considerations are integrated into programme design and delivery, and that programme results are achieved equitably.
- 2) Annual planning and funding cycles can inhibit delivery of long-term system change. OCPP's bilateral partnerships demonstrated limited strategic focus in their engagement with partner countries and were activity rather than outcome focused, in part due to the absence of a robust MEL framework and multi-year planning. To ensure programmes contribute to outcomes and impact, programme teams should use the theory of change as it sets out the pathways to the desired change the programme is expected to achieve and should also invest in MEL systems to enable the tracking of progress.
- 3) OCPP's ALB delivery partners did not pay sufficient attention to sustainability in the design of many of their interventions, missing opportunities to use sustainable approaches to capacity development, for example training of trainers, etc. To better ensure the sustainability of programme support, programme teams should consider sustainability from the start of design of the interventions and not just at the end. Failing to do so is likely to lead to inefficient resource usage and insufficient retrofitted sustainability plans, ultimately limiting the achievement of long-term sustainable results.
- 4) OCPP stakeholders noted that they were pushed to start delivery of the programme right away and that the necessary systems and processes were not in place at the outset to effectively and efficiently manage the programme, for example a MEL framework. The lesson from this, for other programmes, is that "*building a plane while flying it*" is not a good approach to ensuring a programme's systems and processes are in place and fit for purpose to effectively and efficiently monitor and manage the programme.
- 5) Many of the countries within the OCPP's current portfolio are legacy countries from the previous UK Government programmes, such as CLiP from 2018-2020 and Commonwealth marine Economies (CME) programme from 2016-2022. Evidence from case study countries indicates that the OCPP has been able to capitalise on established relationships and priority areas of activity already established by predecessor

programmes. This demonstrates that building on legacy programmes can create entry points and foundations for a new successor programme to take advantage of and facilitate a smooth transition to the new programme's delivery.

- 6) To deliver systemic/transformational change in the management of the marine environment, policy influence is a must. The findings concerning ALBs work indicates that their approach, at present, is somewhat defective in driving forward, with partner country stakeholders, momentum behind key policy reforms/changes in practice. Delivery partners cannot assume that these changes will happen organically or that policy influence is out of scope. FOA and GOAP use different delivery models more aligned to systemic change ambitions and driving scalability/paradigm shifts. Future programmes can learn from this that to achieve systemic and long-term change or policy reforms, scientific or technical solutions must be complemented by advocacy, engagement and ownership building capabilities.
- 7) One factor behind the slower-than-expected progress of the OCPP was that the ALBs are scientific and marine management and regulation institutions, rather than international development focused institutions. This could help explain some of the gaps in in-house expertise in areas such as international development, capacity to deliver project management, GESI and MEL and has invariably impacted on the extent to which the ALBs' work has considered poverty ambitions and GESI considerations. To avoid these issues, programmes should set out, from the outset, the different skill sets needed to run their programmes, recognising that development expertise, project management, MEL and GESI analysis are essential competencies alongside technical /scientific expertise for design and delivery programmes like OCPP.
- 8) In-country stakeholders have limited understanding of what has been delivered or achieved in the past by OCPP's ALBs and on who is doing what and working where. In-country stakeholders have requested improved communications and coordination on what OCPP's ALBs are delivering and the results being achieved. It was felt that the absence of an ongoing in-country presence in most bilateral partnership countries was in part to blame for this issue. The lesson distilled from this experience is that to ensure traction in-country and efficient, effective delivery, programmes need some form of local and ongoing in-country presence.
- 9) Joint scoping missions and joined up planning processes can generate efficiencies and synergies, as shown by OCPP's ALBs. However, the ALBs experience of scoping also shows that for scoping and design activities, remote working is less effective than in-country missions.
- 10) GOAP is paying active consideration to sustainability and plans to establish Indonesia as a global exemplar country in terms of integrating national ocean accounting into national policy and decision making. GOAP plans to use a sustainable approach to the development of "South-South" technical collaboration capacity including pilot collaborations and creating a regional network that will build long-term capacity and reduce reliance on ODA support. The ambition is to enable Indonesian partners to assist other countries develop their own ocean accounts. Other programmes should consider the appropriateness of South-South exchanges and delivery models for sustainability reasons.
- 11) GOAP has been effective in leveraging funding from other donors and development partners. FOA has also engaged successfully with other donors and development partners to take forward the work initiated under OCPP. It is important for other programmes to actively engage with other development programmes and partners to expand funding opportunities to support improvements to the marine environment.

- 12) OCPP's ALBs have successfully collaborated with University of East Anglia to support the development of a global microplastics laboratory network. Other programmes should consider cooperating with other institutions or development partners to amplify their global impact.



Lab equipment provided by the OCPP in Sri Lanka. Source: OCPP MEL team

The following recommendations are based on the evidence and analysis undertaken for this evaluation. There may be other factors or considerations this evaluation team are unaware of that Defra and the delivery partners are required to take on board. These recommendations are grouped into two categories: recommendations to deliver impact and recommendations to improve the process of delivery.

Recommendations to deliver impact

- 1) GESI considerations must be mainstreamed in programme design.
- 2) Poverty alleviation must be better integrated to achieve the intended programme impact.
- 3) Defra and OCPP programme leadership should carefully consider country and activity prioritisation in the remaining years of the programme.
- 4) External communications need to be enhanced and amplified to ensure impact and sustainability.
- 5) OCPP's strategic planning processes need to better integrate the programme and country-level Theories of Changes.
- 6) For OCPP to achieve long-term impact, it will require interventions oriented towards policy change and reform.
- 7) Sustainability needs to be integrated with all OCPP activity planning.
- 8) Transition plans need to be developed for all OCPP bilateral components.
- 9) OCPP should find opportunities to better promote in-country opportunities to ensure expertise retention.

Recommendations to improve process

- 10) Internal knowledge sharing should be promoted and streamlined to enable more effective delivery.
- 11) Programme governance including decision-making, approvals and escalation need to be streamlined.
- 12) VfM monitoring needs to be embedded and strengthened.
- 13) The OCPP delivery partners should invest in resourcing MEL.
- 14) Management processes must be consolidated and strengthened.
- 15) Engagement with in-country stakeholders and donors should be strengthened to ensure effective coordination.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Arm's-length Bodies (ALBs)	Lower Middle Incoms Countries (LMICs)
Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU)	Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)	Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)
Blue Food Partnership (BFP).	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL)
Blue Planet Fund (BPF)	Net Present Value (NPV)
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature (OCEAN) grants programme
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)	Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP)
Commonwealth Litter Programme (CLiP)	Official Development Assistance (ODA)
Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME)	One Health Aquaculture (OHA)
Climate and Ocean Adaptation and Sustainable Transition (COAST) programme	Oxford Policy Management (OPM)
Community of Practice (CoP)	Programme Management Board (PMB)
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra)	Programme Operating Manual (POM)
Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR)	Quality assurance (QA)
Evaluation Questions (EQs)	Quality Management System (QMS)
Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs)	Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)	Senior Management Board (SMB)
Friends of Ocean Action (FOA)	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis
Gender, Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)	Theory of Change (ToC)
Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP)	Technical Assistance (TA)
International Climate Finance (ICF)	Terms of Reference (ToR)
Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	University of East Anglia (UEA)
Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	Upper Middle Income Countries (UMICs)
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Value for Money (VfM)
Learning questions (LQs)	Western Indian Ocean (WIO)
Least Developed Countries (LDCs)	World Economic Forum (WEF)
	World Resources Institute (WRI)

1 Purpose, scope and objectives

1.1 Introduction

The Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) is a UK Government-led programme funded from the £500 million Blue Planet Fund (BPF), which is financed through the UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) and International Climate Finance (ICF) budget. The technical assistance programme supports eligible countries to reduce poverty through sustainable management of the marine environment. Overall responsibility for the programme rests with the UK funding authority the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The programme's delivery partners include three Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs): the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Marine Management Organisation (MMO). The ALBs are responsible for the delivery and management of what is referred to as the 'bilateral programme', which provides technical assistance through partnering with country governments. In addition, OCPP also funds two multi-donor initiatives for the 'multilateral/strategic programme' of the OCPP – the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) and Friends of Ocean Action (FOA), which support partner countries in the development of global public goods relevant to the programme's objectives. GOAP is a global, multi-stakeholder partnership established to enable countries and other stakeholders to go beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to effectively measure and manage progress towards sustainable ocean development. FOA is a platform hosted by the World Economic Forum in collaboration with the World Resources Institute, which brings together ocean leaders from a wide range of sectors to encourage action and investment into sustainable ocean projects. OCPP's bilateral programme start date was 01 July 2021 and its projected end date is 31 March 2026⁴. The two new multilateral programmes, FOA and GOAP, were fully brought into OCPP after one and half years of bilateral delivery. A detailed description of the programme is provided in Annex 5.

The NIRAS Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team were contracted by Defra to deliver MEL services to the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) from June 2023 until the end of September 2026, two years into OCPP's implementation. The MEL services to the OCPP are intended to act as a continuous management function and be a tool for learning, accountability and transparency in the delivery of the programme, for both the OCPP team and wider stakeholders, including the UK government. In December 2023 the revised MEL framework for the OCPP was approved, along with the OCPP MEL inception report. This interim evaluation is the first independent and comprehensive evaluation of OCPP, with the work of the ALBs and the two multi-donor initiatives both in scope.

The report is structured into five sections. Individual case study reports for Belize, Ghana, Maldives, Mozambique, and Sri Lanka are provided in Annexes 8-12:

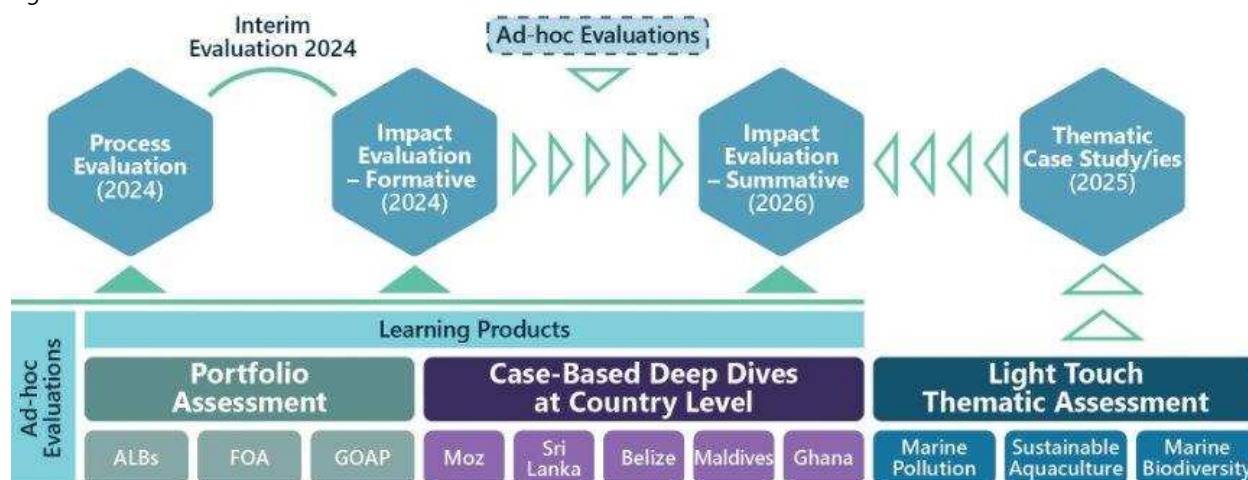
- Section 1 is the introduction to the evaluation, scope and target audience.
- Section 2 describes the evaluation approach and methods used.
- Section 3 sets out the findings from the assessment, aligned to the six DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and likely sustainability.
- Section 4 presents the key conclusions, lessons learnt and the recommendations from the evaluation.

⁴ HMG, Ocean Country Partnership Programme, <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/programme/GB-GOV-7-BPFOCPP/summary>

1.2 Purpose and objectives of the interim evaluation

The purpose of the independent evaluation of OCPP is to both assess the performance and impact of OCPP, as well as to distil learning to support an adaptive management process that mainstreams evidence-based decision-making into OCPP and other similar BPF initiatives. Two evaluations are planned for OCPP: an interim evaluation enveloping both process and impact assessments of OCPP in 2024, for which this is the main output, and an impact evaluation in 2026. The evaluation architecture presented in Figure 1.1 below was designed to address the evaluation needs of the primary evaluation audience (Defra, UK government stakeholders, and BPF programme teams). The evaluations will provide feedback at several different levels by adopting a tiered approach reflecting the breadth and depth of OCPP.

Figure 1.1 OCPP evaluation architecture



This interim evaluation is timely given that the programme has been running for almost two years, so it is ripe to provide feedback to Defra and delivery partners on the relevance and design of the programme, how the programme is being implemented, assessing the delivery modality and efficiency of implementation, as well as considering results from the early phase of the programme, and other lessons learned to inform programme improvement going forward. This paves the way for the 2026 impact evaluation, which will have more of a focus on effectiveness (contribution to intermediate outcomes and outcomes), as well as impact/potential for impact, sustainability, and other lessons learned.

1.3 Scope of the assignment

The temporal scope of the evaluations covers the period from OCPP launch in July 2021 to March 2026, when the five-year programme is expected to end.⁵ The temporal scope of this interim evaluation is from programme launch in July 2021 to the end of May 2024.

⁵ However, certain components of the programme are expected to end earlier – for example FOA’s funding may cease in 2024, although it is also possible that further extensions will be granted to certain projects. In addition new delivery partners may be onboarded and new bilateral partnerships with new countries may be agreed which would also be in scope for the evaluation.

The entire programme was within scope of the interim evaluation. In addition, all countries where the ALB, FOA and GOAP⁶ interventions have been delivered/are being delivered are within geographical scope of the evaluation. In the case of closed bilateral partnerships, these will be covered in *ad hoc* evaluation activities commissioned by Defra and therefore are outside the scope of the evaluation. An *ad hoc* evaluation of FOA delivery was available for review and contributed to the evidence base for this evaluation.

1.4 Target audience and stakeholders

The primary audience for the evaluations is the Defra OCPP, BPF and ODA teams, and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) teams, the five delivery partners, as well as Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) as manager of the OCPP scholarships, other BPF programme suppliers, and BPF Regional Coordinators and Posts (British Embassies/British High Commissions) in partner countries. The secondary audience is the recipients of OCPP technical advice, support, training and education, as well as awareness raising interventions, in addition to the external audience of marine science and conservation community. The report references the following stakeholders:

- “Bilateral programme” includes Defra and the three ALB delivery partners, and their respective technical/delivery teams involved in the management and delivery of the bilateral programme;
- “Strategic programme” refers to the strategic components delivered by FOA and GOAP and the delivery teams involved in the management and delivery of their work;
- “In-country stakeholders” includes partner country government members engaged in the programme and receiving technical assistance; as well as organisations and institutions working with the programme, and contracted subcontractors delivering work on behalf of the OCPP, who are based in an OCPP country.

2. Evaluation approach and methods

The interim evaluation was designed to be utilisation-oriented and participatory, and used a system lens to assess the extent to which OCPP support has enhanced capacities to effectively and sustainably manage and protect marine ecosystems.

2.1 Evaluation questions

An overview of evaluation questions (EQs), sub-EQs, lines of inquiry, and main sources of evidence for the interim evaluation is provided in the evaluation matrix (Annex 1).

The process EQs primarily focused on the following dimensions:

- How well was OCPP and its components designed?
- How well is the programme being implemented? Is delivery of the programme being done in the right way in terms of use of ALB, FOA and GOAP delivery, travel involved in getting ALBs to country, Value for Money (VfM)?

⁶ It is worth noting that GOAP interventions, supported by Defra, extend coverage of countries that are not listed as priority countries of the Blue Planet Fund. In year 1, GOAP pilots were delivered in South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya, Indonesia, Vietnam and Fiji which are all classified as BPF priority ODA eligible countries.

- How appropriate is the structure of the programme in terms of numbers of activities being supported versus depth of focus on a number of critical activities?
- Have the organisational structures, governance arrangements and management processes affected the achievement/likely achievement of intended programme outcomes and impact?
- How have the outcomes and impact been affected by the external context within which the programme was implemented?

2.2 Selection of countries for case studies

In addition to a portfolio assessment, this evaluation used a case-based approach to drill down into, describe and analyse OCPP's work in particular countries in order to ensure depth as well as breadth in the analysis of the portfolio. The unit of analysis for the case studies was the country level, with the assessment covering all OCPP interventions being delivered in that specific country. The sampling criteria (detailed in Annex 1) sought to select a diverse, rather than representative sample, of OCPP countries in order to answer the questions "what works well, where and in what contexts/conditions?" Four countries were selected for case studies – Belize, Ghana, Mozambique and Sri Lanka. For geographical diversity and coverage of FOA and GOAP (without ALB intervention) Fiji was later added as a case study country. However, for reasons elaborated in section 2.5, Fiji was later replaced by Maldives, which afforded another opportunity to assess the results of a more mature partnership supported by the ALBs and GOAP. The case studies have process and impact evaluation dimensions in that they will examine both delivery and efficiency aspects of OCPP as well as effectiveness and emerging impacts. To assess change over time within these case studies, a longitudinal approach will be applied, with the selected case studies remaining the same for the interim (2024) and impact (2026) evaluations.

2.3 Data collection

The evaluation team conducted an extensive number of interviews with key stakeholders in order to inform the overall assessment of the portfolio and additionally at country level within the framework of the country level case studies. In total 152 stakeholder interviews were conducted (86 men and 66 women) and focus group discussions with 20 community members (13 men and seven women) were conducted in Sri Lanka and Belize. One of the focus group discussions in Sri Lanka was with OCPP scholars.

A list of stakeholder institutions consulted is provided in Annex 2. In addition to the key informant interviews which were conducted in-person or online, an electronic survey was also conducted, targeted at OCPP delivery partners (only ALBs) in order to obtain their feedback on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of OCPP support in partner countries. In all 20 responses were received from ALBs (17 female and 3 male respondents). The results from this survey are provided in Annex 3. If survey respondents are included as well as focus group participants, along with stakeholder interviews, in all 102 men and 90 women were consulted in primary data collection activities for the interim evaluation.

In addition to primary data collection, the evaluation team also reviewed an extensive number of secondary documentation, which are listed in Annex 4. Additional lists of documents reviewed are included in the annexes to the country case studies.

Since an evaluation was recently conducted by the NIRAS MEL team of FOA projects, the resultant evaluation report (February 2024) was the key source of evidence on FOA projects. Additional information was sourced from discussions with FOA during the interim evaluation to ensure that the evidence presented in the report was up to date.

2.4 Evaluation methods

The evaluation of OCPP uses a blended theory-based, mixed methods approach which applies a number of evaluation methods in order to understand how and in what way has OCPP delivered results. One of the main methods used was contribution analysis,⁷ which uses the Theory of Change (ToC) to assess the contribution an intervention/portfolio has made to outcomes. This method was applied at country levels (for the country based case studies) by using the respective Theories of Change at programme and country levels to define contribution hypotheses⁸ assessing change from output and intermediate outcome levels through to outcome level. For each of the key results of the programme, the evaluation team presented the significance of the change in terms of improvements to the management of the marine environment and the level of contribution of OCPP, in addition to mapping where the results sit in the ToC causal pathways to outcome and impact. As this is an interim evaluation, the evaluation team also reported results with *potential* to deliver intermediate outcomes and outcome level change, in order to assess likely effectiveness. Other methods of analysis used by the evaluation team include Value for Money analysis, Systemic Change analysis, Contextual Analysis, and Gender, Equity, and Social Inclusion (GESI) analysis.

An important step in the data analysis process was the aggregation of evidence (from qualitative and quantitative sources) which was done by using coding software, MaxQDA, to match evidence to each EQ set out in the evaluation matrix. This was a robust means of ensuring comprehensive capture of all data and evidence, providing a valuable platform for triangulation of findings across evidence sources, and the identification of outliers in terms of opposing views and findings reliant on single sources of evidence.

2.5 Evaluation limitations

The interim evaluation faced a number of issues, for which mitigation measures were necessary to reduce their impact on the strength and quality of evidence (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Evaluation limitations and mitigation measures

Limitation	Mitigation
<p>Logframe for OCPP was being revised during the interim evaluation process</p>	<p>Rather than assess the programme’s performance against the first iteration of the logframe, the evaluation team considered progress against the change pathways mapped out in the programme’s theory of change. In addition the evaluation team reviewed progress with the various programme activities in order to assess whether the programme is on track with delivery. The shortcomings in the sufficiency and frequency of monitoring data, reporting on outputs, intermediate outcome and outcome level results is an issue which should be addressed once the newly</p>
<p>Shortcomings in the availability of monitoring and performance data, including there being no data available to assess performance across logframe outputs.</p>	

⁷ Mayne, J. The Institutional Learning and Change (ILAC) Initiative, (2008). *Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect*. <https://www.betterevaluation.org/tools-resources/contribution-analysis-approach-exploring-cause-effect>

⁸ An example of a contribution hypothesis is “To what extent has OCPP’s capacity building and technical assistance made a contribution to enhancing human and organisational capabilities to support sustainable marine environment management and emergency response, leading to more effective implementation of improved policies and regulations in this sphere?” Other such change hypotheses will be specified based on the causal impact pathways set out in the Theory of Change and supporting narrative.

Limitation	Mitigation
	designed MEL framework is rolled out and in use by delivery partners.
A GOAP-specific evaluation was planned which impacted on the access to their stakeholders in the interest of minimising evaluation burden	GOAP’s activities were assessed from a portfolio perspective, as well as in the context of the case study assessments of Maldives, Ghana, Belize and Mozambique. In view of the forthcoming evaluation of GOAP, the evaluation coverage of GOAP in the interim evaluation was agreed to be light touch.
Application of a theory-based approach was somewhat affected by the fact that programme teams do not apply a theory of change lens to planning activities.	While there are Theories of Change for the different country programmes and for FOA and GOAP at programme levels, the programme teams do not tend to use the ToC as a tool to inform intervention design. Nonetheless the evaluation team was able to map the key emergent results to ToC change pathways, through the application of contribution analysis to assess programme effectiveness and impact.
GESI analysis and consideration of poverty remain at a relatively early stage	These are important issues since the design of interventions have not incorporated GESI nor poverty considerations. The evaluation team sought to unravel what the likely impacts of interventions on these groups might be, while also emphasising in its recommendations the urgent need for GESI analysis to be commissioned by programme teams.
Assessing internal coherence of the programme was compromised by the “agency” based approach the ALBs use to plan and deliver activities. The Tier One change process to improve governance was initiated in October 2023 and was still nascent when the evaluation began in February 2024	The three ALBs tend to sub-divide workplanning between their respective agencies. Consultations and interviews were used to examine any linkages/synergies between the work of the three ALBs. The Tier One change process to improve governance was initiated in October 2023 and was still nascent when the evaluation began in February 2024.
Some stakeholder experiences and perceptions may be missed in the evaluation’s case-based approach, which does not provide comprehensive coverage across the entire OCPP portfolio.	The evaluation undertakes a portfolio assessment and a case-based approach using selected countries for deep dive case studies. The case study sample aimed to represent the diversity of the portfolio (see Annex 1). The portfolio assessment captures the breadth of the portfolio across all OCPP countries, through portfolio document analysis, portfolio-level KIIs and survey.

3. Evaluation findings

3.1 Relevance

3.1.1 Meeting needs of partner countries

Finding 1: OCPP, through a demand-led and consultative process, is meeting the needs of partner county stakeholders, although the balance between use of demand-led and propositional approaches varies from country to country. The programme is filling important gaps in partner countries' expertise and capability to sustainably manage the marine environment.

Overall, the bilateral programme is meeting the needs of the five case study country partners through a demand-led, consultative approach that is adjusted through ALB propositional offers. Both GOAP and FOA delivery were found to be highly relevant to their partner countries, through a more direct demand-led model compared to the bilateral side of the OCPP. A majority of in-country partner stakeholders reported high levels of relevance and satisfaction with the programme meeting their countries' needs and policy priorities, and perceived that the stakeholder process was underpinned by co-development principles and a collaborative, demand-led approach.

Stakeholders particularly praised the high calibre technical expertise and peer to peer training, highlighting the UK's technical expertise as a unique selling point to partner countries. For example, government department stakeholders in Belize praised OCPP on the peer-to-peer biosecurity training and equipment they received to detect and prevent diseases in two key value chain assets in the country (shrimp and tilapia). In Ghana, one key government stakeholder noted that, through OCPP's support, they can now address key coastal management issues through the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) training and expertise.

The strategic partners' more direct, demand-led approach is embedded in their design. For FOA, stakeholders are closely involved in the delivery across all four projects and the co-creation of solutions to marine environment challenges. All four projects included some form of in-country working group, roundtable, partnership platform, or feedback mechanism to validate and inform the direction of project to ensure it aligned closely with stakeholder priorities. GOAP's model of delivery is directed by the country members (and non-members) themselves and the in-country pilots are generally led by locally-based experts and institutions and are deeply embedded in ongoing ocean policy and governance processes in host countries.

There is strong evidence that OCPP fills gaps. Stakeholders across all countries regarded the support provided as useful, given their resource constrained environment and limited availability of this type of support from other donors. Even in well-established OCPP countries that have a highly saturated donor space, such as Belize and the Maldives, the programme is found to address needs/priorities that other donors are not addressing through government-to-government technical assistance. GOAP directly addresses stakeholder's national priorities for ocean accounting, where most stakeholders lack the capacity and capability to carry out their own ecosystem accounting systems. Many stakeholders across all five countries stated there would be a gap if OCPP exited the country. There were mixed results in terms of how well the ALBs balanced the demand-led and propositional approaches. In Belize, Sri Lanka and Maldives, this blended approach worked well; in Ghana and Mozambique there were shortcomings in this balance, leading to some stakeholders frustrated with the bilateral offer. Certain government stakeholders in both countries praised the programme in its technical assistance offered, but stated the needs and priorities could be better identified, and activities better targeted to their needs. For example, in Ghana a stakeholder commended the

programme for supporting activities at a zonal level but stated the programme is currently “not downstream enough” and suggested that technical work should be concentrated at a lower, community level and not just at national or zonal levels.⁹ It should be noted that OCPP was primarily designed to be delivered at national levels and there are other BPF programmes that are more community-focused. While bilateral programme delivery teams sought to achieve a demand-led offer through extensive stakeholder consultation, constraints to resourcing and the bilateral programme delivery model led to more propositional offers. Evidence suggests that what is proposed and delivered by the bilateral programme depends on technical availability and capacity of the ALB teams. This may be limiting the relevance of what is offered.

Finding 2: ALB’s in-country engagement and traction has been hindered by the intermittent presence delivery model. In-country partners prefer face to face working and continuity of engagement in-country.

The intermittent presence delivery model of the bilateral side of the programme is perceived by stakeholders as a ‘fly in,-fly-out’ model. It was cited by multiple stakeholders in Belize, Ghana, and Mozambique as challenging the programme’s relevance. Sri Lanka is the exception, having a British High Commission hosted OCPP programme officer in place, more local procurement, and sustained relationships with in-country stakeholders built by Cefas technical teams since 2019 under CLiP. Sri Lanka uses more local suppliers so it is less reliant on technical teams that intermittently visit the country to deliver the intervention. For the delivery teams in the other case study countries, this approach has somewhat hampered their ability to provide relevant, bespoke workplans due to: barriers and challenges to relationship building in certain thematic workstreams; limited degree of familiarity with country contexts and preferred ways of working; and barriers to delivery (linked to section 4.3 on Efficiency) even in well-established countries like Belize. In addition, this model has potentially led to overambition of what can be delivered and achieved by the bilateral programme due to the remoteness of the delivery teams and challenges in engagement and traction with in-country partners (as covered in section 4.3 on Efficiency): the latest ALB Activity Tracker for FY 2023/24 recorded 330 activities across the portfolio, with many delayed/terminated/paused.¹⁰

“This programme can’t be delivered over email.”
- Ghana stake-

Other factors, such as language, were noted by stakeholders in Mozambique, Sri Lanka, and Senegal as a challenge for the bilateral programme’s ability to meet local needs and build the relationships necessary to conduct the work. While Sri Lankan stakeholders can receive the programme in English, they would prefer documentation and meetings in their own languages and have requested that the programme be sensitive to this, which the bilateral programme delivery teams have sought to address. The language barrier in Mozambique was suggested as a one of the reasons for the inefficient and protracted scoping period, leading stakeholders to suggest that the workplan only partially addressed their needs. Activities in Senegal have been delayed because the ALB delivery teams did not have the translation support and have not been able to hire translators in-country, according to one bilateral delivery team member, who stated that without translation support it is very difficult to build the relationships required to establish buy-in.

⁹ Ghana government stakeholder interview.
¹⁰ OCPP Activity Tracker FY23/24, received 4 April 2024.

3.1.2 Prioritisation of OCPP countries to support

Finding 3: Country prioritisation for the bilateral component of OCPP leant heavily on CLiP. The rationale for selection of the supported countries is not always apparent/fully clear to delivery partners, who struggled with the increase of country delivery under their remit.

Many of the countries within the OCPP's current portfolio are legacy countries from the previous UK Government programmes managed by Cefas, the Commonwealth Litter Programme (CLiP) from 2018-2020 and Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME) from 2016-2022. Prioritisation of countries from predecessor programmes increased the relevance of OCPP's support within Belize, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Evidence from case study countries indicates that the OCPP has been able to capitalise on established relationships and priority areas of activity already established from predecessor programmes. This can easily be seen in Belize, where CLiP drafted the country's National Marine Litter Action Plan that OCPP is now helping the country implement. Within these predecessor programme countries, OCPP has been able to expand support and deliver work in other thematic areas beyond marine pollution to biodiversity and sustainable seafood. From the prioritisation approach of utilising previously established UKAID footprint, the OCPP has ensured a strongly relevant offer to partner countries.

Prioritisation of countries within the wider bilateral portfolio is decided by Defra, with limited input from ALBs and nominal steer from the Senior Management Board (SMB). Defra provides light-touch input in to new pilot countries for ocean accounting supported by the BPF since the GOAP model is demand based. Multiple ALB interviewees noted that it was unclear why Defra chose certain countries for bilateral delivery and it was also not clear why they pushed to roll out bilateral delivery in so many countries beyond the original CLiP countries in such a short space of time. Interviews with delivery team members stated they felt this process was rushed, which decreased their ability to efficiently deliver the programme (see section 4.3 on efficiency). However, interviewees indicated that Defra was pushed to fill gaps in the wider BPF portfolio, and had to respond to ministerial pressures, such as the need for some programme within the BPF portfolio to address IUU.

"OCPP started work right away and then had to figure out how to deliver."
ALB delivery team member

3.1.3 Strategic focus with partner countries

Finding 4: OCPP's bilateral partnerships have had limited strategic focus in their engagements with partner countries. FOA and GOAP display a strong strategic focus in their engagements.

Currently, the bilateral partnerships demonstrate limited strategic focus in their engagement with partner countries over what the programme delivers, at both a country and portfolio level. The first years of programme delivery were done without a robust MEL framework and multi-year planning, which curtailed the programme's ability to establish and maintain a strategic and results-based focus. Planning processes from the beginning of the programme have been focused on planning at the activity-level with limited understanding of how activities are aligned to larger outcomes, except to say that the activities *"are good for the marine environment."*¹¹ According to a delivery team member, at the start of the programme the ALBs were pushed to deliver activities right away and encouraged to plan at the activity-level, due to the need to be reactive to and led by partner country needs.¹² As the bilateral programme progressed, Defra pushed for more strategic planning linked to Theories of Change, but this was slow to materialise in the first few years

¹¹ Belize delivery team member interview.

¹² ALB team member interview.

of the programme. Because of this, how a country delivery fits into the wider portfolio of OCPP and the justification for why its activities support programme-level outcomes is currently unclear.

In recognition of the lack of strategic direction present in the first two years of programme delivery, Defra and ALBs worked together to implement a more strategic approach in 2023 with the introduction of Cefas as a Tier One delivery partner in charge of consolidated management and coordination of the programme. This change process introduced more strategic planning processes, such the introduction of Annual Planning days, and new tools and processes for planning. These tools for the bilateral programme include: an Activity Tracker, Annual Milestone Reporting for each ALB, country-level workplans, country-level Project Initiation documents for each thematic workstream, BPF Implementation Plans (which are Defra/FCDO driven documents), Activity Plans, and a Programme Operating Manual (POM). Country-level Theories of Change were introduced to country teams in mid-2023 through a subcontractor, but these were not found by the evaluation team to be in use by ALB delivery teams. Each of these tools attempts to align itself to the larger strategic vision of the programme, e.g. the Theory of Change, but most of them fall short of providing a clear line of sight of how the activities of the bilateral programme will result in outputs that will be adopted and used by the stakeholders. Many of these documents incorrectly assign programme 'outputs' under 'outcomes', and only provide a high-level overview of how the bilateral programme is addressing identified challenges will result in outcome level results. Out of this suite of strategic planning tools, only the Activity Plan (produced just for Ghana and Mozambique at the time of this evaluation) succinctly connects to the Theory of Change and maps out activities against intended outputs and then the larger outcome-level changes for the country.

As of May 2024, Tier One programme leadership had set multi-year milestones and targets against the logframe indicators. While this action and the suite of tools is a positive move in the right direction, the tools and processes are not being uniformly and fully used by each country team; for example, Activity Plans were only created for Ghana and Mozambique, while Belize is relying on a large slide deck to communicate activity-level achievements with partners. It is understood the programme level Theory of Change was being introduced to each country team at the time of the evaluation; however, the Annual Planning Days in January 2024 was a missed opportunity to introduce the newly strengthened MEL framework and begin socialising it with the bilateral programme delivery teams.

Furthermore, there are too many strategic tools with only partial strategic information in each and these documents appear to silo the strategic information and work. Consolidating these tools—for example, creating a more robust Project Initiation document that combines all thematic workstreams (or use BPF Implementation Frameworks for COAST-aligned countries), attached to an Activity Plan, would help provide the comprehensive strategic line of sight needed for country-level implementation, without spreading the information out over several documents.

Both GOAP and FOA demonstrate a clearer strategic focus in their engagement with countries due to: 1) their more direct, stakeholder-led model of delivery; 2) established mechanisms in the country or region to provide direction and steer into the project (for example, with GOAP's Communities of Practice); GOAP and FOA's project management function demonstrates that it understands how their intervention is anticipated to result in change. The multilateral components of OCPP were required to produce quarterly reporting against set objectives and indicators to Defra. This is unlike the ALBs who reported annually against objectives and indicators set out in the OCPP logframe in the first three years of delivery. Even with their clearer strategic focus and documentation processes, the lack of the robust MEL framework for OCPP impacted

FOA and GOAP's ability to have a clear strategic line of sight in their delivery within the portfolio of OCPP itself. Therefore, all delivery partners within the portfolio experienced shortcomings in levels of understanding and oversight about what was being delivered across the OCPP in the first few years of delivery.

3.1.4 GESI and safeguarding considerations embedded in the design of OCPP

Finding 5: The programme has paid limited attention to GESI and safeguarding considerations thus far. Although there are plans afoot to address these critical gaps, the pace and momentum behind addressing them is somewhat slow and there is a lack of clear leadership on this issue.

The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) review of the BPF recognised that GESI is largely absent from consideration from Defra-funded ODA programmes.¹³ For the OCPP this has resulted in an absence of guidance and available tools from Defra to all delivery partners. Safeguarding, equally, has been given little formal guidance and tools. Even without guidance from the funding authority, responsibility of delivering and meeting ODA requirements sits with delivery partners. Thus far, the delivery partners and most case study countries demonstrate little GESI and safeguarding awareness. However, there is a very strong appetite from delivery teams to address this issue, and they expressed some frustration with the lack of guidance from ALB programme leadership and Defra.¹⁴ Out of all the case study countries, Belize is the most GESI aware: the delivery team stated they recognised the need to be aware of how certain thematic areas, such as stakeholder consultation with fishers for the Managed Access Review, will engage with marginalised groups. In the absence of guidance from programme leadership, there are pockets of GESI being considered by the programme in unique instances. One of Belize's main sub-contractors, WREN, included a GESI lens in their delivery that also featured disability considerations. As of May 2024, some steps to address these issues are being taken by Defra and the ALB programme leadership, (it should be noted that FOA and GOAP have not received any GESI-specific guidance from Defra, though their grant agreements with the authority contain explicit obligations to safeguarding):

- A safeguarding session was delivered to ALB programme leadership by ODA Hub in April 2024.
- A broad GESI strategy from Defra was communicated to OCPP teams starting at the ALB Planning Days in January 2024.
- Safeguarding training has been introduced by Tier One delivery partner Cefas: there are required online trainings that are available for programme teams to attend.
- Tier One delivery partner Cefas has recruited a social researcher to focus on GESI as of May 2024. FOA has plans to hire a GESI consultant if the next phase of the Blue Food Partnership is granted further funding by Defra.

While these are important steps in the right direction, time is running out in this financial year (FY 2024/25) to take meaningful and measurable actions to address the shortcomings on GESI and safeguarding. The lack of GESI and safeguarding was identified as early as August 2023 and the ICAI Review was issued in November 2023. Since then, it appears as if all stakeholders involved (e.g. Defra and programme leadership across all delivery partners) are waiting for someone to take charge and lead on this issue, which points to a lack of a concerted effort to address this problem. There also appears to be confusion on who is driving

¹³ Independent Commission for Aid Impact, "Blue Planet Fund: A rapid review", p.19, November 2023. <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/review/blue-planet-fund/review/>.

¹⁴ Delivery team member interviews.

this aspect and how to meet the respective obligations for both GESI and safeguarding in ODA-funded programmes.

3.2 Coherence

3.2.1 Internal coherence

Finding 6: There is some evidence of disjointed work across the ALB delivery partners, although delivery of work across all delivery partners has been more joined up in West and East Africa. Efforts are underway to have a more joined up approach to planning and delivery of work across all the delivery partners.

There are mixed findings for internal coherence across the programme and across the five case study countries. There are some positive indications of internal coherence from instances of joined up working across delivery partners or ALBs, the creation of regional and international linkages within the portfolio, and strong examples of the programme adhering to relevant national/international norms and standards in their delivery of technical assistance. However, these positive instances are dampened by shortcomings due to the delivery model, the planning process, and governance arrangements.

The bilateral programme and its delivery partners carry out its activities under three thematic workstreams: marine biodiversity, sustainable seafood and marine pollution. Sri Lanka, Belize and the Maldives were able to build a coherent body of work from CLiP in the area of marine pollution, which is positive. However, when the other ALBs (JNCC and MMO) joined Cefas in bilateral delivery in these countries, and when it broadened out delivery to the other thematic areas, evidence suggests delivery was disjointed with work being done in silos. This has improved over time, mainly due to setting up Cross-ALB meetings and the Tier One change process in 2023 to ensure a more joined-up ALB approach. However, at the country-level, it is down to the thematic and technical leads to keep the wider team and ALB Country Coordinator up to date on what thematic activities are occurring. The lack of uniform strategic approach at the portfolio level is reflected at the bilateral country level as well, where the absence of utilising the country Theories of Change stymies a country's/project's delivery team's ability to align itself to the portfolio level. There are different tools and processes in use across the ALBs, but they are not used uniformly across ALBs and ALB country teams, which can affect working together as well. This uneven and ad-hoc approach compromises internal coherence and the programme's ability to align and synergise internally to minimise duplication and cross-working.

The exception to this is the West and East African ALB country teams, who as new partnerships in the bilateral portfolio demonstrate stronger internal coherence than the rest of the portfolio. The Country Coordinators for these countries (Ghana, Senegal, Mozambique and Madagascar) have regular, joined up meetings that even incorporate GOAP team members (e.g. for Ghana). The BPF Regional Coordinators for both West and East Africa enhances the internal coherence and are able to provide strategic, BPF-portfolio level linkages. Delivery of OCPP is more joined up in these countries as well through established meetings and can be seen in recent delivery, for example, with Cefas and FOA in their joint planning and delivery of the One Health Aquaculture Conference in Ghana in February 2024.

Notably, the programme has created regional and international links across its portfolio in a few instances. For example, in Belize through its Belize Recyclers and Waste Management Association and Maritime Ports Feasibility study. Both of these activities have established linkages with other OCPP SIDS in the South Pacific through the sub-contractor, WREN. In addition, the microplastics laboratory work led by Cefas is a strongly positive internal coherence finding. The collaboration of microplastic laboratories were set up under CLiP

and from this, OCPP have created regional and global networks that have allowed these laboratories to produce comparable baseline and monitoring assessments across a number of OCPP countries (see Impact section 3.5.1).

3.2.2 External coherence

Finding 7: External coherence is generally good and there are a number of examples of the programme and its delivery partners leveraging funding from other sources or collaborating with other donors or development partners.

The programme demonstrates strong external coherence by being aligned with partner country policies. Portfolio level documentation, interviews, and case study country results provided evidence of the OCPP delivering work that address countries' priorities and policies at national (and for some countries international) level. OCPP, for example, is helping Belize deliver on its transboundary commitments under the 2021 Blue Bonds for Ocean Conservation law (also known as the Blue Bonds Agreement). This debt refinancing scheme by The Nature Conservancy has allowed the country to convert and reduce debt by locking the country into specific conservation measure agreements.¹⁵

OCPP is found to create strong regional and international linkages outside of OCPP, which further strengthens external coherence. All case study countries demonstrate instances of collaboration with other donors operating in the same space. For example, the programme has been able to help its stakeholders in Ghana create connections in the MSP technical capacity building work by linking a government stakeholder with the Global Environment Facility's MSP programme that is preparing a transnational Marine Special Plan for Ghana, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Benin. Similarly, OCPP in its Marine Pollution Emergency Response workstream is planning to facilitate a multi-day regional symposium in 2024 to provide regional stakeholders with an opportunity to reinvigorate the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme pollution response framework.

Both Ghana and Mozambique have created (or are planning to) create linkages with other BPF programmes operating in the same country/region. According to the evaluation survey, a majority of ALB delivery team members feel that the programme could do more to align the OCPP to what is being done across the BPF. The programme is moving to better align the OCPP with the BPF, starting with Mozambique, with BPF Implementation Frameworks.

"The important thing is – whatever area of work [BPF] is doing, they need to coordinate with others. There's lots of delivery partners and there's risk of duplication. BPF needs to build on the existing and re-enforce what's already there."

Mozambique in-country stakeholder

Avoiding duplication of work by other donors is a key indicator for external coherence. The donor space is heavily saturated in all case study countries. Most case study countries have done extensive stakeholder mapping and are aware of what other donors are delivering, yet risks remain: *"things change on a daily basis,"* as one delivery team member from Ghana stated. ALB delivery teams in newer OCPP bilateral programme countries, such as

¹⁵ The Nature Conservancy, 'Belize Blue Bonds: First Annual Impact Report,' March 2023, <https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/Belize-Blue-Bonds-2023-Impact-Report.pdf>; and Belize National Assembly, Blue Bonds Loan Act (2021), <https://www.nationalassembly.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Act-No-28-of-2021-Blue-Bonds-Loan.pdf>.

Ghana and Mozambique, noted that it takes a long time to understand and map/capture all stakeholders involved in the marine environment space in countries. Because of this, duplication with other donors' work has occurred in some instances. In addition, duplication of work was flagged as a risk by in-country stakeholders for both countries.

Reporting and communication on OCPP was cited by many stakeholders as the biggest weakness that needs to be addressed and which is currently compromising external coherence of the programme. Branding of programme activity is inconsistent across the case study countries: in-country stakeholders are confused by the different ALB badges (e.g. the individual branding logos of each organisation) that are used when teams go in country to deliver technical assistance. There is also little understanding about what has been delivered or achieved in the past, who is doing what and working where. Within the OCPP, this knowledge is held with a few people, and externally, there is very little for stakeholders to share or reference. In addition, in-country stakeholders have requested that communications and coordination on what OCPP is delivering and the results being achieved in country needs to improve.

Finally, in another positive indicator for the programme's coherence, GOAP, FOA, Belize, and Sri Lanka have leveraged funding from other donors (see VfM section 3.3.6).

3.3 Efficiency

3.3.1 Extent outputs are delivered in a timely manner

Finding 8: The bilateral programme delivery partners are delivering outputs and activities below their planned levels, while strategic partners FOA and GOAP are consistently delivering against their milestones.

Timeliness of bilateral programme performance (Year 3 only). Local partner and delivery team member perceive the OCPP implementation by the ALBs as slow and inefficient (particularly in Ghana, Mozambique and Belize) with long periods of time between scoping and the start of activities, and delays to delivery on agreed workstreams. According to the final FY 2023/24 activity tracker, 24 percent of the activities were terminated, while seven percent were delayed. A further seven percent of the activities had yet to start. The reasons for termination are wide-ranging. In some instances, the terminations reflect reactive adaptive management by the ALBs, with activities being terminated in response to changing needs. Other terminations were however due to engagement challenges with governments (as experienced in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) and delays to signing of MOUs (as experienced in Ghana, Mozambique and Sri Lanka), which is between Defra and the respective partner governments. The timeliness of the delivery of activities within a country can vary across the themes. For example, in the Maldives the work in biodiversity proceeded as planned, while the pollution theme had difficulties to find traction. The same occurred in Ghana, where traction for MPA work was difficult to establish with government partners in the first year of delivery. The identified barriers to engagement are discussed in section 3.3.3.

Timeliness of strategic partner performance (FOA and GOAP). The quarterly reports of the strategic partners show they have consistently delivered as planned. On a few occasions the launching of activities were slightly postponed (e.g., to coincide with international conferences or other events). These changes were made with the approval of Defra and demonstrate adaptive programming. The progress is reported against quarterly milestones that have largely been successfully delivered. A key outcome for GOAP is to

advance ocean accounts, including the piloting of actions in six new countries, all of which are on track¹⁶. The implementation at country level is guided by a ToR or country-level work plan. This evaluation confirmed that outputs, within these guiding documents for the six initial countries have been delivered on time or are on track to be delivered by the end of OCPP support to GOAP Phase 2 by March 2025.

3.3.2 Factors supporting efficiency

Finding 9: Past achievements by the ALBs and existing networks in partner countries have supported the efficient delivery of OCPP. Concurrently, recent changes in planning, management and coordination processes and mechanisms have improved the efficient delivery of OCPP to a certain degree.

The bilateral component of OCPP built on the achievements of CLiP that worked in seven countries of the Commonwealth¹⁷, all of which were absorbed into OCPP. This has enabled the bilateral programme to efficiently ‘springboard’ off existing initiatives and relationships to expand the marine pollution work, and deliver other thematic areas in these countries. In addition to building on previous programmes, individual connections of ALB and GOAP staff were also cited by interviewees in the evaluation as important factors to progress country programmes. Interviews revealed that the connections of GOAP staff in particular enabled unique access to otherwise closed high-level government meetings.

The assignment of Cefas as the Tier One Delivery Partner in October 2023 has led to improved efficiency in both planning and delivery. New working groups (for Travel; Communications; Risk Assumptions Issues and Dependencies ; and MEL) were established. The position was created as part of the MoU between Defra and Cefas in October 2023 and delegates authority from Defra to Cefas to adjust and manage budget items across ALB delivery partners as required.¹⁸ Interviewees noted that while the first two years of delivery between ALBs was siloed, after the change process country-level planning and implementation has improved between the organisations, with a focus on improved communication, strengthened coordination and the use of focal points. The appointment of BPF Regional Coordinators has also been recognized by stakeholders as supporting efficiency in programme delivery, particularly in Africa, as noted in the coherence section above.

In addition, the use of in-country and local partners has facilitated efficient delivery. FOA has made considerable use of international and local consultants and organisations to co-deliver programme activities. World Economic Forum (WEF) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) staff state that during a project they are in-country only a few times, and that local consultants were crucial for keeping the projects on track. GOAP mobilises technical expertise from its secretariat and UNSW when needed,

On FOA: “They work in a different way. They have local delivery partners who already have whole sets of existing relationships on the ground and are implementing a very focused and defined project.”

-BPF Regional Coordinator

but it also has a number of strategies to engage local support. These include fellowship schemes for PhD scholars and advanced study and early career researchers, , the use of local NGOs to deliver research

¹⁶ FY2022/23: Ghana and Maldives; FY2023/24: Belize and Madagascar; FY2024/25 TBC, but likely Costa Rica and Sri Lanka.

¹⁷ Belize, India, Maldives, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Vanuatu.

¹⁸ The Independent Commission for Aid Impact’s (ICAI) report, 2023 reported that an MOU was signed between Defra and the ALBs on 30 October 2023. Prior to this, investments had been disbursed without a completed MOU, and this was noted as a weakness in Defra’s management in the ICAI report.

activities, and use of experts to develop and oversee national and regional initiatives. The latter is channelled through the Communities of Practice (CoP) and their leads, which are particularly active in Africa and the Pacific Islands. At the time of writing, GOAP has contracted around £3m to downstream delivery partners.¹⁹

The bilateral programme is now increasingly using local contractors to mitigate against the weaknesses experienced in their intermittent presence delivery model, and to reduce costs and accelerate disbursements of funds to delivery activities. All case study countries are procuring suppliers to deliver work in-country, which is a positive sign for efficiency. The peer to peer knowledge exchange on offer from the ALBs has also proven cost efficient and pivotal in enhancing in-country capabilities. It should be noted that of the ALBs, MMO does not have a legal basis for subcontracting local providers to deliver technical assistance for its work under OCPP, except to subcontract for research purposes.

Finally, Defra' steer to ALBs to reduce travel has led to a slight improved coordination and efficiency of in-country visits among ALBs, with some instances of delivery partners implementing joint trips (with multiple objectives) and on occasion representing one another at the country-level. FOA and GOAP have also stated that the purpose of trips should serve several objectives and should support a range of OCPP activities, wherever possible.

3.3.3 Factors hindering efficiency

Finding 10: A range of factors have led to delays in OCPP implementation, reducing the efficiency of programme delivery. These include: lengthy delays in approvals (Defra) and procurement and planning (ALBs); ALB inexperience in sustainable development contexts; unclear communications and branding across the bilateral programme; and lack of a bilateral programme in-country presence.

Delays in approvals, procurement and planning. Lengthy delays in approvals from Defra have undermined efficiency. GOAP and FOA would have benefitted from a faster turnaround on sub-contracting and grant approval requests to provide stability in their grant funding. Implementing partners have reportedly had to develop mitigating strategies to work around this challenge. Defra, in its second Annual Review (unpublished) acknowledges it should improve the turnaround time, but based on the interviews conducted little progress appears to have been made. According to interviewees the underlying reasons for the delays in decision-making by Defra were limited staff resources and during some periods of the programme high staff turnover. The evaluators also note the lack of consistent SRO oversight and delegated authority in decision making for the programme from Defra. Understaffing is also prevalent among the ALBs according to interviewees, and concern has been expressed by stakeholders that efficiency will be a risk (particularly with Cefas) if any key positions become vacant. Recruitment freezes were also in place in ALBs which limit what the delivery partners can do to hire in the requisite expertise to efficiently and effectively deliver OCPP. As noted by one bilateral delivery team member, activities in Senegal have been delayed because they do not have the translation support and have not been able to hire translators in-country. In addition, ALB inexperience in delivering international development contexts and interventions (noted below) could have placed a higher burden on Defra to provide oversight and steer.

Delivery team members also suggested that delays have been exacerbated by the annual work planning processes, that have been described as 'reactive' and activity-based, rather than 'strategic' in nature.

¹⁹ GOAP – Delivery Chain Map (March 2024).

According to ALB personnel surveyed, 40 percent of ALB personnel interviewed through this evaluation feel the annual work planning process has not been efficient to date.

ALB inexperience in international development contexts. Stakeholders interviewed noted that the slower-than-expected progress of the OCPP may have been influenced by ALBs, which are scientific and marine regulator institutions rather than international development focused institutions. Delivery partners themselves recognise that ALB staff are not international development project managers and there is a lack of project management skills in the international development context on delivery teams. One of the delivery partners noted that unfamiliarity with working in developing countries has also been an obstacle to delivering activities, which concurs with some of the in-country stakeholders' observations. An interviewee in a coordination role noted that some of the individuals in the ALBs have experience delivering ODA initiatives, but institutionally they are not set up and do not have the frameworks and processes in place to deliver that type of programme. The interviewee also noted that Defra's ODA Hub is still new and developing, and was not designed to supplement gaps in delivery partners but rather provide guidance and support.

Unclear communications and branding across ALB delivery partners. The absence of clear OCPP programmatic branding and inconsistent messaging across ALB delivery partners has hampered efficient programme delivery. In some of the target countries (e.g., Ghana and Sri Lanka) the ALBs are presenting themselves as distinct project partners, branding themselves as individual organisations (Cefas, JNCC, MMO) rather than delivery partners of the overall OCPP. This has led to some confusion and lack of clarity amongst in-country partners who have yet to appreciate the interconnectivity of the work being delivered by the ALBs, and the differences between OCPP and the BPF.

The lack of clarity on the roles and responsibility between OCPP ALB Country Coordinators and BPF Regional Coordinators is somewhat hindering efficient programme delivery. Some in-country stakeholders are confused between the two roles. The BPF Regional Coordinators themselves see their roles as advisory and helping to make connections and they are unsure to what extent they should be involved in work planning of OCPP. Both the stakeholders interviewed and the coordinators themselves suggested a Terms of Reference (ToR) should be drafted to differentiate the roles and responsibilities of the two roles.

Lack of a bilateral programme in-country presence. The lack of the bilateral programme's in-country presence hampers the continuity of activities according to a majority of in-country and delivery partner stakeholders. While ALB visits can galvanize action in-country, as soon as they leave there is a loss of momentum leading to delays in implementation or a loss of direction for the partners. For in-country visits, large teams visiting government officials can be overwhelming, particularly in countries with limited staffing and capacity and where government representatives already have numerous other donor and development programmes to interact with (this is particularly the case in Ghana and Mozambique). The intermittent presence delivery model also affects relationship building: partners reported that it takes time to develop relationships with in-country stakeholders and interviewees highlighted the importance of face-to-face interactions for developing trust and good working relationships with government bodies. Sri Lanka is the only programme country that benefits at this point from a British High Commission hosted OCPP programme officer to date and a majority of interviewees suggested efficiency could be enhanced with the assignment of in-country coordinators in all bilateral partnership countries.

3.3.4 Extent governance arrangements are fit for purpose

Finding 11: Misunderstandings on the remit, roles and responsibility of bilateral programme delivery partners is affecting the effectiveness of the programme’s governance structures. Greater SRO oversight and improved communication on Tier One responsibilities are needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery.

The OCPP Business Case states: “The programme will be managed by Defra and implementation will initially be led by our Arms-Length Bodies (Cefas, JNCC, MMO). ALBs have individual processes in place to ensure full responsibility and accountability...The central Defra team overseeing the OCPP will be ultimately responsible for delivery, with support from the wider programme management team [consisting of ALB-appointed programme managers].”²⁰ The Business Case also states that the Defra SRO will be responsible for overall oversight of the programme in line with UK Government guidance.

While responsibility of OCPP ultimately rests with Defra (and the SRO), the delivery partners have devolved responsibilities, some of which existed since the beginning of the programme per the Business Case. The current MoU between Defra and Cefas indicates that the Tier One entity is lead and in charge of programme management and certain elements of strategy (such as workplans), and that Defra is dependant on Cefas for a number of responsibilities including adherence to ODA guidance and mainstreaming GESI²¹. Feedback from delivery partners on this evaluation report indicates that the responsibilities of the Tier One entity are not uniformly understood across the bilateral programme delivery partners.

Despite this shortcoming in terms of consistent understanding of management roles and responsibilities across the bilateral programme delivery partners, the Tier One change process of 2023, initiated by Defra and the bilateral programme delivery partners, did introduce improvements to governance structures which are explained in Box 1 below.

Box 1: Governance Structures for OCPP

The Programme Management Board (PMB) — meets quarterly and is mainly focused on progress reporting from the ALBs. The PMB is not a decision-making structure per se, and does not include FOA and GOAP, who have their own formal and informal meetings, typically every quarter.

The Senior Management Board (SMB) — bring all stakeholders together quarterly (as of 2024, where previously it met every six months), including FCDO input. These meetings are important for discussing OCPP strategy and progress, and getting a senior steer on what OCPP is doing. The SMB is not a decision-making structure but provides review of the core programme design and delivery decisions for the OCPP. Once reviewed at SMB level, the Senior Responsible Officer for OCPP (SRO) will incorporate the views of the SMB to inform final programme level decisions.* The ToR for the SMB was recently adjusted to optimize efficiency, and since October 2023 FOA and GOAP representatives have participated in the SMB meetings.

²⁰ OCPP Business Case, p.71.

²¹ OCPP MoU between Tier One Cefas and Defra (section 7.1, p.19); obtained by the evaluation team on 7 August 2024 in response to stakeholder comments on the draft interim evaluation report.

Cross theme meetings at country level — are now conducted fortnightly since January 2023. Meetings are composed of the country coordinator and at least three technical ALB leads.

** The SRO retains the right to make a different decision to that advised by the board.*

The evaluation interviews revealed that the PMB is generally working well, although it only includes participation by the bilateral delivery partner ALBs and Defra. Delivery partners have stated that the inclusion of strategic partners (FOA and GOAP) into the SMB has proven highly efficient at improving communication and information sharing and has been welcomed by all parties. The cross-theme meetings are likewise valued by delivery partners, although the regularity of these meetings can vary a lot across countries (up to four months apart due to scheduling challenges).

“The OCPP team and the cross theme ALB meetings every 2 weeks are fundamental. This supports delivery. I think what I’ve seen work really well is the aquaculture lead in Cefas that brings all the aquaculture bits and pieces together.”

-ALB Country Coordinator

Even with the Tier One change process in 2023, Defra have not provided sufficient SRO oversight of the programme nor leadership in driving forward improvements to its design and delivery within the first three years of programme delivery. For example, throughout the MEL supplier’s involvement in delivery, the SRO had very limited interaction or engagement with the revision of the MEL framework and only engaged on these strategic components for final approval.

Further recommendations for improvements to OCPP governance are provided in the OCPP Year 2 Annual Review (unpublished) that cited the need for better coordination between the ALBs and the development of more cohesive, strategic work packages. The change process from 2023 has kick-started several improvements and stakeholders interviewed reported an overall improvement of coordination and improved understanding of the governance frameworks and decision-making flows. There is, however, recognition that a number of issues still need to be addressed, to improve OCPP governance. Of the ALB staff respondents for the evaluation survey, only 20 percent agreed that the arrangements were efficient, while 25 percent were neutral, and 55 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. For example, the disconnect between the ALB initiatives and strategic partner programmes (GOAP and FOA) has not yet been resolved fully. To date ALBs have not had access to the annual plans of these strategic partners. Other challenges to address include:

- There is still some confusion on what Defra needs to sign off, despite a delegated authority table. Tier One Cefas needs to make sure messages from Defra cascade down to the delivery teams for them to know who has the authority to make decisions.
- Some stakeholders feel that Cefas as a Tier One delivery partner should play a greater coordination role at country level and convey key developments up to Defra and likewise key messages from Defra to country level teams, instead of having Defra team members join numerous cross theme meetings.
- The Country Coordinator roles are not formal jobs but are rather extra responsibilities for personnel (amongst other tasks); the role may benefit from being formalised by ALB delivery partners.

- The fragmented filing of documents continues to be a challenge, with one SharePoint for each of the ALBs. Staff members expressed frustration with the inaccessibility of key information to enable learning from other projects.

In addition, more harmonisation is needed between milestone reports and the actual budget trackers. For example, the cost categories are not consistent between the milestones and the budget trackers, with the former based on OCPP logframe outputs²² that are cross-country²³, and the latter focusing on country-level expenditure (see section 3.3.5 for more information). The ALBs are anticipating that the roll out of the finalised Programme Operating Manual (POM) will provide guidance on reporting and budget tracking.

Finding 12: Delays to signing of MoUs/absence of MoUs has affected the pace and efficiency of programme delivery in some countries. Accountability mechanisms in place with partner governments are weak, in the case of bilateral programme delivery.

Delays to the signing of bilateral MoUs in Ghana, Sri Lanka and Mozambique has also reduced the efficiency of implementation. At the launch of the OCPP, Defra anticipated MoUs²⁴ with government partners to be signed with all partner governments for the bilateral partnerships. Two years into programme delivery, only Bangladesh, Belize, India and Maldives had signed MoUs, with the remaining countries experiencing barriers to signing. OCPP programme governance, on FCDO Post advice, changed its position on MoUs and now allow similar arrangements, such as a ToR between governments to suffice for programmatic activities to commence.

While MoUs have an important role to play in galvanizing action and engagement for programme delivery, there is no evidence to suggest that signed MoUs advance accountability. For example, the MoU with the Maldives is very broad, with no obligations relating to funding or support is detailed in the document. Country-level workplans are anticipated to provide a mechanism for accountability, although in their current format, these country-level plans provide only a general outline and are not linked to Theories of Change, without targets or timelines in many instances. In the Maldives, the work plan was shared with the government, but not formally endorsed. Therefore, there is a lack of frameworks in place, supporting accountability with partner governments. For the bilateral programme, only contracts with service providers, such as NGOs working on behalf of OCPP, stipulate clear outputs, timelines and reporting mechanisms.

Strategic partners FOA and GOAP deliver many of their initiatives through contracts, with accountability established through clearly documented deliverables and guidance on financial management. MoUs are used by GOAP to assist in formalising the relationship with the government and not the contractor. This aids delivery, not for accountability purposes but instead to enable a formalised route for project management and involvement of government. Sub-contracting competent parties to deliver work appears to have been an efficient way to accelerate programme delivery. FOA partners in Ghana stated that the contracts worked well in keeping service delivery on track. Having well defined roles and responsibilities ensured effective accountability and tracking of results. Similarly to FOA, GOAP's work is not underpinned by MoU, but is instead guided by a workplan with a partner government or contracts with service providers. GOAP

²² Logframe from Y1 and Y2

²³ The remainder of the cost categories in the milestone reports are staff costs, programme management costs, frontline delivery costs, overheads, travel and MEL. In the budget trackers, the categories are country costs (staff and subcontractors); project management; programme management and leadership; MEL; emergency response, communications and cross cutting.

²⁴ Or similar signed agreements between the UK Government and partner country governments.

also uses partnership agreements in pilot countries to provide guidance on their partnership arrangements with governments.

3.3.5 Extent of engagement with local communities, in-country and local delivery partners, national and local government

Finding 13: Engagement of OCPP with local communities has been limited; in-country and local delivery partners are more strongly engaged by the strategic partners, however ALBs are increasingly utilising local delivery partners to support programme delivery. The extent of ALB engagement with partner country governments varies, depending on the country and the thematic area.

Local community engagement in programme activities for the bilateral programme is determined by the thematic workstream being delivered. For example, MSP activities will involve a degree of community consultation; MPA and Managed Access reviews work directly with local fishers or local communities; activities related to marine pollution, such as Abandoned, Lost and Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG), or waste collection, will engage with local fisherfolk and/or communities. FOA's Blue Food Partnership (BFP) has a high a high degree of local community and small-shareholder farmer involvement through its aquaculture value chain work. Overall, however, community engagement in delivery of the OCPP programme has been low, largely due to the design of the programme as a capacity building and technical assistance facility directed to government, science institutions and key marine organisations.

Learning from the experiences of the strategic partners, the Year 2 (FY 2022/23) Annual Review (unpublished) reports that '*...all delivery partners have been encouraged to increase local / in-country delivery where appropriate*'. As the programme has progressed, the ALBs (with the exception of MMO, who cannot subcontract in a majority of cases) are increasingly working with local delivery partners in order to accelerate the implementation of activities. When asked the extent to which these in-country partnerships were related to efficient delivery of the programme, 65 percent of survey respondents felt the partnerships in-country were working well.

3.3.6 Does OCPP represent Value for Money?

Finding 14: There have been a number of challenges to VfM notably in relation to economy and efficiency. Nonetheless, good practice examples are emerging that can potentially drive stronger VfM going forward.

In assessing VfM, a judgment on the balance of 4Es is sought — Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity. While it is difficult to conclude on VfM with certainty at this point in the programme, nonetheless the interim evaluation has distilled a number of key findings which are set out below.

Procurement: Procurement has experienced delays and has been implemented at a slower pace than expected. This is anticipated to pick up in the coming financial year, with high impact items such as subcontracting for ACU reportedly ready to go. Currently each ALB is responsible for managing their own procurement activities for a majority of OCPP requirements and each ALB has their own processes/policies specific to procurement that work under the overarching public sector procurement regulations. Cefas manage the Procurement Working Group for the bilateral component of OCPP, comprising all three ALBs that allows the delivery partners opportunity to consider joint procurement activities. For identified joint procurement opportunities, Cefas manage the process and act as the contracting authority, with JNCC and MMO as authorised users of the contract. A recent example for this is the translation service that was procured to be utilised by all three ALBs

The major risks for procurement of suppliers in beneficiary countries are to do with insurances (low coverage) and financial stability and standing and owing to this, the due diligence stage of any procurement is the lengthiest. While fraud was also acknowledged as a risk, it was reported that there has not been an instance of that so far. This could be in part due to the low levels of subcontractor procurement by the ALBs thus far. Judging by their cost categories, procurement activity seems to be lower in value for FOA. These two delivery partners feature grant making modalities. Finally, regarding procurement, asset registers were recently introduced, arguably late in the programme.

Key cost categories: The share of key cost categories and the changes in those over time are an important VfM Economy consideration. Among the cost categories of the OCPP, staff costs appear high across all components. This is mainly explained by the delivery modalities and the nature of projects. For example, across the ALBs, the peer-to-peer model is applied, which is essentially knowledge transfer that involves scientific and marine management expertise and policy work with government cadres in a particular field. Share of spending through sub-contractors has been low through the ALBs but is picking up in the coming financial year, which will lead to improved cost efficiencies. For GOAP, the staff costs for 2022 – 2026 are estimated to be approximately 50% of the budget. FOA's model is also technical assistance heavy as per the nature of the programme prioritising influencing. FOA's biggest key cost category is staff and TA costs (which were between 39%-64% across their projects)and sub-contracts/ grants to its partners.

Another key cost category, particularly across the ALBs, is 'overheads' which is routinely described as non-project attributable costs. Across OCPP's implementing partners, there are differences as to what is included under this category of expenditure. The share of overheads as a share of the partners' total OCPP annual expenditure has varied from 4.5 percent (GOAP),²⁵ up to 38.5 percent (Cefas), with the other partners' overheads within this range, generally at the lower end. A benchmarking review of overheads rates was commissioned by Defra and will report on the findings in the coming months (Defra programme management confirmed that the review is ongoing at the time of writing). The government response to ICAI is as follows: "VfM will be further assured through a review of corporate overheads drivers and rates charged by the in the context of the BPF".²⁶

Financial reporting: More harmonisation is required between milestone reports and budget trackers used by the bilateral programme delivery partners; e.g. the ALBs. The budget trackers available for review by the evaluation (for Years 1, 2 and 3) are focused on the country level expenditure, while the milestones are presented based on logframe outputs²⁷ and are cross-country²⁸. The milestone reports for Year 4 (FY 2024/25) have been changed to align with the new logframe outcomes and outputs. At times, however, the information provided in ALBs' milestone reports can be confusing. For example, for one ALB organisation, 15 percent was presented as overheads for the milestones of FY 2024/25, which would constitute a

²⁵ Described as 'admin overheads' in budgets.

²⁶ HMG, "ICAI review of the Blue Planet Fund: Government response," 19 January 2024; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/icai-review-of-the-blue-planet-fund-government-response/government-response-to-the-independent-commission-for-aid-impacts-review-of-the-blue-planet-fund-november-2023> .

²⁷ As per the previous logframe of OCPP from Y1 and Y2

²⁸ The remainder of the cost categories in the milestone reports are staff costs, programme management costs, frontline delivery costs, overheads, travel and MEL. In the budget trackers, the categories are country costs (staff and subcontractors); project management; programme management and leadership; MEL; emergency response, communications and cross cutting.

significant reduction from the previous years. When asked to clarify, the interviewees suggested that this was not yet agreed and will be reviewed with Defra.

Spending/ fund utilisation: Programme spend has been slow for ALBs during the first three years of programme delivery²⁹ but is anticipated to pick up speed in the coming months. However, spend is still below full utilisation of available funds for the next two financial years. As per SMB information of June 2024, it is projected that ALBs will spend 90% of their total allocation by the end of OCPP³⁰. At the end of year 3 (FY 2023/24), ALBs have spent £22m against a budgeted £30m, which represents 73 percent utilisation. FOA and GOAP have had better spending performance, with FOA achieving the smallest variances between budgets and actual expenditure.³¹

In terms of overall fund utilisation at OCPP, as of June 2024, £35.5m was spent so far³², which constitutes 54 percent of the original BC allocation of £65m. One further point to note is that OCPP is seeking an uplift of 10 percent for the total programme allocation, which will bring the total to £71.9m. As the programme is well past the halfway mark, in terms of time lapsed, spending performance will need to improve, particularly for ALBs. Feedback from interviewees indicated that the lower-than-expected performance was to do with slow in-country engagements and responses, as well as a number of high impact procurement items being finalised only recently, which will be reflected in the coming periods. A review of the recent ALB milestone reports, particularly for frontline delivery costs and downstream partners funding share, shows that these may still be optimistic estimates. The OCPP sub-contractor supplier data shows that around £4m has been committed in contracts by the ALBs since 2022. However, in Cefas milestone budget for FY24/25, £5.2m³³ is allocated to 'frontline delivery costs' which are 'sub-contractors and consumables'. It is difficult to conclude with confidence that over £5m can be expedited over the course of this current financial year by Cefas, while much smaller amounts have been contracted³⁴ for all three ALBs over 2.5 years³⁵.

Leveraging of additional funds: GOAP and FOA have been successful in leveraging additional funds. GOAP has leveraged >£5.8m (which is a significant achievement compared to the GOAP spend to date of ~£5.5m). Furthermore, two of FOA's projects have managed to leverage funding from other donors, to continue without additional Defra funding. Other examples of economy and efficiency that are potential VfM drivers include:

- The recruitment of BPF regional coordinators is leading to improved coordination and efficiency of operations;
- Cross-ALB working groups are enhancing joint planning and implementation (including travel and procurement); for example, given that the travel component of the ALB budgets has been sizeable³⁶ the travel working group is likely to lead to cost efficiencies;

²⁹ In many cases, lower than 80%.

³⁰ As per SMB figures made available in June 2024, ALBs will have spent £50m against the original BC allocation of £55m (up to end of FY 2023/24).

³¹ For FOA, the evaluation team only has project-level budget information i.e. information on each of the four FOA projects.

³² As per Defra programme management reporting at SMB, 13 June 2024. This amount includes all programme components, including the MEL unit.

³³ This corresponds to 55% of the budget of the year in question (Cefas Milestone Report for FY24/25 as of March 2024).

³⁴ They are not all spent. Committed and contracted amounts were presented.

³⁵ A number of the procurements have contract end date for 2026 and 2027.

³⁶ For example, at 6% of the total budget for Cefas, as per the '24-'25 milestone report and 7% for JNCC in the '23-'24 milestone report.

- The recently reorganized Tier One structure has the potential to deliver cost efficiencies;
- Annual planning meetings (with participation of all OCPP partners) are streamlining communications, planning and the sharing of knowledge and information; and
- The use of high quality local sub-contractors is proving efficient, as exemplified in the case study countries such as Sri Lanka and Ghana. Suppliers in Sri Lanka indicated that the procurement process was efficient with short turnaround times. Similarly, in Ghana, out of the 12 'completed' activities, six were delivered directly by local sub-contractors alone, or through a collaboration between ALBs and sub-contractors. Another example of cost efficiency from nearly all case study countries was the use of training of trainers modalities. This is a positive efficiency finding, as it shows the team utilising in-country, and/ or regional expertise to deliver the work, saving on travel costs and international fees, as well as local capacity building for delivery of similar work in the future.³⁷

Finding 15: OCPP is already delivering results that, in time, are likely to deliver significant benefits. However, there is not enough evidence to conclude at this stage whether these have generated returns above and beyond the amount spent. GESI reporting, or the cost of inclusion in the programme has not yet been addressed by OCPP partners. VfM indicators need to be established to ensure VfM can be monitored and achieved.

At the design phase, VfM at OCPP was articulated through a quantified economic analysis in the Business Case. Three main benefits were identified for OCPP (livelihood improvements, health improvements and marine environment benefits). For each benefit, themes were also mapped out (marine pollution, marine biodiversity and sustainable seafood) as to how those would contribute to the realisation of the benefit. The Business Case offered Benefit to Cost Ratios of 2.9:1 to 9:1³⁸ which indicated significant value for money. It was also taken into consideration that these strands would not work in isolation, and there may be positive complementarities for example, improvements in water quality will improve the outcomes for aquaculture health. For FOA and GOAP fund allocations, separate Business Cases were prepared. They also used quantitative economic analyses similar to the OCPP which identified Benefit Cost Ratios (BCR) and Net Present Value (NPV). For GOAP, a BCR of 2.4:1 was estimated³⁹. Regarding FOA, it was estimated that, based on data from similar projects, the returns could be between 3.1:1 and 12:1⁴⁰.

Assessing whether programme delivery is currently on track to achieve these benefits and VfM ratios is challenging at this time. However, there are examples of results that are likely to generate significant value at portfolio, implementing partner and at country levels, such as the ocean accounts, seafood loss and waste reduction, marine pollution emergency response work or the banning of plastics in Sri Lanka, to name a few. These are likely to provide major upticks in benefits to be accrued over time, even if it is hard to demonstrate presently. Some respondents were of the view that there has been an increased momentum in the last few months at OCPP for the above benefits to come to fruition.

With regard to the value of the peer-to-peer model, one view was that bilateral component of the programme (e.g. Defra and the ALBs) have not made sufficient efforts to articulate the value of that modality, which may require going beyond the existing VfM tools and assessments. Further, a commonly expressed view was that OCPP have not generated rich data sets to demonstrate its results well, which underpin

³⁷ Ghana Case Study, May 2024.

³⁸ Above break even 1:1.

³⁹ GOAP Business Case 2021, p.28.

⁴⁰ FOA Business Case Jan 2021, p.39-40.

judgments on VfM. This view also highlighted that there should be more emphasis on communication of the programme results and learnings to wider audiences. One good example to note is the OCPP Library of Products, which is at an early stage of development by the ALBs, which is likely to contribute to better knowledge management.

The data requirements to revisit the VfM calculations are high and are unlikely to be met by the existing data on OCPP results and impacts. The duration of benefits applied in economic appraisals in BPF programmes is long, often around 30 years, so that also presents a difficulty. Further, it was a particular disadvantage that the programme level ToC came considerably late in the implementation, a view shared by many programme actors. A set of VfM indicators was developed by the NIRAS OCPP MEL team, for monitoring VfM annually for OCPP. Those indicators have not yet been operationalised.

While it is widely agreed that Equity is often a cost driver, meaning that targeting the hard-to-reach groups can come at the expense of efficiency, documenting that trade-off is also important for VfM Equity. GESI reporting, or the costs of inclusion in the projects has not yet been addressed by OCPP partners.

3.4 Effectiveness

Finding 16: The level of effective implementation of OCPP varies across target countries and across delivery partners. The programme is beginning to move towards positive change: sufficient evidence exists that OCPP will make significant contributions to outcome level change for identified emerging achievements. However, a concentrated effort to convert outputs to outcome level results is needed through careful strategic planning that considers the viability of activities delivered in country.

3.4.1 Extent OCPP is likely to achieve outcomes

The effectiveness criterion explores the extent OCPP is making progress against the programme's outcome and intermediate outcome as articulated in the revised ToC (see Box 2). The interim evaluation applied contribution analysis to assess whether the evidence indicates that change is happening as envisaged in the ToC, and the extent that these observed changes can be attributed to OCPP implementation. Information from the case study countries, data from activity tracker analysis, and interviews with ALBs and strategic partners enabled the extraction of key results of the OCPP to date. These results are ranked by applying the following levels:

- **Outcome level change** — improved policies, regulations and practices are adopted and fully implemented.
- **Intermediate outcome (IO) level change** — improved policies, regulations and practices are adopted, but not yet implemented.
- **Potential IO level change** — based on the activities delivered by the programme stakeholders at least intermediate outcome level change is expected during OCPP implementation.

The interim evaluation identified more than 23 key results of OCPP to date. Table 3.1 gives a summary of these results, which are also presented in more detail in Annex 7 where further information is provided, including a description of the change, its significance and OCPP's contribution to the change.

Box 2: OCPP Outcome and Intermediate Outcome Statements

Outcome: *Partner country stakeholders take action to effectively manage and protect their marine environments.*

Intermediate Outcome: *Improved policies or regulations and practices established for sustainable marine environment management and emergency response with enhanced awareness, capabilities and inclusive governance in place to implement and enforce them.*

Source: OCPP Theory of Change

Table 3.1 Summary of key results of OCPP to changes or potential changes to the management of the marine environment, by theme, and by significance and contribution to change (Sources: country case studies, stakeholder interviews, FOA evaluation report.)

Case Study Country/ Strategic Partner	# Key results and themes	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to Change	Change level
Belize	1 Pollution 1 Seafood 1 Cross-theme	High	Medium - High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Outcome level change • 2 Intermediate Outcome level changes
Ghana ⁴¹	1 Pollution 1 Seafood 1 Biodiversity	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 <i>Potential Intermediate Outcome level change</i>
Maldives	1 Pollution/ER 5 Biodiversity ⁴²	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Outcome level change • 4 Intermediate Outcome level change • 1 <i>Potential Intermediate Outcome level change</i>
Sri Lanka	2 Pollution/ER 2 Pollution/ER 1 Biodiversity	Medium-High	Low - High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Outcome level change • 2 <i>Potential Intermediate Outcome level change</i> • 1 Intermediate Outcome level changes
FOA	3 Seafood 1 Cross-theme	Medium- High	Medium-High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Outcome level change • 3 <i>Potential Intermediate Outcome level change</i>
GOAP	1 Biodiversity 3 Cross-theme	Medium-High	Medium-High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Intermediate Outcome level change • 3 <i>Potential Intermediate Outcome level change</i>
Total	9 Pollution 5 Seafood 8 Biodiversity 4 Cross-theme			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Outcome level change • 6 Intermediate Outcome level change • 12 <i>Potential Intermediate Outcome level change</i>

⁴¹ The Ghana case study also includes the FOA BFP project. In this summary table that project is included under FOA.

⁴² The Maldives case study focused only on the activities taking place under the biodiversity theme, while in-country activities are also taking place on the pollution theme but are not advanced as yet.

The results show that there is a positive direction of travel for the identified changes to reach intermediate outcome and outcome change. The programme is beginning to move towards change, but a concentrated effort to convert emerging outputs to outcome level results is needed through careful strategic planning that considers the viability of activities delivered in country. The country case studies have shown relatively equal progress in each of the thematic areas. GOAP's work is mostly considered cross-theme, since ocean accounts provide data for decision making in different sectors. In contrast, the results are not equally distributed over the four causal pathways of the Theory of Change, which are the mechanisms in which the programme seeks to deliver its intervention. Capacity Building and TA is the dominant pathway contributing to most of the results, followed by Governance and Regulation and Science, Education and Knowledge Exchange. Only two results relate to the Value Chain and Market Access pathway, and these are both FOA-led projects. The low number of results in this pathway from ALB delivery could be due in part to the recent introduction of this pathway into the programme's Theory of Change and subsequent addition to the Activity Tracker. The evaluation team recognises that many ALB-delivered activities are focused on value chains and expect the number of outputs in this pathway to rise in reflection of more accurate programme reporting.

The significance of the changes brought about by these results ranges from medium to high, with some intermediate outcome and outcome level results making important positive change to address challenges and needs within the partner countries. To date, five results have been identified at outcome level: two in Sri Lanka with the ban on plastics and the Emergency Response work, one result in Maldives in Emergency Response, and one project from FOA (Supply Chain Risk Tool) – see Annex 7. It is worth noting that OCPP's marine pollution work was built on the foundations started by CLiP. All of these initiatives have achieved an outcome level change, where policies, regulations or improved practices are being implemented. It is noteworthy that the effective changes brought about by the implementation of policies and regulations is not exclusive to governments. For example, outcome level change is being achieved in FOA's SFLW project by a cluster of private companies taking action, not government institutions. Likewise, in the Maldives, it is local councils and resort owners, in addition to the Maldives Government, who are utilising the procedures for effective MPA management planning and development.

The contribution of OCPP towards these changes range from low to high. While most of the changes are the result of collaboration between OCPP and local partners, the financial means to implement activities has generally been provided fully by OCPP. An exception is the result in Sri Lanka on the ban of plastics, which is scored as low in OCPP contribution, yet high in significance. This is due to OCPP's support being focused towards the development and dissemination of awareness raising materials, which is a small component within a process of policy development and enforcement, yet crucial to make it effective. In most results, however, OCPP's contribution is high, consisting of supporting a number of activities that together bring about the change. With six results at intermediate outcome level change, it can be expected that more outcome level change will have been achieved and will be attributable to the OCPP by completion of its term in 2026 as envisaged in the ToC.

Only a few of the programme's current Theory of Change assumptions are holding in practice, depending on the delivery partner. Assumptions are the conditions that must be met in order for the programme to achieve the intended results. When assumptions are not being held, or actualised, this is an indication that the programme's ability to achieve its objectives is at risk. The table in Annex 6 applies a RAG rating to assumptions at each level; those flagged as 'amber' or 'red' need to be reviewed by OCPP programme teams and considered for in planning processes.

Table 3.2 Overview of Outcome level results to date (Sources: country case studies, interviews, FOA evaluation report)

Delivery Partner / Initiative / Country	ALBs				FOA
	Belize	Maldives	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	Supply Chain Risk Tool
Significance of Change	High	High	High	High	Medium
Contribution of OCPP to Change	High	High	Low	High	Medium
Theme	Marine Pollution	Marine Pollution – Emergency Response	Marine Pollution	Marine Pollution – Emergency Response	Sustainable Seafood
Result	Laboratory analyses capacity and capabilities enhanced to implement policies, two new MicroFTIR microscopes installed to support microplastics and other pollutant analysis.	OCPP brought together stakeholders to review international conventions and look at gaps in policy and procedures. An action plan with priorities was produced. Training has been delivered online.	Bans on manufacturing and sale of single-use plastics.	Sri Lanka has established a command unit, trained officers and developed an oiled wildlife response plan. They have started taking steps towards ratification of 10 conventions. MIEPER has made a commitment to regional coordination.	Tools in place for companies to assess their risk of IUU fishing within their supply chain and take action; data solution used by enforcement agencies, and a coalition of governments in APEC region committed to coordinating action against IUU.
Outcome level attainment	<i>Partner country stakeholders take action to effectively and sustainably manage their marine environments</i>	<i>Policies and practices are effectively implemented by partner countries, with strengthened preparedness to respond to emergencies.</i>	<i>Policies and practices are being implemented by partner country.</i>	<i>Policies and practices are effectively implemented by partner countries, with strengthened preparedness to respond to emergencies.</i>	<i>Improved data and knowledge. Governments utilising the data generated to implement action.</i>

3.4.2 Internal factors influencing effectiveness

Finding 17: The achievement of bilateral programme objectives has been hampered by the intermittent presence model of delivery, the geographical breadth and thematic range of the portfolio, and the lack of an effective MEL system.

Bilateral partnership delivery is characterised through periodic in-country visits (the intermittent presence delivery model) where a majority of the technical assistance is delivered when the ALB teams are present in country. This is supplemented by online and remote work once ALB teams leave, though evidence indicates that in many countries, remote work is ineffective and significantly slows delivery. This was raised as an issue by a majority of in-country stakeholders in the case study countries. The lack of engagement with appropriate stakeholders across activities hinders the effectiveness of those activities (particularly those that are anticipated to be adopted or continued by in-country partners independently of the OCPP and in the long-term). Some stakeholders commented that they could not comprehend why the bilateral programme model of delivery was considered appropriate for effective programme delivery. The lack of in-country presence was cited by in-country stakeholders and ALB delivery team interviews as ineffective for developing the appropriate relationships with in-country stakeholders necessary to support the delivery of programme objectives.

Nonetheless, the dedication and motivation of the ALBs is recognised. When the ALBs *are* undertaking in-country visits, they tend to serve multiple objectives, and their use of hands-on approaches has been appreciated by in-country stakeholders. In addition, in-country stakeholders stated that the ALBs add value to stakeholders through their high calibre technical expertise and delivery of trainings. For example, early activities in Ghana included a capacity building activity and awareness raising workshop delivered by MMO on MSP. Stakeholders reported an increase in capacity of in-country partners through improved connectivity and network building between stakeholders.

The delivery model of the strategic partners has involved the use of in-country delivery partners from the outset, with more in-country presence and engagement when required. Within these partners, the stature of WEF and WRI (in FOA projects) has been cited by stakeholders as particularly effective in mobilizing the engagement of a range of stakeholders in OCPP activities, from government agencies to local organisations. In addition, their standing enables improved access to parties and information that can be otherwise challenging to reach. For example, in FOA's Blue Recovery Hubs research they were able to pull together data from sources that are hard to access for most stakeholders and engaged high level stakeholders from ministries and UN agencies in their consultations.

GOAP's delivery model has also been credited by interviewees as being effective. The progress of GOAP's work in the promotion and piloting of ocean accounts is attributed to a secretariat and its associates proactively approaching countries or regional bodies that already have an interest in the development of sustainable or national ocean plans or have otherwise expressed an interest in ocean accounting to inform decision making. This accelerates results and these 'early adopter' countries can then be used as exemplars to leverage interest and engagement in other countries. GOAP also utilizes local expertise where possible, including local NGOs, scholars, and the regional Communities of Practice, and utilise earlier adopters of GOAP to help deliver their experience in other project locations.

Some of the ALB and strategic partners interviewed felt that the OCPP is very fragmented geographically and is thematically too broad in scope, arguing a greater focus would benefit the quality of programme delivery and the attainment of outcomes. Thematically, the programme works in three areas, and within them a number of work streams exist. For example, the pollution theme includes workstreams on marine pollution, water quality and emergency responses. One country may have all these themes, and numerous sub-themes active at once. One ALB staff member noted that after the scoping phase it would have been more appropriate to reduce the

anticipated activities and allow the partners to get deeper into specific themes. One of the BPF Regional Coordinators concurred that OCPP should be focused on fewer deliverables and have a clear and visible line of impact. Geographically, the countries of focus are fragmented and far-reaching, and interviewees noted that (with the exception of the Pacific) there was little clustering of countries or regional engagement that would have enabled regional learning and sharing.

The lack of a robust MEL framework that underpins the entire programme was not established at the beginning of the bilateral programme. The two multilateral components had more established MEL structures. GOAP worked with a number of self-defined indicators related to the areas and ecosystems covered by ocean accounts and is redesigning their MEL systems to improve systematic data collection against the new OCPP reporting framework. Similarly, FOA established their own MEL system at the launch of its projects and was able to collect outcome indicator results after three years against an FOA-specific logframe, which was later aligned to the OCPP programme-level logframe. It is hoped going forward with the revised and strengthened MEL framework will help address the shortcomings in OCPP's previously inadequate MEL systems, which has hampered the reporting of results and an assessment of effectiveness.

"The ToC and logframe have come way too late [though] it's great we have them to give purpose and direction."

-ALB senior staff member

3.4.3 External factors influencing effectiveness

Finding 18: While complementary initiatives in the donor and development community are creating an enabling environment for OCPP, delivery has been impacted by the fact that some in-country government personnel have limited availability to contribute to OCPP activities, exacerbated by political and economic factors. ALB personnel noted that this has sometimes resulted in OCPP supplementing government capacity rather than building it.

The OCPP is not working in isolation in the programme countries, and there are complementary Initiatives active across programme sites. For example, initiatives related to ocean accounting in OCPP countries (and beyond) are receiving funds from UN institutions, Australian Government, World Bank, and others. Protected area management is being advanced through the IUCN Green List initiative in multiple OCPP countries like Belize and the Maldives. These (and other) donor and development initiatives are complementary to the OCPP and further advance an enabling environment for the effective implementation of OCPP activities and resultant outcomes and impact. In some instances, these initiatives are also leveraging the outputs of the OCPP into wider programmes. For example, the Maldives has a number of donor funded programmes in the marine environment sector, one of which has contracted a local NGO to use the OCPP/MoCCEE's MPA management guide in six MPAs.

In-country government staff are a central component of programme delivery and can bring vital capacity to support programme implementation. However, they suffer from capacity constraints as well as other commitments and mandates that compete with OCPP for time. ALB personnel noted that this has sometimes resulted in OCPP supplementing government capacity rather than building it. High staff turnover in government agencies, and staff often absent due to other commitments or overseas studies have also been given as factors limiting the availability of an already small pool of experts. In Belize, stakeholders suggested that the biggest risk to the achievement of programme objectives were personnel rotations in government departments and the lack of time availability of in-country stakeholders to deliver their side of the work.

Elections are notorious for temporarily paralyzing work in the public sector, and when held in OCPP countries, by extension the OCPP is stalled for periods of time. This has affected all delivery partners. For example, the implementation of FOA and GOAP were both on hold for some time in Fiji after the December 2022 elections. The recent presidential (2023) and parliamentary (2024) elections in the Maldives brought a change in government,

and such changes can also have profound effects on programme implementation (where new individuals take key positions, and institutional memory can be lost). Therefore, events such as elections or outbreaks of political unrest, that are far beyond the influence of the programme, need to be carefully navigated to ensure the smooth continuity of programme deliverables where possible. It is noteworthy that OCPP has not yet planned to conduct political economic analysis to understand the impact of the elections that will take place in 2024 in bilateral partnership countries.

3.5 Impact

3.5.1 Likelihood of achieving intended impact

OCPP’s impact statement per its refreshed ToC is as follows “Better sustainable management of the marine environment and biodiversity in partner countries will enhance marine dependent livelihoods and the wellbeing of those that depend on them, sustainably, equitably, and inclusively”⁴³. As of December 202, the programme has three impact indicators which are set out in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3: OCPP logframe impact indicators

OCPP Logframe Impact Indicators	
1	Area of marine environment under sustainable management practices due to OCPP (ha)
2	<i>_Proxy indicator on improvement in marine dependent livelihoods and wellbeing to be confirmed.</i>
3	Transformational change in partner countries supported by the programme (ICF 15)

Source: OCPP Logframe

Thus far, no baseline data was collected by the programme on its impact indicators. Additionally, no targets/milestones were set for impact in OCPP’s original logframe. The 21/22 Annual Review suggested that the measurement of impact indicators should begin mid-way through OCPP. The Business Case for OCPP indicated that realisation of some benefits were expected in 2-5 years and full benefits in 5-10 years. This is consistent with findings below, where the more mature bilateral partnerships in countries which were also supported by CLiP are demonstrating greater likelihood of impact, as they have had more time for results to progress.

While all delivery partners can deliver impacts across the three impact indicators, GOAP’s work is most aligned to influencing impact indicator 1, FOA’s is most directly aligned to impact indicator 2, and all delivery partners can potentially deliver transformational change. As the programme is now in its last two years of delivery, consolidation and harvesting of the impacts of the work delivered over the three years is increasingly important. This means that focusing on the activities that need to be delivered including policy influencing activities that might drive output level results into higher level change.

⁴³ Since OCPP, FOA and GOAP each have their own business cases, their impact statements were all initially different. However, there is now consistency in the impact statement of all three programmes (as stated above) following the discussions with the ALBs, FOA and GOAP on the Theory of Change for the integrated OCPP programme as a whole -leading to one overarching impact for all components of the programme.

Finding 19: GOAP is demonstrating potential to deliver a strong contribution to impact indicator #1. The ALBs can also potentially make a contribution, although likely results are contingent on more work being done for the impacts to be realised.

As a result of Defra investment, GOAP partners have established accounts for 111 MPAs spanning 29m ha of ocean. Accounts established for eleven different types of eco-system including 92K ha of coral reefs, 10.5m ha of mangroves and 770,000 ha of kelp forest habitat. Ocean accounts provide decision-makers with an inventory of multi-disciplinary data, enabling them to make data-driven, evidence-based decisions that are crucial for sustainable ocean planning and management⁴⁴. In addition, there is potential for ALB's work to contribute to this impact indicator, although more work needs to be done for these impacts to materialise:

- Belize – OCPP supported the strengthening of Belize's MPA network by reviewing data collected within MPAs, collaborating with IUCN to support the Belize Government to Green List their MPAs and supporting a local NGO to complete the annual management effectiveness evaluation for Belize's MPAs on behalf of the Fisheries Department.
- Sri Lanka – OCPP supported METT-4 assessments of three MPAs (five supported in total) will be taken forward by Sri Lanka Coral Reef Initiative strengthening future management of coral reefs.
- Sri Lanka – OCPP contributed via research and data gathering on marine pollution including plastic pollution, as well as paid for all multi-media campaigns⁴⁵ connected with the ban on certain types of plastics, which fed into the decisions on the bans as well as contributing to public adherence to the bans once introduced by government.
- Ghana – early stage but likely that if the Marine Spatial Development for Ghana's Western Region (covering all six western districts) is adopted and implemented, it would allow the government to sustainably manage their marine environment. This is the same for the nascent MSP work in Sri Lanka.
- Maldives – Finalised National Management Plan for Protected and Conserved Areas and SMART Management Plans for two MPAs - *if adopted and used* (no institutionalisation) by local councils, gov agencies and resort owners would contribute to sustainable management of the marine environment. The National MPA Research & Monitoring Framework will support the incorporation of research, monitoring activities into MPA Management Plans.

Finding 20: FOA has the most direct link to improvements in livelihoods and wellbeing. For the other components of OCPP, livelihood and well-being impacts are more indirect.

In terms of impact indicator # 2, FOA has the most direct link to livelihoods and well-being via the support to improving the sustainability of blue food production and supporting developing countries to business sustainable ocean economies. The SFLW project, now completed, is deemed to be delivering impact in this area and is highest ranked in the recent FOA evaluation on potential poverty impacts. The Namibian Ocean Cluster⁴⁶ will independently of Defra funding continue to implement changes in Namibian value chains with the increased

⁴⁴The evaluation team experienced some challenges to assess comprehensively the extent of use of ocean accounts in terms of informing and shaping policy and practice due to GOAP members confidentiality requirements. One constraint is the need for the GOAP Secretariat to respect confidentiality requirements of the members and therefore it is not always possible to report to Defra on certain national activities (outcomes and engagements). Sometimes some national policy impacts are reported verbally to Defra but only after securing the consent of the members.

⁴⁵ While these campaigns were designed pre-OCPP, their roll out was paid by OCPP.

⁴⁶ The June 2024 slide pack for the SMB reported that the Namibia Ocean Cluster had now acquired legal entity status.

utilisation of seafood by-products. The BFP is also likely to generate benefits to women and vulnerable groups involved in the value chain, but to achieve this it would need to be appropriately targeted. The recent evaluation of FOA projects found that the Blue Recovery Hubs and Supply Chain Risk Tool, now continuing with other donor support, are likely to have a more indirect contribution to poverty reduction.

The work of the ALBs have good potential to make an **indirect contribution** – if the marine environment is more sustainably managed, then the livelihoods and wellbeing of marine dependent people should improve. The ToC for OCPP is based on the premise that by equipping partner countries with the skills and expertise, they will be better able to tackle challenges relating to marine pollution, biodiversity and sustainable seafood, leading to better protection and sustainable management of marine resources and in turn poverty reduction. The realisation of socio-economic impacts, on well-being and livelihoods for people from these improvements, is plausible given the benefits to tourism and fishing industries, as well as food security for marine dependent people.⁴⁷

Finding 21: The geographical footprint of the programme is not well aligned with its ODA poverty reduction requirements and the skills profile of the delivery partners has been a constraint on integrating poverty reduction and GESI considerations into programming by all partners.

The Business Case for OCPP indicated that OCPP would identify high-potential partner countries where the programme has the greatest potential to **impact on poverty** and the marine environment. However, the geographical footprint of the programme is not well aligned to its poverty ambitions⁴⁸ driven in part by being a legacy programme (adapted from CLiP/One Health), country interest, and advice from Posts where significant change can be achieved. While the balance between Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Lower Middle Income Countries (LMICs)/ Upper Middle Income Countries (UMICs) is more skewed for the strategic partnerships than the bilateral partnerships (with a higher proportion of support going to UMICs and LMICs), for the bilateral partnerships the distribution of spend is also highly skewed with LDCs receiving the smallest bilateral programme budget allocation for the first three years of the programme⁴⁹. The rationale for the geographical footprint of GOAP is based on opportunities to engage with the partner country on ocean accounting, sufficiency of partner capacity to engage and deliver efficiently. Overall, OCPP has struggled to articulate how it will contribute to poverty reduction in its target countries. This issue was also noted in the recent ICAI Review of the BPF and is accepted by HMG with plans to commission a review of the global evidence base on the linkages between poverty and protecting and restoring the marine environment in 2024.

Moreover, the extent and nature of OCPP’s socio-economic impacts, for example on **women and vulnerable groups**, is hard to unpack due to the absence of coverage of GESI dimensions in OCPP programming. OCPP ALB delivery partners repeatedly reported that their expertise lies in the marine science and environment space rather than in poverty reduction and gender and inclusion. Overall, there is a paucity of skills in the ALB teams to be able to align their technical assistance and capacity building work to poverty alleviation goals and GESI ambitions, although recently some new personnel with international development experience have been brought into the delivery partner management of the bilateral partnerships in recognition of this issue, although insufficient capacity in this area remains an issue. The

“We are marine scientists not social scientists”.
-ALB staff member

⁴⁷ Sophie Plagerson; “Marine biodiversity and poverty alleviation,”Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg K4D, 1 July 2020; [https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/articles/report/Marine Biodiversity and Poverty Alleviation/26431957?file=48081559](https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/articles/report/Marine%20Biodiversity%20and%20Poverty%20Alleviation/26431957?file=48081559).

⁴⁸ The distribution of countries across the components is as follows: Bilateral - 45% LDCs, 36% LMIC and 19% UMIC. Strategic Partnerships - LDC 17%, LMIC 33% and UMIC 50%

⁴⁹ SMB June 2024 data (three years of programme delivery by ALBs) 33% of spend in Lower Middle-Income Countries, 17% in Upper Middle-Income Countries and 11% in Least Developed Countries.

OCCP programme was assessed as GESI unaware in an assessment conducted by the ODA Hub, which is a significant failing for a programme three years into implementation. This was also reported by the ICAI review of the BPF and the delivery partners including FOA and GOAP, are taking steps to address these critical oversights (see under relevance – section 4.1).

Finding 22: Of the delivery partners, GOAP demonstrates, at this point, the greatest potential to deliver transformational change.

OCCP’s third impact indicator is about the delivery of transformational change in partner countries supported by the programme and is aligned to International Climate Finance (ICF) KPI 15. ICF KPI 15 guidance⁵⁰ defines transformational as “encouraging others to replicate and scale up successful activities in the longer term and facilitating substantive institutional and policy change towards a low carbon and climate resilient future”. Transformational changes are unlikely to materialise within an ICF programme lifetime according to the guidance. The indicator is measured by tracking the likelihood of activities being transformational by looking at the drivers of transformational change. The methodology sets out a menu of nine criteria for transformational change, which programmes can select from and apply different weightings to when seeking to measure transformational change for their own programmes. Creating an adapted transformational change scorecard (Table 3.4) and scoring the components of OCCP accordingly resulted in the findings reported below. The scores and qualitative descriptors from ICF KPI 15 guidance are set out Table 3.5.

Table 3.4 ICF KPI 15 scoring guide

Score	Description
1	Substantial evidence that suggests transformational change is unlikely or will not occur
2	Partial evidence that suggests transformational change is unlikely
3	Not enough evidence yet to assess or the balance of evidence is inconclusive
4	Partial evidence that suggests transformational change is likely
5	Substantial evidence that suggests transformational change is likely or is already occurring

Overall, the weighted scores of FOA and GOAP equate to a score of 4, which aligns with data reported by DESNZ⁵¹ with most ICF programmes (28 out of a total of 55 programmes reviewed) having partial evidence that suggests transformational change is likely. On the other hand, the ALBs scored a 3, though the assessment of the ALBs work is inconclusive at this point as there is not enough evidence to indicate that transformational change is likely. This compares with 17/55 ICF programmes scoring a 3.

⁵⁰ UK Government “Extent to which ICF intervention is likely to lead to Transformational Change”, ICF KPI 15 Methodology Note, February 2023. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63fe28fb8fa8f527fb67caf8/international-climate-finance_KPI_15_Methodology_Note_Extent_to_which_ICF_intervention_is_likely_to_lead_to_transformational_change.pdf

⁵¹ Data reported by a DESNZ representative at a webinar organised by Agulhas on measuring transformational change, 6 June 2024. [Agulhas at gLOCAL 2024: Measuring Transformational Change - Lessons from Climate Action on Vimeo](#)

Table 3.5 Transformational Change Scorecard – Draft Scores

Criteria for Transformational Change (weightings) ⁵²	OCPD Examples	ALBs		FOA		GOAP	
		Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Political will and local ownership (20%)	Political will is variable in bilateral partnership countries – good in Belize and Sri Lanka. There are elections in many partner countries in 2024. Ownership an issue in some countries due to resource constraints – Ghana, Sri Lanka. Ownership is better for GOAP as it is a membership-based organisation.	3	60	4	80	5	100
Capacity and capability is increased (20%)	Evidence does indicate that OCPD is doing valuable work to increase capacity and capability in partner countries.	4	80	4	80	4	80
Evidence of effectiveness is shared (10%)	Via GOAP’s Communities of Practice, ALBs scientific publications, conferences, training and courses	4	40	3	30	5	50
Leverage/create incentives for others to act (15%)	GOAP leveraging funding of other donors, Continuation of some of FOA/ALB work via others.	3	45	4	60	5	75
Scalability (15%)	FOA - BRH – rapid scaling of the BRH in the Pacific taken forward by WRI and OECD. BFP – scale up in Ghana and in another country to improving value chains for sea food loss and waste (if approved for Defra funding for Phase IV). No evidence of scaling from ALBs work yet although the Marnie Pollution Response work is planned to be scaled in Year 4 (FY 24/25) and will seek to scale to a regional approach and not just nationally. GOAP has potential for scale due to mainstreaming ocean accounting.	3	45	5	75	4	60
Sustainability (20%)	FOA and GOAP good. ALBs mixed – not enough attention to sustainability.	2	40	4	80	4	80
Total		19	310 (3)	24	405 (4)	28	445 (4)

3.5.2 Impact of OCPD on the UK and global marine science sectors

Finding 23: OCPD is supporting global microplastics monitoring harmonisation, approaches to measure progress in the sustainable use of marine resources and ocean accounting, and marine environment knowledge sharing, all of which have the potential for wider impact in the global marine sciences sector.

Microplastics monitoring. One of the areas that OCPD has sought to deliver a global impact is in the monitoring and detection of microplastics. OCPD is seeking to contribute to the knowledge on the spatial distributions, as well as temporal changes concerning microplastics⁵³. Due to the relative newness of microplastics research, spatial

⁵² The weightings were applied by multiplying each score by the assigned weighting. For example a score of 3 multiplied by 20% weighting led to a weighted score of 60.

⁵³ See paper “Creation of an international Laboratory Network towards global Microplastics Harmonisation”, Adil Bakir et al, 2024, www.nature.com/scientificreports

and temporal data is patchy on a global scale.⁵⁴ This work is particularly relevant at this time with the move towards a global agreement on plastic pollution (United Nations Environmental Assembly – 5.2⁵⁵).

OCPP, and its predecessor programme CLiP, supported the installation of common infrastructure to ensure harmonised guidelines to ensure development of comparable scientific outputs on the results of monitoring the presence of microplastics in the ocean. Under CLiP and consequently OCPP, several laboratories were created in South Africa, Belize, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and in the South Pacific in collaboration with project partners to ensure a harmonised approach to the generation of scientific evidence in support of regulatory actions and national/regional marine litter action plans (MLAPs). In parallel with OCPP, the University of East Anglia (UEA) initiated a similar programme of capacity building and training in microplastic analysis for Malaysia⁵⁶. This was assisted by forming the Malaysian Microplastics Network (MyMiP –<https://mmp.umt.edu.my>). One of the main focuses of CLiP, OCPP and MyMiP was to support the provision of adequate national facilities to support scientific advances in the field of microplastics. The current microplastics network is shown in figure 3.1 below.

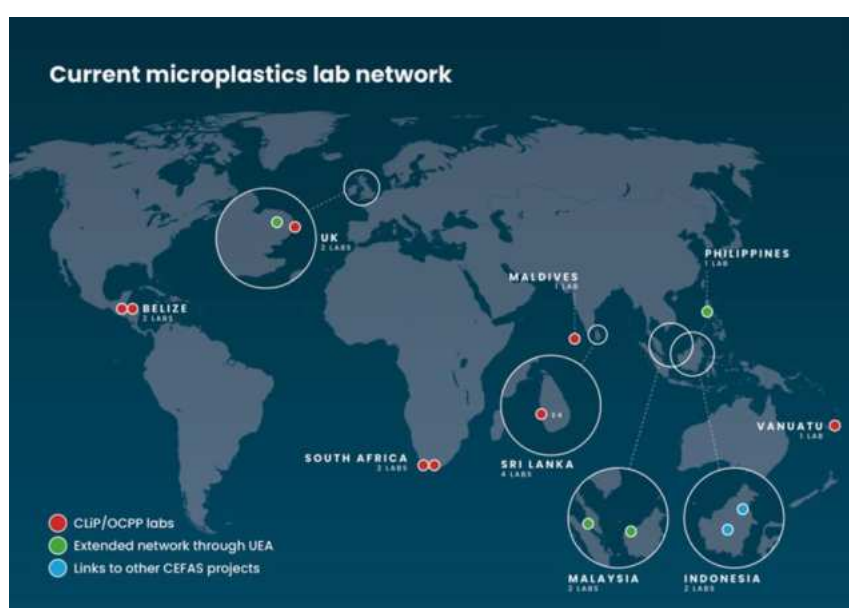


Figure 3.1: Current microplastics lab network. Source: “Creation of an international Laboratory Network towards global Microplastics Harmonisation”, Adil Bakir et al, 2024, www.nature.com/scientificreports

For such a network to be impactful on a global level, in terms of filling in knowledge gaps by gathering scientific evidence on the use of plastics, the laboratories must be used. A survey of the laboratories⁵⁷ included in the network (some funded via OCPP, some not) indicated that 14 out of 15 of the laboratories are currently in use, with the one not in use, due to a lack of human resources. The evaluation team was informed by the bilateral programme delivery teams that this has recently been rectified. In terms of research priorities, there were lots of similarities across the network, although there was one response from Vanuatu which was specifically interested in monitoring the success of a recent policy change, including the ban on single use plastic items.

In order to increase the impact of this network of national microplastics laboratory facilities, a common shared online platform, to facilitate dialogue and sharing between the different stakeholders in the network, is being developed, taking forward the work of CLiP.

Ocean accounting. One of the deliverables of Defra’s support to GOAP is the global mainstreaming of ocean accounting – outcome 4 of GOAP’s work⁵⁸. Defra’s initial investment of £1m resulted in setting a foundation for

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ UNEA-5.2 also became a historic moment as delegates agreed to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee with the mandate to forge an international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution by the end of 2024.

⁵⁶ Funded by the UK Government through the Global Challenges Research Programme.

⁵⁷ Reported in the paper “Creation of an international Laboratory Network towards global Microplastics Harmonisation”, Adil Bakir et al, 2024, www.nature.com/scientificreports.

⁵⁸ BPF investment in GOAP, Progress Report for Milestone 8, Year 2, Phase 2 and 3.

increasing requests from members and non-members for support to develop ocean accounting systems. The drivers of this increased demand include the adoption in December 2022 of the Kuming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the CBD Decision 15/24 on conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. A manifestation of this increased country demand for ocean accounts is reflected in the need to increase Phase 2 investment in GOAP with an increased allocation of £6 million and a further allocation of £7million for Phase 3 (2024-26) but with a reduction in annual funding to £2million in FY 2025/26. Some examples of the contributions of GOAP to global and regional policies on ocean accounting are set out below.

Global policy outcomes

- Specific ocean accounting commitments embedded within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): This decision of the CBD (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf>) was very directly supported by the GOAP Secretariat within scope of the UK investment in GOAP, championed by Indonesia, and involved inputs from several GOAP Member countries.
- Implementation of ocean accounting commitments in the High Level Ocean Panel Transformations⁵⁹: GOAP Secretariat and relevant Ocean Panel members (which at the time did not include the UK) were the driving force behind the Heads of Government Commitment on Ocean Accounts that underpin the headline commitment on Sustainable Ocean Plans. Implementation⁶⁰ of the Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy: A Vision for Protection, Production and Prosperity document (although predated UK's investment in GOAP), was enabled by UK investment into GOAP.

Examples of regional policy outcomes

- Nairobi Convention⁶¹: The GOAP investment has led to ocean accounting being embedded into the objectives of the Convention's Regional Ocean Governance Strategy, Western Indian Ocean (WIO) Strategic Action Plan, and associated Information Management Strategy. The Nairobi Convention is illustrative of an impact approach that GOAP is following in several regions where the bottom-up accounting activity with local institutions is nested within a broader policy discussion at national level, and then in turn at a regional level. This process is accelerating quickly now in the Pacific, for example, but is further behind the discussions in WIO context.
- Pacific Regional Cooperation: The GOAP Secretariat participated in a meeting of Foreign Affairs officials from Pacific Countries convened by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), where it was agreed that ocean accounting would be utilised as a basis for securing resources within zones of national jurisdiction, through a Pacific Islands Community of Practice that uses catalytic GOAP investment to leverage broader in-kind and cash resources from the formal Pacific regional ocean governance architecture.

Marine environment knowledge sharing. In the first year of the programme, the ALBs achieved 17 scientific papers/reports and or databases were developed or published scientific papers with support from OCPP and GOAP achieved 6⁶². In the second year, FY 22/23 the equivalent achievements were zero for ALBs, eleven FOA and ten for GOAP, which constituted an under achievement by ALBs in terms of progress against set targets, on-target by GOAP and in excess of target by FOA. ⁶³.

Of the five delivery partners, GOAP in particular strives to deliver global impact through knowledge products for example by co-creation of knowledge products that support the development of globally accepted and

⁵⁹ Ocean Panel; <https://oceanpanel.org/the-agenda/>

⁶⁰ For example in Ghana.

⁶¹ Covering 10 coastal countries Western Indian Ocean including Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique. The Nairobi Convention is a regional treaty that works to protect, manage, and develop the Western Indian Ocean.

⁶² Defra, 2021/22 Annual Review of OCPP.

⁶³ 2022/23 Annual Review.

standardised ocean accounting practices. In terms of knowledge products, it was not possible to track which products were most impactful in terms of downloads from GOAP's website (as the website used by GOAP does not support these analytics) or indeed use by stakeholders. However, an impressive range of academic, thematic and guidance documents are available on GOAP's website.

In terms of FOA publications, it produced several reports /products across their Seafood Loss and Waste, Blue Recovery Hub, Blue Food Partnership and Supply Chain Risk projects all of which are globally and freely available⁶⁴. Both the Belize and Sri Lanka case studies demonstrate OCPP generating publications, some of which were authored by in-country stakeholders supported by OCPP.

3.5.3 Extent and nature of OCPP's socio-economic impacts (including women and vulnerable groups)

Defra's ODA Hub reviewed OCPP in terms of GESI and found the programme to be GESI unaware and that more work was needed to better mainstream GESI and build capability and expertise across the Defra programme team and delivery partners. During the preparation of this evaluation, Defra and the ALBs were engaged in a number of activities in order to better embed GESI into the programme going forward. While GESI has been embedded into the new ToC and logframe for the programme, at this junction it is not yet possible to measure the socio-economic impacts of the programme as these considerations have not been embedded into its design.

3.6 Sustainability

3.6.1 Likelihood benefits will be sustained

Finding 24: GOAP and FOA are assessed to have the greatest potential sustainability at this point and have given greater consideration to sustainability; the bilateral delivery partners less so.

Defra led on the design and development of OCPP's Business Case⁶⁵ which notes that a key principle of each bilateral partnership is that they are sustainable beyond exit, with the support and upskilling of partners helping to identify and leverage funds for ongoing delivery beyond the lifetime of OCPP. FOA's Business Case aims to contribute to two priority areas of the BPF, namely improving the sustainability of blue food production and supporting developing countries build sustainable ocean economies. The sustainability of GOAP's work is very much tied to embedding ocean accounting processes in governments and also to use UK funds to mobilise other funding for ocean accounts in GOAP member countries.

⁶⁴ OCPP Annual Review 2022/23

⁶⁵ Defra, OCPP Business Case

In order to assess the likely sustainability of OCPP programmes the NIRAS MEL team developed a multidimensional sustainability scorecard covering financial sustainability, operational sustainability, clarity of ownership, retention of trained people in the sector, etc. This scorecard is shown in Figure 3.2. Findings from this scorecard assessment are reported below (Table 3.6).



Figure 3.2 OCPP's Sustainability Scorecard

There is greatest **clarity of ownership** in relation to GOAP's activities working with key institutions in partner countries and its membership-based partnerships help demonstrate commitment by partners to build in country expertise and capabilities in ocean accounts. Ownership is less clear in the case of FOA and the ALBs – with the latter sometimes suffering as a result of unclear institutional mandates and overlapping responsibilities across partner country institutions.

All delivery partners are striving to develop **capacity in their respective work areas** to ensure partner countries can take this forward independently of their support. The most recent Annual Review (unpublished) of OCPP for FY 22/23 rated OCPP's work in increasing marine scientific and/or technical capacity in partner countries as exceeding expectations (A+). However, developing sustainable capacity cannot be guaranteed particularly in resource constrained environments such as Ghana and Sri Lanka where the programme has come under pressure to "provide" capacity (i.e. inputs from delivery partners to do the work rather than support partners in doing) rather than "build" capacity.

However, as the programme is demand-led, it does help ensure sustainability as the programme is already developing capacity on topics in which ministries and agencies in partner countries have expressed interest. By working with the different levels of government – national, regional and local levels – it means that the stakeholders at the different levels have the tools and templates to take forward. Delivery partners noted that by training people in many countries, it has enriched the available capacity within OCPP countries to support the programme's work in the future.

GOAP and FOA have, to date, been most successful in **leveraging funding** from other sources to support the continuity of OCPP results. Policy influencing work is needed across all components to ensure plans, draft policies, tools etc. are adopted and implemented and in the case of GOAP that ocean accounts are used to drive evidence-based policy making.⁶⁶

The sustainability of equipment procured by OCPP was flagged as a concern in the Sri Lanka Case Study due to the severe financial and technical constraints faced by the recipient institutions in Sri Lanka and the practice of the ALBs continuing to maintain the equipment and even purchase consumables to support its use. The equipment procured by OCPP remains in UK Government ownership until the end of the programme. However, there

⁶⁶ Useful blog on this theme – ITAD <https://www.itad.com/article/you-cant-achieve-system-change-without-investing-in-advocacy/#:~:text=Policy%20advocacy%20is%20a%20widely,policy%20environment%20that%20perpetuates%20it.>

was no inventory of procured equipment available for the evaluation team to review, posing a risk to transition planning. Similarly, the sustainability of copyrighted material such as multimedia campaigns was cited as an issue as these presently reside with Cefas. OCPP support for the MPA website in the Maldives may face issues going forward as, at present, there is no provision for its maintenance. However, in the future there is an expectation that the website will generate funds for its maintenance via the use of part of the revenue generated by online bookings to PCA sites. A notable intervention to develop sustainable capacity in the marine environment sector is the OCPP scholarships which interviewees noted would have a lasting impact. However, it was also noted that sustainability of their expertise in terms of improved management of the marine environment was dependent on their retention in the sector and this could not be guaranteed. In Sri Lanka, there was an expectation that circa half of the scholars would remain in Sri Lanka working on the marine environment. It is also worth noting that there are a number of additional activities planned for OCPP scholars including a capacity strengthening programme for all scholars and a limited number of fellowships.

Table 3.6 Findings – OCPP Sustainability Scorecard

Scorecard Element	Bilateral Delivery Partners: ALBs	Strategic Delivery Partner: FOA	Strategic Delivery Partner: GOAP
1. Clear ownership			
2. Capacity in place			
3. Resources available for implementation			
4. Financial sustainability			
5. Scholars remain in sector		N/A	
6. Backed by law/policy			
7. Consumables to run equip		N/A FOA does not provide equipment	N/A GOAP does not provide equipment
8. Equipment can be maintained		N/A FOA does not provide equipment	N/A GOAP does not provide equipment
Legend	Not in any case	In some cases	In the majority of cases

GOAP is paying active consideration to sustainability. GOAP plans to establish Indonesia as a global exemplar country in terms of integrating national ocean accounting into national policy and decision making. GOAP plans to use a sustainable approach to the development of “south-south” technical collaboration capacity including pilot collaborations and creating a regional network that will build long-term capacity and reduced reliance on

ODA support. The ambition is to enable Indonesian partners to assist other countries develop their own ocean accounts.

As noted in the section 3.5.1 under impact, FOA projects have also been successful in accessing continuation funding for interventions which Defra has ceased to fund⁶⁷. SFLW has been completed as the Namibian Ocean Cluster has been successful as an independent body and can continue operations without donor support which illustrates confidence in likely sustainability. The sustainability of BFP after phase 3 funding cannot yet be assured – a decision on future funding from Defra was pending at the time of the interim evaluation. However, the key stakeholder for the BFP (the Chamber of Aquaculture - a key driving force for sustainable aquaculture in Ghana) noted the risk of donor funding and have elicited the buy in and support from large scale businesses through the integration of BFP components into their existing activities. An overview of findings concerning the likely sustainability of ALB’s work is set out in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Findings concerning sustainability of ALB’s work

Some examples of consideration of sustainability by ALBs	Some areas of improvement vis-à-vis sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a sustainable financing workstream/ working group by the delivery partners which looks at gaps in financing across all themes and countries. Some delivery partners have noted that the sustainable financing of MPAs was a particular challenge. Supporting the countries in sustainable financing has recently been picked up by the ALBs starting with the distribution of a questionnaire to each country to understand their needs in sustainable finance. Sustainable finance is a priority for Belize – Cefas is about to go live on a tender on sustainable finance in Belize looking at the activities supported by OCPP. Commercial models for labs, training of trainers, some good examples of sustainable interventions in the case study countries. The roll out of low cost analytical techniques for the large scale mapping of microplastics⁶⁸ is another approach taken to better ensure the sustainability of equipment procured by the programme BPF implementation plans allows other BPF programmes to take on OCCP work if required. KIs noted that there are lots of funding opportunities from the BPF which are now opening up e.g. OCEAN Call for Proposals , COAST is active in some OCCP countries such as Mozambique. Lots of other donors in space bodes well for future sustainability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited consideration of sustainability from the start of the design of interventions. More consideration needed on the implications of elections on sustainability. Sufficiency of staff in partner agencies an issue with likely sustainability in some cases. Significant resource constraints to continue the work in some partner countries. Number of signed MoUs is low, posing a risk to likely sustainability. Lack of clarity re roles and mandates can lead to challenges for the sustainability of OCCP support in some countries , e.g. SL, Fiji. Measures are needed to better safeguard retention of OCCP scholars in the sector

⁶⁷ For example, the SCRT project will benefit from Global Fishing Wise and FishWise funding and BRH from WRO/OECD.

⁶⁸ Using NR (fluorescence tagging of polymers with Nile red) – as reported in “Creation of an international Laboratory Network towards global Microplastics Harmonisation”, Adil Bakir et al, 2024, www.nature.com/scientificreports

3.6.2 Are exit/transition plans being implemented in practice?

Finding 25: Transition planning has not received sufficient attention, until recently.

Three of the four FOA projects which will no longer receive Defra funding were making forward plans and arrangements at the time of the interim evaluation to ensure their continuation. Although the transition arrangements were made late in the project cycle, the plans going forward appear viable and likely to secure the continuation of the work initially funded by Defra. An exit or transition plan has not yet been developed for the BFP.

For the bilateral partnerships, there is a draft OCPP Exit and Transition Strategy which briefly presents options concerning OCPP exits or transitions from partner countries, principles and responsibilities, communications, risks, indicators and legacy. In terms of transition planning, an assessment of these processes for closed/closing partnerships in South Africa and India was commissioned by Defra recently – this study is designed to assess the lessons from transition processes in order to strengthen these processes for other partnerships going forward.

The development of commercial models for laboratories procured by OCPP in Sri Lanka is one of the plans designed to ensure their sustainability after OCPP completion in country. It is critical that a comprehensive asset register is developed to document all the equipment procured by the programme and to support transition planning as at present no such register exists which is a concern given that the equipment and assets remain in the ownership of the British Government until after the programme ceases delivery.

Four out of 20 survey respondents indicated that there were plans for their country to have a transition strategy in the future. One respondent did not know. The remaining 15 respondents said "No we have not discussed transition strategies yet".

-OCPP Interim Evaluation Survey of ALBs

GOAP's model was built with transition planning in mind with the intention that delivery would eventually be devolved to the current countries supported.. FOA has already demonstrated ability to be able to transition work to other partners at relatively short notice but not good practice. Transition planning for BFP needs to be initiated now.

4. Conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The programme has had three full years of implementation and is now in its fourth year with 21 months until closure. It is meeting the needs of stakeholders in partner countries and filling capability gaps, likely to be left unfilled without it. The bilateral part of the programme is serving as a useful vehicle for harnessing UK's strong expertise in marine science, management and regulation, supporting partner countries build capacity and capabilities to address the challenges they face in managing the marine environment. FOA and GOAP have showcased innovative approaches and potential to scale results and leverage resources. However, some of the shortcomings of OCPP's design that have been present right from the start, such as insufficient attention on poverty reduction and consideration of GESI in intervention designs, and some inefficiencies in the bilateral partner delivery model, continue to constrain OCPP's ability to deliver on the expectations set out in its Business Case.

It has taken until Year 4 of the programme for attempts to address these shortcomings in OCPP's design to gain traction and gather impetus among delivery partners and Defra. These issues have been highlighted in past Annual Reviews and by the NIRAS MEL supplier inception report (Dec 2023). The criticism by ICAI in its recent review of the BPF (published in November 2023) of Defra's insufficient attention to poverty reduction⁶⁹ and GESI is

⁶⁹ ICAI noted that several business cases (including OCPP among others) did not provide sufficient evidence of links to poverty reduction.

essentially what provided the much needed impetus to address these critical but long standing gaps - gaps which cut across all components (bilateral as well as strategic partnerships). The ICAI Review of the BPF noted that the OCPP Business Case (along with two other programmes) was cited as an example of a business case that did not provide sufficient evidence of links to poverty reduction. The ICAI Review went on to note that this shortcoming was identified multiple times in the business case quality assurance process, but only minor changes to the text were made rather than a thorough review of the design of the programme.

Defra and delivery partners agree – the programme does need to do more in these areas. There is now a growing appetite to address the issues with plans underway to address these gaps and some useful interventions such as hiring GESI experts within delivery partners, although the pace of change to address these critical shortcomings is a concern. It now seems likely that bilateral programming for FY 2024/25 will, like earlier years, continue to remain defective in this regard, leaving only one year remaining for the programme to address these major flaws.

The complexity of the programme and the lack of development programming experience among delivery partners continue to constrain the ability of the programme to “reset” and focus on these well recognised and essential gaps. The ALBs, in particular, as marine science, management and regulation institutions have struggled to articulate a narrative that links what they are doing to improve the marine environment with poverty reduction and GESI ambitions. The programme needs to become a development programme focused on the marine science and regulation sectors, rather than essentially a marine science programme. This is a major challenge at this stage in the lifecycle of the programme – complicated further by pressures to considerably ramp up spending in the closing years to make up for underspends in the earlier years.

The absence of an ongoing in-country presence by the OCPP in bilateral partner countries is affecting efficiency of delivery and in-country stakeholders are clear – they prefer in-country presence and programmes like OCPP cannot be delivered effectively and efficiently remotely with in-country missions from time to time. An ongoing in-country presence would serve as a platform for fostering close relationships with in-country stakeholders and advocating and catalysing change to policies and practice concerning sustainable, inclusive and equitable management of the marine environment. In this closing phase of the programme, to consolidate and harvest the results of earlier work and deliver on outcomes, such in-country presence could be instrumental and catalytic in OCPP realising its outcome level potential.

To deliver systemic/transformational change in the management of the marine environment, policy influence is a must. At present, the current bilateral programme model is somewhat defective in driving forward with partner country stakeholder momentum behind key policy reforms/changes in practice. FOA and GOAP use different delivery models more aligned to systemic change ambitions and driving scalability/paradigm shifts – for example in mainstreaming use of ocean accounting. In the final phase of OCPP, it is important to take stock, consolidate and reflect on where can the programme influence policies/practices, building on its earlier work. It will be important for the delivery teams to use the Theory of Change as a strategic planning tool to guide the progression to outcomes and impact. It is clear from the effectiveness analysis in this interim evaluation, the programme can potentially deliver benefits and significant changes to the management of the marine environment in supported countries, but more work is needed to harvest these results; in more disabling reform environments change is unlikely to happen organically but needs to be nurtured. The bilateral delivery partners cannot assume that policy change will happen organically or that policy influence is out of scope. This would mean running the risk of outcome level change and later impact level change falling short. GOAP does not see policy influencing as out of scope but rather recognises the sensitivities around advocating for change and being viewed as a neutral partner.

There has been some positive moves to make the programme more coherent – including the appointment of Cefas as a Tier One supplier for the bilateral component and greater engagement of GOAP in discussions with

the bilateral delivery partners to join up work where possible, however it is noted that this is retrospective fitting of two individual programmes and their respective Business Cases. These have been helpful, but nonetheless internal coherence does need to be strengthened; the programme is very fragmented with a huge number of activities in forward plans for the bilateral delivery partners; partner country stakeholders are not fully clear on what is being done across the portfolio. With bilateral delivery teams using their own institutional branding in many countries rather than OCPP, there is not always an awareness by in-country partners and stakeholders that the different activities are under the umbrella of OCPP. Communications have been poor. There are however some good examples of external coherence with the ALBs creating a microplastics laboratory network with the University of East Anglia for example or working with IUCN in several countries, as well as FOA and ALBs working together in Ghana. More needs to be done to ensure the bilateral delivery partners are up to date on what other donors / development partners are doing in partner countries and sharing of knowledge products, scientific papers, guidance documents is hampered by the absence of a knowledge management system or a centralised Sharepoint. It was challenging to form a judgement on VfM due to data gaps; going forward the delivery partners need to agree a set of KPIs for VfM monitoring. Timeliness in decision-making has been an issue due in part to staff turnover and lack of staff capacity in Defra, particularly at the SRO level and that role's engagement in decision making in the programme.

It is likely that OCPP will make useful contributions to outcomes in the partner countries supported by the bilateral partnerships. There are already a number of key results, from both bilateral and strategic partnership work, which show potential to mature into outcome level change, which bodes well in terms of the programme making a difference to managing the marine environment. GOAP, in particular, shows good potential to deliver strong impacts. MEL systems need considerably more investment and capacity to engage MEL from delivery partners. While the NIRAS MEL supplier have supported all delivery partners to develop and implement the MEL framework over the past year, the programme runs the risk of "missing" key results in its reporting because of the insufficient attention and no dedicated resources for MEL in the bilateral delivery partners. To piece together the story on what OCPP is doing in each country selected for case studies was a big challenge for the evaluation team as there was no systematic monitoring of outputs or results available from the ALBs. The monitoring and reporting processes in place by FOA and GOAP are much more fit for purpose, although there are constraints in GOAP's reporting on use of ocean accounts which limits reporting on outcomes and impact.

While sustainability of FOA and GOAP's work is assessed as good, likely sustainability is considered weak at this point for the ALBs work due to insufficient attention thus far, with the prevailing view that sustainability is something that should be considered at the end of a programme. For the OCPP Scholarships to make a lasting difference to the pool of expertise and capacity in partner countries the scholars will need to remain working in the sector in their own countries; this cannot be guaranteed, even in OCPP countries like Sri Lanka where the expectation is that around half the scholars will remain engaged in marine pollution.

Overall, OCPP is a useful and valued programme with potential to deliver some significant results, with strong potential in evidence already in the case of GOAP. But the programme has suffered from starting delivery without being appropriately set up (particularly the bilateral partnerships) and from major design flaws in terms of its consideration of poverty and GESI as an ODA programme. These issues need addressing without delay, alongside an injection of appropriate development and GESI expertise and strong leadership commitment, and a drive to make big changes.

4.2 Lessons learnt

One of the objectives of MEL for OCPP is to learn about what works and what doesn't to inform governance and programmatic decisions. There is evidence that the programme is learning oriented – not least the documentation of lessons from OCPP (CLiP, and MyMip) on the harmonisation of global microplastics monitoring in a paper, the creation of a common online platform between microplastic laboratories and the organisation of stocktake days including all OCPP delivery partners are some examples of the programme sharing lessons from its work. Annual Reviews also document lessons learnt. However, opportunities have been missed for the bilateral delivery partners to learn from FOA and GOAP who show greater potential to deliver transformational change.

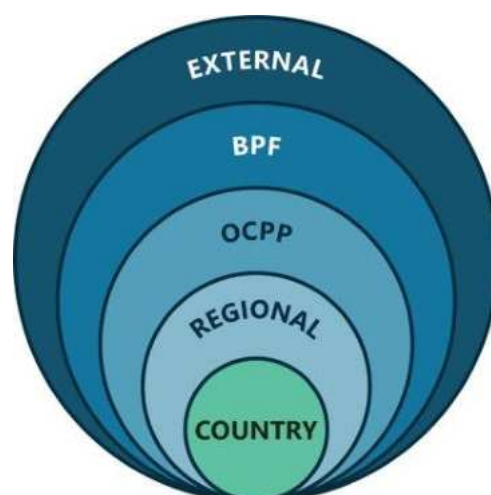


Figure 4.1 Levels of learning - OCPP

GOAP has particularly strong learning platforms with the creation of regional Communities of Practice for countries interested in developing and learning about ocean accounting – such as the Asia-Pacific Community of Practice and the new Latin-America and the Caribbean Community of Practice (which is just getting started following the Global Dialogue on Sustainable Ocean Development, July 2024).

The interim evaluation has identified lessons learnt by the programme thus far looking at a number of different levels as set out in Table 4.1 below. These lessons can be applied not only to the OCPP, but also considered by the wider Blue Planet Fund as a whole. Country case studies also include lessons learned from OCPP delivery in the case study countries.

Table 4.1 Key lessons from OCPP relevant to other programmes

Num-ber	Lessons	Applicable to:
1	GESI analysis is critical to the design of all interventions. The International Development (Gender Equality) Act of 2014 requires that development assistance must be delivered in a way that is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. OCPP paid limited attention to GESI considerations in its design and delivery due to little GESI awareness. The lesson for other programmes is that if a delivery partner does not understand the implications of their intervention on gender and inclusion, then they should commission research to better understand it to ensure GESI considerations are integrated to programme design and delivery, and that programme results are achieved equitably.	External, BPF
2	Annual planning and funding cycles can inhibit delivery of long-term system change. OCPP's bilateral partnerships demonstrated limited strategic focus in their engagement with partner countries and were activity rather than outcome focused, in part due to the absence of a robust MEL framework and multi-year planning. To ensure programmes contribute to outcomes and impact, programme teams should use the theory of change as it sets out the pathways to	External, BPF, Country level

Number	Lessons	Applicable to:
	the desired change the programme is expected to achieve and should also invest in MEL systems to enable the tracking of progress.	
3	OCP's ALB delivery partners did not pay sufficient attention to sustainability in the design of many of their interventions, missing opportunities to use sustainable approaches to capacity development, for example training of trainers, etc. To better ensure the sustainability of programme support, programme teams should consider sustainability from the start of design of the interventions and not just at the end. Failing to do so is likely to lead to inefficient resource usage and insufficient retrofitted sustainability plans, ultimately limiting the achievement of long-term sustainable results.	BPF, External
4	OCP's stakeholders noted that they were pushed to start delivery of the programme right away and that the necessary systems and processes were not in place at the outset to effectively and efficiently manage the programme, for example a MEL framework. The lesson from this, for other programmes, is that <i>"building a plane while flying it"</i> is not a good approach to ensuring a programme's systems and processes are in place and fit for purpose to effectively and efficiently monitor and manage the programme.	BPF, External
5	Many of the countries within the OCP's current portfolio are legacy countries from the previous UK Government programmes, such as CLIP from 2018-2020 and CME from 2016-2022. Evidence from case study countries indicates that the OCP has been able to capitalise on established relationships and priority areas of activity already established from predecessor programmes. This demonstrates that building on legacy programmes can create entry points and foundations for a new successor programme to take advantage of and facilitate a smooth transition to the new programme's delivery.	BPF, External
6	To deliver systemic/transformational change in the management of the marine environment, policy influence is a must. The findings concerning ALBs work indicates that their approach, at present, is somewhat defective in driving forward, with partner country stakeholders, momentum behind key policy reforms/changes in practice. Delivery partners cannot assume that these changes will happen organically or that policy influence is out of scope. FOA and GOAP use different delivery models more aligned to systemic change ambitions and driving scalability/paradigm shifts. Future programmes can learn from this that to achieve systemic and long-term change or policy reforms, scientific or technical solutions must be complemented by advocacy, engagement and ownership building capabilities.	BPF, External
7	One factor behind the slower-than-expected progress of the OCP was that the ALBs are scientific and marine management and regulation institutions, rather than international development focused institutions. This could help explain some of the gaps in in-house expertise in areas such as international development, capacity to deliver project management, GESI and MEL and has invariably impacted on the extent to which the ALBs' work has considered poverty ambitions and GESI considerations. To avoid these issues, programmes should set out, from the outset, the different skill sets needed to run their programmes,	BPF, External, Country-level

Number	Lessons	Applicable to:
	recognising that development expertise, project management, MEL and GESI analysis are essential competencies alongside technical /scientific expertise for design and delivery programmes like OCPP.	
8	The level of understanding of in-country stakeholders is limited on what has been delivered or achieved in the past by OCPP's ALBs and on who is doing what and working where. In-country stakeholders have requested improved communications and coordination on what OCPP's ALBs are delivering and the results being achieved. It was felt that the absence of an ongoing in-country presence in most bilateral partnership countries was in part to blame for this issue. The lesson distilled from this experience is that to ensure In order to have traction in-country and efficient, effective delivery, programmes should have need some form of local and ongoing in-country presence.	BPF, External, Country-level
9	Joint scoping missions and joined up planning processes can generate efficiencies and synergies, as shown by OCPP's ALBs. However, the ALBs experience of scoping also shows that for scoping and design activities, remote working is less effective than in-country missions.	BPF, External, Country-level
10	GOAP is paying active consideration to sustainability and plans to establish Indonesia as a global exemplar country in terms of integrating national ocean accounting into national policy and decision making. GOAP plans to use a sustainable approach to the development of "south-south" technical collaboration capacity including pilot collaborations and creating a regional network that will build long-term capacity and reduced reliance on ODA support. The ambition is to enable Indonesian partners to assist other countries develop their own ocean accounts. Other Programmes should consider the appropriateness of South-South exchanges and delivery models for sustainability reasons.	BPF, External, Country-level
11	GOAP has been effective in leveraging funding from other donors and development partners. FOA has also engaged successfully with other donors and development partners to take forward the work initiated under OCPP. It is important for other programmes to actively engage with other development programmes and partners to expand funding opportunities to support improvements to the marine environment.	BPF, External
12	OCPP's ALBs have successfully collaborated with UEA to support the development of a global microplastics laboratory network. Other programmes should consider cooperating with other institutions or development partners to amplify their global impact.	BPF, External

4.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the evidence and analysis undertaken for this evaluation. There may be other factors or considerations this evaluation team are unaware of that Defra and the delivery partners are required to take on board. These recommendations are grouped into two categories: recommendations to deliver impact (Table 4.2) and recommendations to improve the process of delivery (Table 4.3). Impact-related recommendations are essential to address within the two years left in the programme and focus on ensuring compliance with ODA requirements. The process-related recommendations seek to ensure efficient delivery and VfM. All recommendations are vital for the programme to review and consider.

Table 4.2 Key recommendations to deliver impact

Recommendations to deliver impact, per evaluation findings	Relevant Finding	Targeted to	Timeframe	Prioritisation (impact)
1) GESI considerations must be mainstreamed in programme design.	5	All delivery partners	From now onwards	High
2) Poverty alleviation must be better integrated to achieve the intended programme impact.	22, 21, 12	All delivery partners	From now onwards	High
3) Defra and OCPP programme leadership should carefully consider country and activity prioritisation in the remaining years of the programme.	16, 3	Defra and OCPP programme leadership	From now onwards	High
4) External communications need to be enhanced and amplified to ensure impact and sustainability.	7, 10	All delivery partners	From now onwards	Medium
5) OCPP's strategic planning processes need to better integrate the programme and country-level ToCs.	4	ALBs	From now onwards	High
6) For OCPP to achieve long-term impact, it will require interventions oriented towards policy change and reform.	19, 23	ALBs	From now onwards	High

Recommendations to deliver impact, per evaluation findings	Relevant Finding	Targeted to	Timeframe	Prioritisation (impact)
7) Sustainability needs to be integrated with all OCPP activity planning.	25	ALBs	From now onwards	High
8) Transition plans need to be developed for all OCPP bilateral components.	25	ALBs, FOA	By March 2025	High
9) OCPP should find opportunities to better promote in-country opportunities to ensure expertise retention.	24	ACU	By March 2025	Medium

Table 4.3 Recommendations to improve process

Recommendations to improve process, per evaluation findings	Relevant Finding	Targeted to	Timeframe	Prioritisation (impact)
10) Knowledge sharing should be promoted and streamlined to enable more effective delivery.	24, 25	All delivery partners	By December 2024	High
11) Programme governance including decision-making, approvals and escalation need to be streamlined.	10	Defra/ALBs	From now onwards	High
12) VfM monitoring needs to be embedded and strengthened.	15	Defra/ All delivery partners	By December 2024	Medium
13) The OCPP delivery partners should invest in resourcing MEL.	4, 18	All delivery partners	From now onwards	High

Recommendations to improve process, per evaluation findings	Relevant Finding	Targeted to	Timeframe	Prioritisation (impact)
14) Management processes must be consolidated and strengthened.	11, 3	ALBs	After the close of Annual Review Year 3 reporting period.	Medium
15) Engagement with in-country stakeholders and donors should be strengthened to ensure effective coordination.	2, 6, 19	ALBs	From now onwards	Medium

1) GESI considerations must be mainstreamed in programme design. OCPP has been assessed by Defra’s ODA Hub and labelled GESI unaware. The programme teams are aware of this critical gap and have adopted an incremental approach to addressing this issue for example by starting with training and guidance on safeguarding. However, the pace and momentum behind addressing this critical component of an international development programme is evident: there has to be direct actions to address GESI and safeguarding beyond characterisation and training. These actions should be responsive to the OCPP’s Theory of Change. Some urgent action needs to be taken as soon as possible to raise the level of GESI sensitivity in programme design and delivery. One option would be to hire in-country consultants to undertake a GESI review and analysis of OCPP’s delivery and activities in each partner country as soon as possible, to develop an action plan and embed this into the country’s workplan and thus into bilateral programme’s design. Delays on this will mean that GESI will be absent from programme delivery in FY 2024/25 which would be a missed opportunity. Table 4.4 provides examples of GESI-related activities OCPP delivery partners should consider.

Table 4.4 Illustrative examples of types of GESI-related activities OCPP delivery partners should consider

Scoping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a comprehensive socioeconomic and demographic characterisation of the area. This will include a GESI analysis to identify gender differentiated needs, priorities, interests and social norms that influence gender roles, responsibilities, and rights in relation to utilisation and management of marine resources. Report provides types of data disaggregation beyond sex (male/ female). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examine interactions between gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other contextually defined social markers. ○ Identify issues related to inclusion and safeguarding and how these are experienced by local population. • Consult with women's groups to assess their needs and explore possible interventions that are relevant to the goals of OCPP to address their needs. • Undertake a gap analysis in participating institutions to identify (i) gender imbalances in staffing and their impact on delivery of services, (2) women and minority groups participation in training and capacity building activities including degree courses, and (3) support to marine social sciences and GESI related studies. • Conduct stakeholder analysis to identify stakeholders most knowledgeable about and have the experience dealing with gender, social inclusion, and safeguarding in the project area. • Conduct an impact assessment of OCPP interventions in terms of extent to which they support women empowerment. • Identify preliminary gender transformative indicators for the work being delivered.
Marine Spatial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and conduct a participatory, inclusive, and transparent process to identify social, economic, and environmental priorities and develop plan to create jobs, economic opportunities, and environmentally sustainable actions for coastal communities including women, youth and vulnerable groups. • Explore opportunities to engage women in planning processes, identifying gendered and indigenous knowledge systems. • Seek to engage vulnerable groups in decision making fora concerning the sustainable development of ocean resources.
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender responsive and inclusive needs and gap analysis to inform the design of training and capacity building interventions. (see first row)

- 2) Poverty alleviation must be better integrated to achieve the intended programme impact.** The geographical footprint of the programme is not well aligned with its poverty reduction ambitions and the skills profile of the delivery partners has been a constraint on integrating poverty reduction. To better embed poverty into programme design and delivery, ALBs need to recruit a development specialist onto their team - each of the ALBs should do this but, at a minimum, Cefas as the Tier One partner should. GOAP and FOA also need to better articulate their causal chains to poverty impact.
- 3) Defra and OCPP programme leadership should carefully consider country and activity prioritisation in the remaining years of the programme.** Defra and OCPP programme leadership should define a list of criteria to be applied which considers exiting from bilateral partnership countries. These criteria could include use of newly available evaluation data and upcoming monitoring evidence on results to inform decision-making about where OCPP can deliver most impact and potential to impact on poverty reduction. Defra and OCPP programme leadership should then consider withdrawing from bilateral partnerships with countries where output results are below expectations and/or where traction and engagement is difficult to deliver outputs, to engender more focus and less fragmentation and maximise the impact of ALBs' work.
- 4) External communications need to be enhanced and amplified to ensure impact and sustainability.** Reporting and communication on OCPP was cited by many stakeholders as the biggest weakness that needs to be addressed and which is currently compromising external coherence of the programme. Branding of programme activity is inconsistent across the case study countries: in-country stakeholders are confused by the different ALB badges that are used when teams go in country to deliver technical assistance. It is not possible to track use of all knowledge products, guidance and tools in all cases. To improve this issue, the bilateral programme needs to:

 - a) Develop a communications plan spanning all components of the programme, create standardised templates and communication toolkits that feature singular OCPP branding, in order that stakeholders in partner countries have a clear holistic picture of what OCPP is delivering in-country;
 - b) Have ALB delivery teams working under the OCPP badge, not their government body badge; and
 - c) Ensure a use and dissemination plan is prepared for each product. Monitoring processes should track use of these products.
- 5) OCPP's strategic planning processes need to better integrate the programme and country-level ToCs.** The bilateral partnerships demonstrate limited strategic focus in their engagement with partner countries over what the programme delivers, at both a country and portfolio level. The first years of programme delivery were done without a robust MEL framework and multi-year planning. Planning processes from the beginning of the programme have been focused on planning at the activity-level with limited understanding of how activities are aligned to larger outcomes.

 - a) To strengthen effectiveness and encourage programme teams to aim towards the delivery of long-term change (including on poverty reduction) and a more strategic focus of their work, programme teams need to start actively using the theory of change in their programme planning and delivery.
 - b) To ensure a more strategic engagement at country level, ALBs should use the country level ToCs (which are aligned to the OCPP programme level ToC) in their country planning and delivery.

- 6) For OCPP to achieve long-term impact, it will require interventions oriented towards policy change and reform.** To deliver systemic/transformational change in the management of the marine environment, policy influence is a must. At present, the current ALB model is somewhat defective in driving forward with partner country stakeholder momentum behind key policy reforms/changes in practice. Many partner countries have elections planned for 2024, which may affect the appetite for policy reform. To best manage this, the following recommendations are made:
- ALBs need to plan what actions they need to take to promote the adoption and use of the policy/guidance, recommendations etc. with partner governments. ALBs need to sustain the pressure to ensure policy commitments are implemented. They need to invest in policy influencing activities to deliver policy change.
 - With elections planned in many partner countries in 2024, it is important that OCPP refresh/develop Political Economy Analyses to assess the likelihood that the planned work will make a contribution to impact or whether planned programme of work should be changed.
- 7) Sustainability needs to be integrated with all OCPP activity planning.** GOAP and FOA are assessed as having the greatest potential sustainability at this point and have given greater consideration to sustainability; the ALBs less so. Sustainability needs to be considered from the start of the design of interventions throughout the delivery of OCPP at activity level; for example in designing training activities consideration should be given to trainer of training approaches, etc.
- 8) Transition plans need to be developed for all OCPP bilateral components.** For the bilateral partnerships, an assessment of transition planning for closed/closing partnerships in South Africa and India was commissioned by Defra recently – this study is designed to assess the lessons from transition processes in order to strengthen these processes for other partnerships going forward. Following the assessment on transition planning in South Africa and India, OCPP should develop transition plans for all programmes.
- 9) OCPP should find opportunities to better promote in-country opportunities to ensure expertise retention.** A notable intervention designed to develop sustainable capacity in the marine environment sector is the ACU scholarships; however the retention of scholars in the sector cannot be guaranteed. To mitigate this challenge, OCPP could consider:
- An OCPP Alumni Network should be established to provide OCPP scholars with networking opportunities going forward.
 - A careers day should be arranged as part of the Masters/MSc courses to allow OCPP scholars to explore work and internship opportunities in the marine sector in their own country.
- 10) Internal knowledge sharing should be promoted and streamlined to enable more effective delivery.** The ALBs, FOA and GOAP have developed an impressive number of knowledge products, including scientific papers/reports, databases, etc. Of the five delivery partners, GOAP in particular strives to deliver global impact through knowledge products for example by co-creation of knowledge products that support the development of globally accepted and standardised ocean accounting practices.. In terms of knowledge products, it was not possible to track which products were most impactful in terms

of downloads. There is not one single repository for these OCPP knowledge products which therefore limits their sharing potential.

- a) OCPP should develop a repository of all knowledge products, scientific papers, guidance documents developed by each delivery partner (ALBs and Strategic Partners), to ensure better access and more efficient sharing of these products by the delivery partners and more widely.
- b) Greater effort needs to be made to ensure transfer of lessons from FOA and GOAP to the ALBs and vice versa. FOA and GOAP can transfer lessons and good practice on scaling interventions, leveraging other resources and also different models such as South-South delivery models.

11) Programme governance including decision-making, approvals and escalation need to be streamlined. Timeliness in decision-making has been an issue due staff resourcing constraints. There is still some confusion on what Defra needs to sign off, despite a delegated authority table. Some stakeholders perceive that Cefas, as a Tier One delivery partner, should play a greater coordination role at country level and convey key developments up to Defra and likewise key messages from Defra to country level teams, instead of having Defra team members join numerous cross theme meetings. Specific recommendations include:

- a) Defra programme management should seek to respond in a more timely manner to delivery partner queries and apply faster decision-making on programmatic requests from partners. This would help speed up the spending performance. Other UK international development programmes use a two week response time for decisions/requests.
- b) Cefas as the Tier One Delivery Paper should make sure there are appropriate escalation routes of issues identified in country level cross theme meetings to Defra's policy team (in order minimise need for Defra staff to attend these meetings).
- c) Tier One Cefas needs to make sure messages from Defra cascade down to the delivery teams so that they know who has the authority to make decisions.

12) VfM monitoring needs to be embedded and strengthened. It was challenging to form a judgement on VfM due to data gaps. Delivery partners need to operationalise VfM reporting in their progress reporting. Delivery partners should report on a menu of aligned KPIs for VfM monitoring in their progress reporting to Defra. VfM case studies should be prepared to demonstrate benefit to cost comparisons, etc.) in consultation with the NIRAS MEL Team.

13) The OCPP delivery partners should invest in resourcing MEL. Shortcomings in OCPP delivery partner MEL systems has somewhat hampered the reporting of results and the assessment of effectiveness. The programme was delivered during its first years without a robust MEL framework in place. Technical teams have repeatedly mentioned they do not have enough time to do MEL and that when they do, it takes time away from delivery of technical work. To demonstrate effectiveness of their work delivery partners, particularly the ALBs, need to invest in MEL.

- a) There is a need for a dedicated MEL specialist in each ALB (may not be a new hire, could also be the assignment of this role to existing team members).
- b) Programme leadership needs to inform delivery teams that MEL is foundational to the delivery of the work and it is not supplemental.
- c) The monitoring and reporting processes in place by FOA are much more fit for purpose. There are constraints in GOAP's reporting on use of ocean accounts which limits reporting against the revised

logframe outputs, outcomes and impact. As such GOAP needs to explore ways of demonstrating evidence of use of ocean accounts in evidence-based policy making.

14) Management processes must be consolidated and strengthened. The first years of programme delivery were done without a robust MEL framework and multi-year planning. Planning processes used by ALBs from the beginning of the programme have been focused on planning at the activity-level with limited understanding of how activities are aligned to larger outcomes, The fragmented filing of documents continues to be a challenge, for example there is a need for one SharePoint for the three ALBs. Staff members expressed frustration with the inaccessibility of key information to enable learning from other projects. More harmonisation is needed between milestone reports and the actual budget trackers. The ALBs are anticipating that the roll out of the finalised POM will provide guidance on reporting and budget tracking. To achieve this harmonisation, OCPP should consider the following:

- a) Conduct a review and consolidation of ALB annual planning documents at the portfolio and country levels needs to be undertaken, in consultation with the OCPP MEL team;
- b) Tier One programme management should establish a centralised Sharepoint to act as the central hub/intranet for the ALBs to ensure each of the ALBs follow same processes and protocols to the extent possible; and
- c) Bilateral component of the programme needs to continue to improve delivery partner coordination through the roll out of the POM and establishing a central document depository. For example, Defra should ensure sign-off of key outputs and documents are timely to prevent delays to programme activities.

15) Engagement with in-country stakeholders and donors should be strengthened to ensure effective coordination. For OCPP to deliver impact and respond effectively in dynamic and complex contexts, it needs to better understand and engage more effectively with in-country stakeholders. There are some positive indications of internal coherence from instances of joined up working across delivery partners or ALBs, and the creation of regional and international linkages within the portfolio. In addition, in-country stakeholders have requested that communications and coordination on what OCPP is delivering and the results being achieved in country needs to improve. ALBs noted that it takes a long time to understand and map/capture what all stakeholders involved in the marine environment space in supported countries are doing. This includes:

- a) OCPP should consider the recruitment of in-country coordinators for all bilateral countries to improve stakeholder understanding of OCPP, increase stakeholder coordination and provide continuity in implementation of activities in the absence of ALBs.
- b) Increase efforts to identify and capitalise on regional linkages and joined up work.
- c) ALB delivery teams need to keep on top of the donor landscape and what is happening in country through systematic processes (stakeholder mapping log/reporting) in order to minimise overlap and take advantage of synergies/leverage funding opportunities.

Annex 1

Evaluation Matrix

Annex 1 - EVALUATION MATRIX

Sub-questions	Lines of Inquiry	Main source of evidence	Data Analysis	Process Evaluation	Impact Evaluation
EQ 1: Relevance: Is the programme relevant to partner countries' priorities and needs and is its design appropriate?					
1.1 To what extent is the OCPP focus and approach relevant to the needs of key stakeholders including addressing partner country priorities and meeting the needs of local communities?	How well has the bilateral component managed to blend demand-led and propositional approaches?	Document Review including Scoping Studies, workplans Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), with key stakeholders in-country, FGDs with community members	Political economy analysis, Analysis of needs, Triangulation Evidence Synthesis	√	√
1.2 To what extent were the countries prioritised the most relevant and appropriate for OCPP support ?	Is OCPP geographical footprint aligned with HMG priorities?	KIIs Defra, FCDO, DPs Document review including HMG strategies and plans	Analysis of selection criteria, policy and priority alignment analysis	√	
1.3 Does OCPP have a strategic focus in its engagements with partner countries?	Does OCPP have a line of sight in terms of what its ambitions are in terms of country level results?	Document review including MoUs, workplans, country level and project ToCs KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners	Analysis of strategic engagement with partner countries	√	√

1.4 How well is OCPP adapting to contextual changes/evolving and changing in response to lessons learnt?	To what extent are lesson learning and MEL evidence informing programme decision-making and adaptation?	Document review including workplans, stocktake PPTs, KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners,	Contextual analysis, PEAs	✓	✓
1.5 How well were GESI considerations embedded in the design of OCPP?	Is OCPP compliant with HMG requirements including the 2014 International Development (Gender Equality) Act and the priorities of HMG women and girls' strategy 2022?	Document review including workplans, stocktake PPTs, KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners,	GESI Analysis	✓	
EQ 2: Coherence – how coherent is the programme internally and externally with other actor/donor initiatives in the same space?					
2.1 To what extent is the OCPP internally coherent?	<p>How appropriate is the structure of the portfolio in terms of numbers of activities being supported versus depth of focus on several critical activities?</p> <p>Are scoping activities joined up between the ALBs and strategic in terms of ambitions and comprehensive (for example in terms of coverage of GESI considerations)?</p> <p>To what extent are OCPP delivery partners coordinating and learning from each</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, BPF Regional Coordinators</p> <p>Document review including workplans, Stocktake PPTs</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis</p> <p>Portfolio analysis</p> <p>Process Checklist</p> <p>GESI analysis</p>	✓	

	other (avoiding silos) within countries, regions and as a whole?				
2.2 To what extent is OCPP externally coherent with other actors/initiatives operating in the same space (including with other Blue Planet Fund programmes), as well as partner country policies and international agreements?	<p>Does OCPP avoid overlap/duplication of support with other programmes including BPF?</p> <p>Does OCPP complement or build on the work or amplify the results of other BPF/other programmes?</p> <p>Is OCPP coherent with partner country policies?</p> <p>Are OCPP interventions coherent with binding and non-binding international agreements e.g. CBD, CEDAW,, ILO.</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, other relevant programmes, BPF Regional Coordinators, Partner Country Stakeholders</p> <p>Documentation on other relevant programmes include BPF programmes</p>	Qualitative analysis	√	
2.3 Does the branding of OCPP in-country support internal and external coherence?	Do BPF wide country implementation plans support or not support coherence across BPF programmes?	KIIs Defra, DPs, other relevant programmes, BPF Regional Coordinators, Partner Country Stakeholders	Qualitative analysis	√	
EQ 3: Efficiency : How well are resources being used (timely and economic delivery)?					
3.1: To what extent are planned outputs being delivered in a timely and economically efficient manner?	Is OCPP being delivered efficiently (in terms of use of ALBs, multilateral partners)?	KIIs Defra, DPs, Partner Country Stakeholders,	Delivery Model Analysis Efficiency analysis	√	

		BPF Regional Coordinators Analysis of workplans and delivery plans, Activity Tracker, Monitoring data			
3.2 What are the factors that support/hinder efficient delivery?	<p>Is the appointment of BPF regional coordinators (e.g., Ghana, Moz, Equator and Fiji) supporting efficiency in programme delivery?</p> <p>Does annual workplanning processes support/hinder a results-based rather than project-based approach?</p> <p>Are there any gaps in skills and expertise to manage and deliver the programme, including in mainstreaming GESI in design and delivery, safeguarding, etc?</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, Partner Country Stakeholders, BPF Regional Coordinators</p>	Efficiency analysis	√	
3.3 To what extent are the governance arrangements fit for purpose for all partners?	<p>Are governance arrangements clear and inclusive of all DPs and have clear effective internal structures and processes been established to deliver partnership goals?</p> <p>To what extent are accountability mechanisms (e.g.</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, BPF Regional Coordinators</p> <p>Documentation review including Terms of Reference for Governance structures, Minutes of DP meetings etc.</p>	Analysis of governance arrangements	√	

	<p>MoUs) established and used to help maintain accountability?</p> <p>To what extent are decisions/activities based on the best available evidence?</p>				
<p>3.4 To what extent are delivery partners engaging/ working with local communities, in-country organisations and local delivery partners, local and national governments?</p>	<p>To what extent are local partners used to support the delivery of OCPP?</p> <p>To what extent have the bilateral partnerships established the right enabling environment for effective partnership working?</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners, other BPF programmes,</p> <p>FGDs (Case study countries) local communities</p>	<p>Analysis of engagement with partners and communities in countries supported, analysis of procurements including local partners</p>	√	√
<p>3.8 Does OCPP represent VfM?</p>	<p>What are drivers of VfM on OCPP?</p> <p>What are the implications of different delivery modalities for VfM?</p>	<p>Analysis of monitoring data, KIIs with Defra, DPs, other BPF stakeholders</p>	<p>VfM Analysis</p>	√	√
<p>EQ 4: Effectiveness: Is the programme achieving or expecting to achieve its objectives?</p>					
<p>4.1 To what extent is OCPP likely to achieve its objectives, planned outputs and outcomes?</p>	<p>Does the evidence indicate that change is happening as envisaged in the ToC ?</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners, BPF and other complementary programmes in the same space,</p>	<p>Contribution analysis</p> <p>Contribution Tracing</p>	√	√

	<p>Are the ToC assumptions holding in practice?</p> <p>To what extent can observed outcomes be attributed to OCPP?</p> <p>What has been the added value of mainstreaming GESI?</p> <p>What innovations were introduced to achieve targeted change?</p>	<p>monitoring/performance data</p> <p>Monitoring and performance data, Ad hoc evaluations</p>			
<p>4.2 What internal factors are/have been influencing effectiveness?</p>	<p>Has the delivery model worked as anticipated and facilitated the achievement of objectives?</p> <p>Have risks to likely effectiveness been identified and are risk reducing measures put in place and effective in practice?</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners, other BPF programmes</p> <p>Ad hoc evaluations</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>√</p>
<p>4.3 What external factors are/have been influencing effectiveness?</p>	<p>How have external factors including contextual factors affected effectiveness?</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners, other BPF programmes</p> <p>Ad hoc evaluations</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis</p> <p>Contextual analysis</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>√</p>
<p>EQ 5: Impact: What difference does the programme make (higher/ long term/transformational effects – positive, negative, intended, unintended)?</p>					

<p>5.1 To what extent the OCPP is /likely to achieve its intended impact?</p>	<p>Have there been any unintended impacts from OCPP support?</p>	<p>Klls Defra, DPs, in-country partners, other BPF programmes, monitoring and performance data, Ad Hoc Evaluations</p>	<p>System analysis Contribution analysis Contribution Tracing</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>5.2 How have FOA and GOAP added value to OCPP?</p>	<p>Have FoA and GOAP managed to deliver global impacts beyond what was delivered in the countries they have directly engaged with?</p> <p>How have FoA and GOAP contributed to transformation of marine resources (including gender/social transformative action)?</p> <p>What lessons have FOA and GOAP generated including insights on transformative ocean improvement practices that could be tested in other contexts?</p>	<p>Klls Defra, DPs, in-country partners, Ad Hoc Evaluations,</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis, consideration of the counterfactual – would the results generated have happened without FoA/GOAP?</p> <p>Quantitative analysis</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>5.3 What is the nature and extent of the OCPP’s impact on the UK and global marine science sectors?</p>	<p>What is the likely impact of OCPP Scholarships on the capability and expertise of partner countries?</p> <p>What is the extent of take-up/use of scientific research</p>	<p>Klls UK marine science sector stakeholders, DPs, fisheries companies, global stakeholders (e.g., WorldFish).</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis Contribution analysis Contribution Tracing</p>		<p>✓</p>

	<p>and papers generated by OCPP?</p> <p>How has the research been used to influence policy at a country level and in OCPP programming?</p> <p>To what extent has marine social science been integrated into the marine agenda?</p>				
<p>5.4 What was the extent and nature of OCPP’s socio-economic impacts for example on women, other marginalised groups and communities?</p>	<p>How has OCPP impacted on the livelihoods and well being of women and poor and vulnerable people?</p> <p>What kind of innovative strategies have been developed to ensure inclusive and transformative marine resource management?</p>	<p>KIIs Defra, DPs, in-country partners, FOA Ad Hoc Evaluations, FGDs with communities, including women and marginalised groups</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis</p> <p>Contribution analysis</p> <p>Contribution Tracing</p> <p>GESI analysis</p> <p>Analysis of monitoring data</p>		<p>√</p>
<p>EQ 6: Sustainability: Will the benefits last (extent to which the benefits will continue or are likely to continue)?</p>					
<p>6.1 Likelihood of OCPP related benefits (including those for women and other marginalised groups) continuing once the programme has finished?</p>	<p>What are the factors likely to support/hinder sustainability?</p> <p>What good practices introduced by OCPP are being institutionalised at a country level?</p>	<p>KIIs DPs, in-country partners</p>	<p>Qualitative analyses</p> <p>Quantitative analysis</p> <p>Sustainability analysis</p>		<p>√</p>

	<p>What are local communities, including women and marginalised groups, perceptions regarding sustainability of interventions?</p> <p>Are benefits inter-generational?</p>				
<p>6.2 Are exit/transition plans being implemented in practice?</p>	<p>Have budget provision being made to support implementation of the enhancements to marine management after exit of OCPP?</p> <p>How are communities and country level decision-makers involved in the preparation of exit or sustainability strategy plans?</p>	<p>KIIs In-country partners</p>	<p>Qualitative analysis</p> <p>Sustainability analysis</p>		<p>√</p>

Sampling Criteria for OCPP evaluations

Case Study Country Income profile and phase of the partnership	Other Considerations	Financial Spend	Intervention Themes and Modalities
Mozambique (low income) Scoping, MoU not signed, Relatively new partnership Delivery Partners: Cefas, JNCC, MMO GOAP	A joined up BPF integrated country implementation framework has been developed for Mozambique ⁸¹ . BPF Regional Coordinator based in Mozambique.	FY 22/23: £96K Projected FY 23/24: £246K	All 3 OCPP themes covered. Governance & Regulation, Capacity building and TA and VC and market access covered. ALB work: MPAs (JNCC), IUU/fisheries compliance (MMO), aquaculture, fisheries, marine pollution (Cefas). GOAP pilot to create ecosystem accounts focused on the Bazaruto Archipelago, Bazaruto Bay, Cabo Sebastiao Peninsula and the delta of the Save River.
Sri Lanka (lower middle income) Delivery, MoU not Signed, Long standing partnership Delivery Partners: Cefas, JNCC, MMO	Recruiting an in-country OCPP PM. Includes Emergency Response Training and educational packs for primary school children. Engagement on the Commonwealth Litter Programme (CLiP)	FY 22/23: £1.172m Projected FY 23/24: £1.16m	All three themes covered. MPAs (JNCC), IUU (MMO), Emergency Response (Cefas), Marine Spatial Planning (MMO), Habitat mapping, marine pollution, aquaculture, climate change education videos (Cefas). OCPP scholarships expected to start in Sri Lanka in January 2024.
Belize (upper middle income) Delivery, MoU signed, Long standing partnership Delivery Partners: Cefas, JNCC, MMO, GOAP	Previous engagement on CLIP (since 2019). Also engaged in Commonwealth Marine Economies.	FY 22/23: £1m Projected FY 23/24: £1.5m	All three themes; all 4 causal pathways in ToC. Marine pollution, AI drone work, aquatic animal health, data, finfish aquaculture, fisheries, deep sea camera system (Cefas), MPAs (JNCC), IUU /fisheries compliance and managed access (MMO). GOAP new pilot project in Belize (2023/24 FY).
Ghana (lower middle income) Delivery phase, MoU not signed, relatively new partnership Delivery Partners: Cefas, MMO, JNCC, FOA, GOAP	BPF regional coordinator appointed for Ghana.	FY 22/23: £125K Projected FY 23/24: £745K	Marine Pollution, Sustainable Seafood themes covered. Governance and regulation, capacity building and TA, value chain and market access. Marine pollution and fisheries education (Cefas), MSP and IUU/fisheries compliance (MMO), MPAs (JNCC).

			FOA pilot of global aquaculture roadmap (Blue Food Partnership), 2023/24 GOAP pilot in Ghana, OCPP Scholarships expected to start in Ghana in 2023/24 (Sept). Africa wide capacity building potential via the micro-plastic facility to be hosted in a new ACECOR World Bank funded building to become a regional hub (covering Senegal, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Madagascar).
Fiji (upper middle income) Delivery phase, MoU not signed, relatively new partnership. <u>Delivery Partners:</u> FoA, GOAP	BPF Regional Coordinator located in Fiji. Previous engagement on CLiP.	FY22/23: £557,042	Marine Biodiversity. FOA – Blue Recovery Hubs. 2022/23 – GOAP pilot in Fiji. Governance and regulation, capacity building and TA, value chain and market access.

Annex 2

Stakeholders consulted

OCPP portfolio-level stakeholders interviewed	
Institution	Role of Interviewees
Defra	<p>OCPP/BPF Interim Team Lead</p> <p>OCPP Programme Manager</p> <p>Economist</p> <p>Former Team Leader for the OCPP</p>
FCDO	<p>COAST Senior Responsible Officer</p> <p>BPF Regional Coordinator- West Africa</p> <p>BPF Regional Coordinator- East Africa</p> <p>BPF Regional Coordinator- South East Asia</p> <p>BPF Regional Coordinator- Pacific</p>
Arms-Length Bodies (Cefas; MMO; JNCC)	<p>Tier One Programme Director OCPP - ALBs</p> <p>Senior Programme Manager Tier One</p> <p>Programme Director JNCC</p>

	<p>Programme Director - Cefas</p> <p>Programme Director – MMO</p> <p>Programme Director - JNCC</p> <p>MMO MEL Working Group representative</p> <p>Procurement Lead for OCPP</p> <p>Country coordinator India</p> <p>Country Coordinator Maldives</p> <p>Country Coordinator Senegal</p> <p>Country Coordinator Solomon Islands</p> <p>Country Coordinator Vanuatu</p>
<p>Friends of Ocean Action</p>	<p>Project Impact Manager</p> <p>MMI MEL consultant</p> <p>Blue Food Partnership, Project Manager (Ocean Lead)</p> <p>Blue Recovery Hub, Project Manager</p> <p>Seafood Loss and Waste, Blue Food lead</p> <p>Supply Chain Risk Project, SCR Project lead</p> <p>Operations Lead, Ocean Action Agenda</p>

Association of Commonwealth Universities	Manager QECS, Association of Commonwealth Universities
GOAP	Director, Sustainable Development Reform Hub (SDRH) GOAP Secretariat Manager; Manager International Programs SDRH) Coordinator Asia and Pacific

Belize case study list of stakeholders consulted	
Institution	Role of interview
WREN Consulting	Director
Belize Agriculture Health Authority	Lab technician x2
British High Commission	British High Commissioner Climate and Environment Officer for the Caribbean
Belize Waste Management Authority	Director

Ministry of Blue Economy and Climate Change (MBECA)	Staff working under the Director of Blue Economy x2
Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (Department of the Environment)	Environment officer Environment officer/Lab manager
University of Belize	Assistant Professor of Chemistry and Dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology
Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA)	Director
Belize Fisheries Department	Fisheries officer
Department of Agriculture	Aquaculture Lead at National Tilapia Hatchery
Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE)	Officer
Waste Recycler's Association focus group discussion with waste recyclers	In-country stakeholder
SYTECH	Operations Director Consultant
OCPD delivery teams	Country Coordinator + two technical leads
<u>Attendance, site observation and discussions with stakeholders at:</u>	

Department of Environment lab tour; TASA Turneffe Atoll; Tilapia Hatcheries; BAHA laboratories; Hummingbird Lab at University of Belize; ACU Scholars Launch (Uni of Belize); CZMAI introduction; OCPP stakeholders' reflection and feedback session; Belize Waste Recycler's Association Launch event

Ghana case study stakeholders interviewed

Institution	Role of Interviewee(s)
Land Use & Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA) (government partner)	Deputy Director of Plan Preparation
University of Cape Coast: Centre of Coastal Management (academic partner, sub-contractor and host for ACU scholarship)	Director UCC-CCM
Chaint Afrique (sub-contractor)	Co-Founder
AyaData (sub-contractor)	Co-Founder
Norwegian Embassy (development partner)	Advisor
TetraTech (USAID implementer for GFRA programme)	Programme Manager for GFRA programme
Ghana National Plastic Action Partnership	Manager

Landing Beach Enforcement Committee	Founder
Blue Food Partnership (FOA)	FGD: Chamber of Aquaculture, Friends of Ocean Action (FOA), Industry, University of Ghana
Chamber of Aquaculture (FOA)	CEO
University of Ghana (FOA)	Professor/Consultant
FCDO	BPF Regional Coordinator(s)
OCCP delivery teams from MMO, JNCC and Cefas	Technical Teams, including Country Coordinator, Senior PM
Fisheries Commission	Director for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture and Head of Fish Health Unit
<p><u>Attendance at:</u> One Health Aquaculture (OHA) conference, Farmed Blue Food Festival, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) Breakfast Observation</p>	
<p>Maldives case study stakeholders interviewed</p>	
Institution	Role of Interviewee(s)
Rekam Nusantara Foundation	Founding member and director
Biodiversity conservation unit of the MOECCT Maldives	Staff member

Baa Biosphere Marine Reserve	Outreach officer and technical in charge of Baa BR
Subcontractor for website development and PCA forum	Subcontractor
Environmental protection agency	Senior environment analyst at environmental research and conservation section
Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy	Staff member; Director of PA department
IUCN	Head of protected and conserved areas department in Asia
Noo Raajje	Staff member
OCPD delivery teams from JNCC	Country coordinator
FCDO/British High Commission	Political and communications officer
Mozambique case study stakeholders interviewed	
Institution	Role of Interviewee(s)
National Administration for the Conservation Areas (ANAC) (government partner)	Nairobi Convention Focal Point

National Directorate of Environment (DINAB) Government department	Head of the Environmental Management Dept Focal point of the convention on drought and desertification
MIMAIP DIPOL Government department	Former MIMAIP OCPP Focal Point
Government department ADNAP	General Director ADANP Director of Central Aquaculture Management Services Head of the Fisheries Monitoring Department
Government department IDEPA	Director of Services for Study Centres, Planning and Community Development
Government department INAMAR	General Director
WCS	Programme Manager
IUCN	Coastal Coordinator for Mozambique
Fauna and Flora Int.	Operations Manager Marine Specialist
European Union	Partnership Manager
FAO	National Project Coordinator

GIZ	Project Manager
Eduardo Mondlane University	Professor
OCPP delivery teams from MMO, JNCC, and Cefas	BPF East Africa Regional Coordinator MMO Compliance and Enforcement Lead Cefas Project Manager Cefas Aquaculture Lead
FCDO	Mozambique OCPP Country Coordinator
Sri Lanka case study stakeholders interviewed	
Institution	Role of Interviewees
British High Commission	Head of Prosperity Section and South Asia Programme Officer OCPP
Blue Resource Trust	Staff member
Department of Wildlife Conservation	Staff member

Marine Environment Protection Authority	Staff member
Central Environment Authority	CEO Deputy Director Assistant Director Environment Officer Environment Officer
Ministry of Fisheries	Deputy Director
South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme	Staff member
Disaster Management Centre	Deputy Director (Operations)
University of Wayamba	Professor
University of Kalaniya	Professor + 6 Scholars
National Cleaner Production Centre	Staff members
InboundHype	Staff member

National Aquatic Research & Development Agency	Scientists; Head of Environmental Studies Dept; NARA senior scientist
IUCN	Senior programme officer; programme officer
Cefas + JNCC	Technical team/delivery team members

Annex 3

Survey results

The Interim Evaluation included a survey for OCPP delivery partners (only ALBs) in order to obtain their feedback on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of OCPP support in partner countries. Forty four individuals across the ALBs received the survey via email. In all 20 responses were received from ALBs (17 female and 3 male respondents). This section summarizes the responses. Unless indicated differently the data presented is from all the respondents (N = 20).

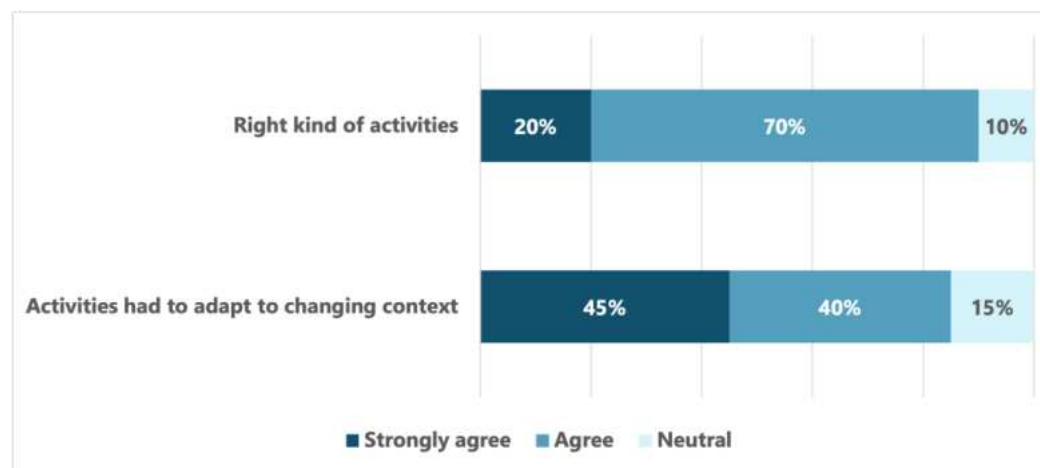
Q = Question asked

Relevance

Addressing the needs

Q: In your opinion, is OCPP doing the right kinds of activities in your country?

The figure below summarizes the data from survey questions on the kind of activities being implemented, and OCPP’s adaptation to country context. Almost all of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the right kind of activities are being delivered (90%) and that the program had to adapt to a changing context (85%).



Q: In your view, is the programme delivering an appropriate amount of activities in your country?

Most (70%) of the respondents, are of the opinion that an appropriate amount of activities are being delivered, with the remaining 30% responding 'Maybe'.

Demand-led vs Propositional approach

Q: Please rate on the scale of 0-10 the level of demand-led and/or propositional approaches experienced by your country.?

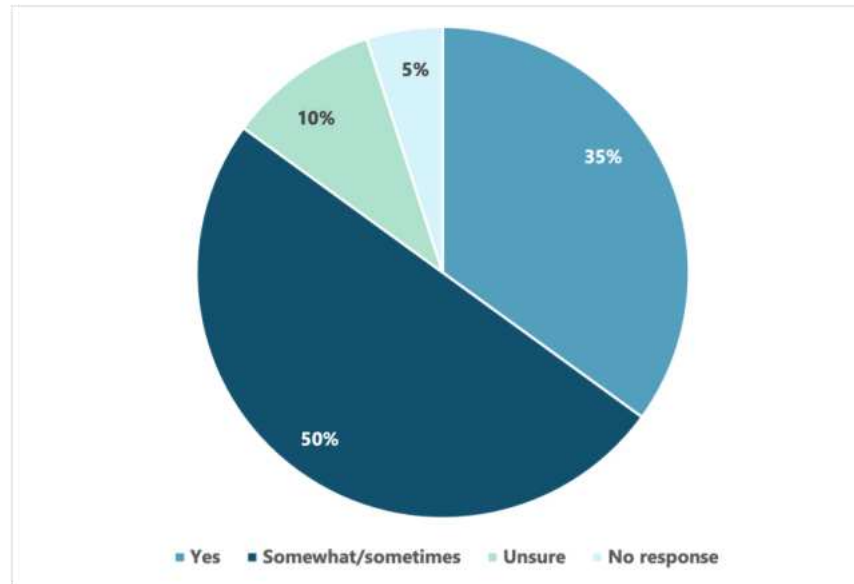
In the scale a 0 represents a completely demand-led intervention, while 10 a country program that is be fully propositional, meaning programme components coming from the OCPP delivery partners.

The average of the respondents is 4.65, and the median 4.5, or an overall programme that is near to an equal mix of demand-led and propositional interventions. There is however disagreement between respondents that are engaged with the same country, with a difference in response of up to 6 points.

Q: Does OCPP learning inform programme adaptation?'

The question was posed as an open text response. Half (50%) of the respondents (see the figure below) provided answers describing the occurrence of adaptation, but not always, and not structurally across the programme. Reflection and learning are often at the country- or technical-level and oftentimes not reaching the broader OCPP implementing community. Even the respondents that categorically answered 'Yes' to this question described activities being country-level and noted that it was unclear how these adaptations feed into OCPP learning and adaptation. Examples of activities supporting learning include bi-annual meetings of country coordinators, and the adaption of lessons learned methodology adopted by one of the ALBs.

A few respondents highlighted the absence of a standardized process to identify and disseminate learnings as challenging programme wide learning. It was also noted that the identification of lessons can depend upon who is present, and while identified, changes are implemented too slowly.



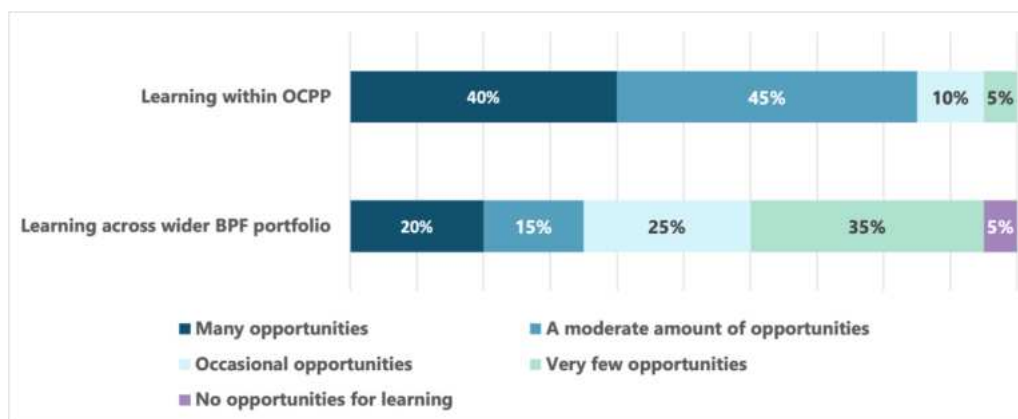
Opportunities for sharing across OCPP and BPF

The survey respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they thought OCPP offers opportunities to share learning within the OCPP, and across the wider BPF portfolio. The inquiry used two statements, and a 5-point Likert scale.

The statements:

- There are opportunities to share learning within the OCPP
- There are opportunities to share learning across the wider BPF portfolio

The chart below shows there were more opportunities to share learning within the OCPP, with 40% stating that there are many opportunities, and 45% a moderate amount of activities. This contrary to the wider BPF portfolio where a majority of 65% of the respondents felt there were 'no opportunities' through to 'occasional opportunities' only.



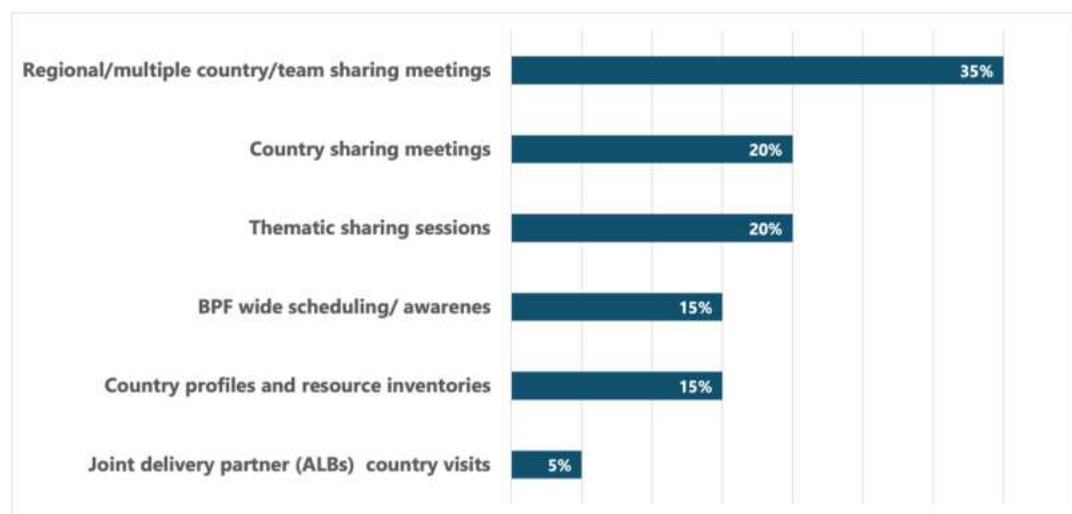
Q: What kind of learning spaces or events would be most useful to your role?

The graph below summarizes the suggestions made by the survey respondents on what learning spaces they would prefer. The question allowed for open text responses from which the common categories as presented in the chart.

The data demonstrates a wide range of learning events, mostly meeting related. The majority of the respondents would like to have sharing meetings at a regional, multi country or team level (35%), while 20% suggests sharing at the country level. A number of the respondents (20%) would like to see thematic gatherings, and 15% beyond OCPP at a BPF level.

Outside of meetings as learning events, some respondents noted that they would like to see resource inventories, and shared locations where information can be stored and accessed (15%).

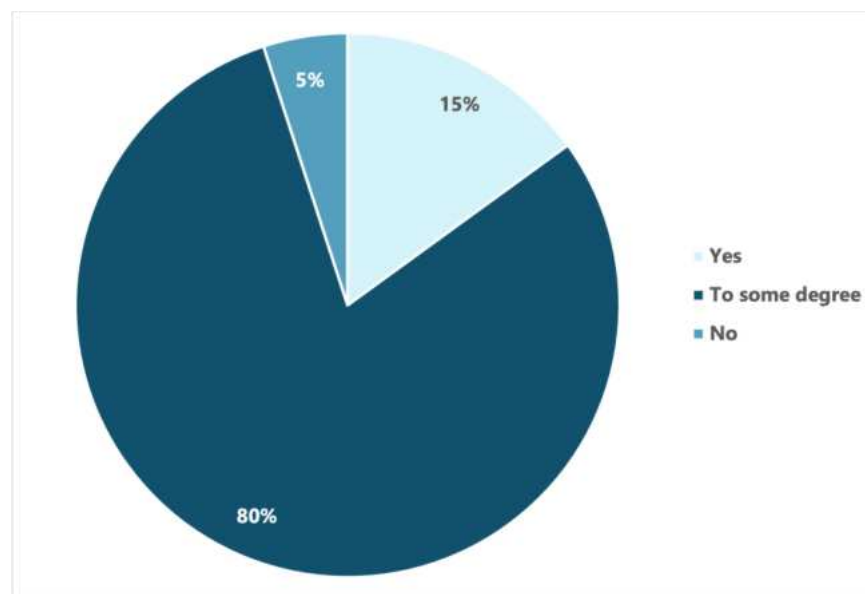
Two suggestions were made for thematic sessions, with GESI at 25% of the respondents being most common. The second was on cultural aspects and how it can affect the delivery of activities.



Women, youth and marginalized groups.

Q: Women, youth and/or marginalised groups have been considered in the planning and delivery of OCPP's work in my country

Respondents overwhelmingly, 80%, felt they were considering women, youth and / or marginalised group in their planning and delivery, however the results of the work presented in other parts of the report do not reveal particular GESI consideration (nor articulation) in terms of delivery or impact.

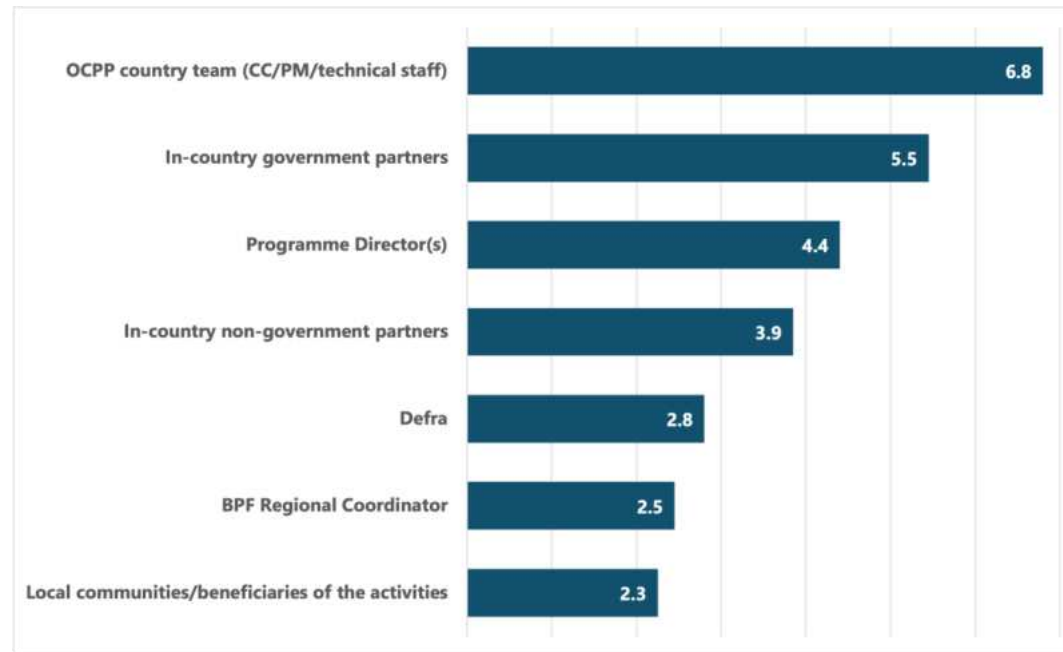


Efficiency

The survey explored among the respondents which stakeholders were involved in work planning activities. The question included seven stakeholder group, which the respondent could drag in an order from most involved to the least involved. The position of the stakeholders were converted to numbers, with 7 the highest, and 1 the lowest score.

Q: Please rank (by clicking and dragging each box) the level of involvement of different stakeholders in your country workplanning, with the most involved at the top and least involved at the bottom.

The chart below presents the average of the scores allocated to each of the stakeholder groups. The OCPP country team were seen as the biggest contributor by most respondents, resulting in a score of 6.8, almost the maximum score of 7. In-country government partners score 5.5 follow by Programme Directors with 4.4. The local communities and beneficiaries of the activities scored lowest with 2.3.

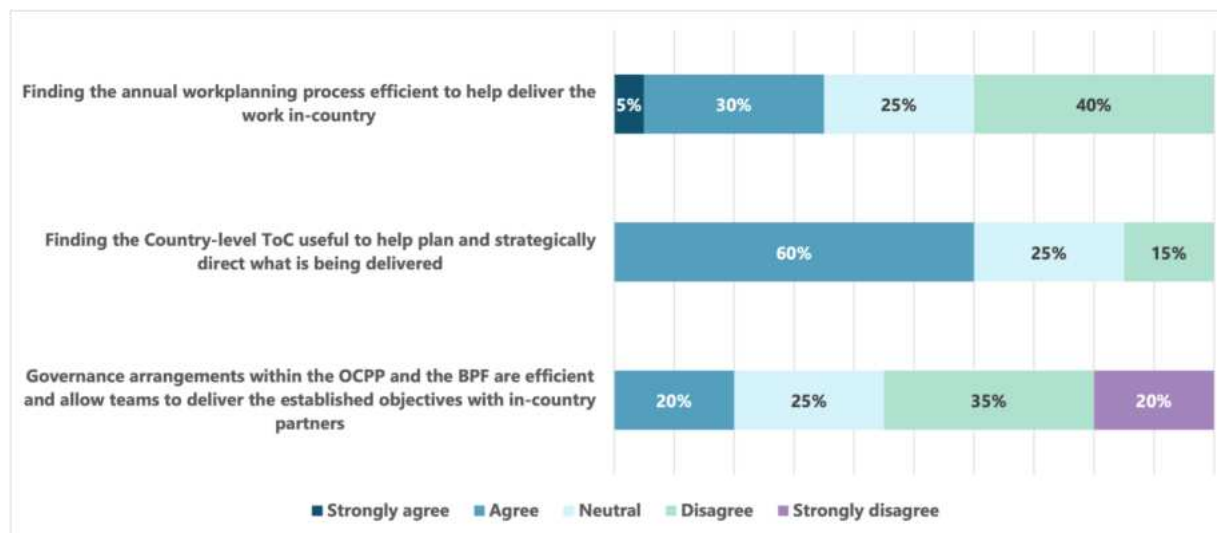


Under the Efficiency criterion the survey sought the views of ALB staff to what extent governance and management arrangement support efficient programme delivery. The survey included three statements with a 5-point Likert scale of agreement.

The statements are:

- I find the annual workplanning process efficient to help deliver the work in-country
- I find the country-level Theory of Change useful to help plan and strategically direct what is being delivered
- The governance arrangements within the OCPP and the BPF are efficient and allow teams to deliver the established objectives with in-country partners

The respondents are divided on the workplanning process being helpful to the delivery of the programme. One fourth of the respondents is neutral, and almost equally divides the respondents that find it useful (35%) and the do not find it useful (40%). The respondents are more positive about the ToC, 60% agreeing that it helps planning and providing strategic direction. Only 15% disagree with the statement. The statement on governance arrangements results in the most negative response. Just over half of the respondents, 55% out of whom 20% strongly disagree, disagree that the governance arrangements are efficient. A further 25% is neutral, and only 20% reflect positively that the arrangements allow teams to deliver the in-country objectives.



Q: Please rate on the scale of 0-10 the level of work being delivered by in-country partners and/or sub-contractors, with 0 representing all work delivered by ALB teams and 10 representing all work by in country partners.

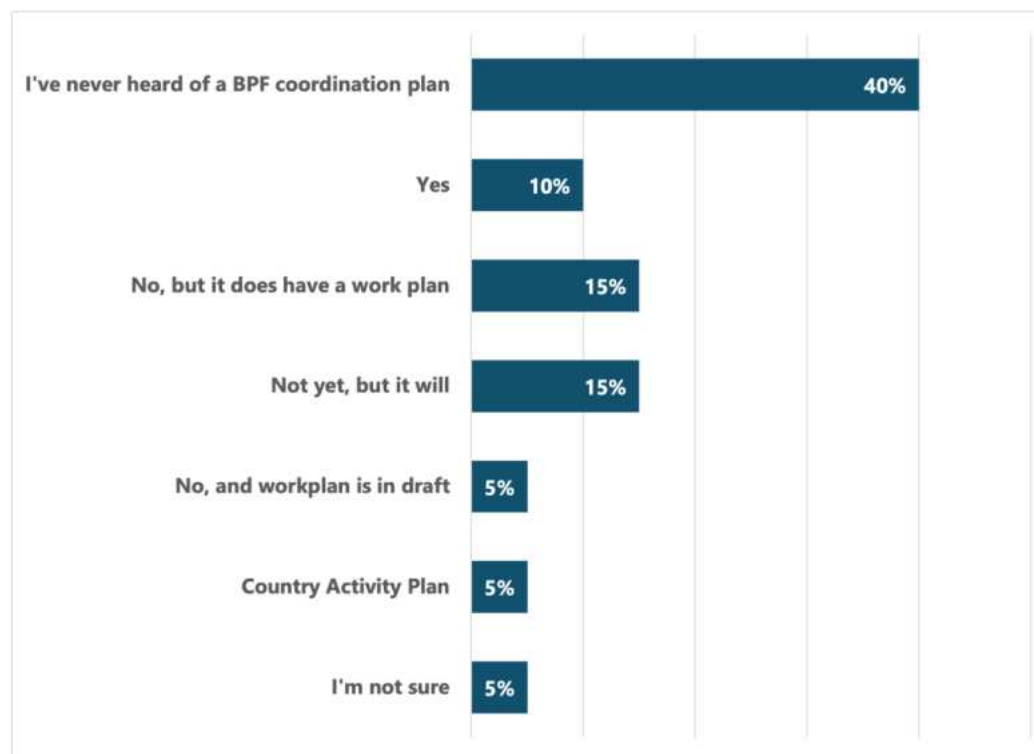
The average and median of the responses are both 5 (N=20), indicating that overall OCPP is close to an equal mix of the delivery partners and in-country partners or service providers implementing programme activities. The responses also show Technical specialists are more of the opinion that delivery is more by the ALB teams, while country coordinators are on or near the middle of the scale. This is also the case if they are both engaged with the same country.

Effectiveness

The BPF is making steps towards better coordination and collaboration between the different BPF programmes in a country.

Q: My country has a BPF Country Implementation Plan

The chart below summarizes responses of 19 survey participants. The 20th participant did not oversee a particular country. The findings indicate that a significant portion, 40%, had not heard of this initiative yet, and only two respondents worked in countries that did have such a plan. Other respondents indicated that the country had an alternative plan in place, like a work plan, or in development (25%).



The survey explored among the respondents how useful the plans are. The table below presents the opinion of the respondents that indicated that their country has a BPF country implementation plan, or another plan how useful it was (N = 6). The helpfulness of the plans was assessed through three statements with a 5-point Likert scale: Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat disagree, Disagree.

The statements are:

The BFP implementation plan:

- ...helps align activities within the OCPP to ensure minimal duplication and maximise complimentary
- ...helps align activities across the BPF portfolio to ensure minimal duplication and maximise complimentary
- ...helps align activities with other donor-funded programmes in the same country/region to minimise duplication and maximise complimentary

The data is very limited and does not allow for making conclusions, but from these responses a country activity plan or a BPF Country Implementation Plan can be helpful in aligning activities across OCPP or the BPF portfolio. To align with other donor-funded programmes the Country Activity Plan seems to be a better tool than the BPF Country Implementation Plan.

Type of plan	...helps align activities within the OCPP to ensure minimal duplication and maximise complimentary	...helps align activities across the BPF portfolio to ensure minimal duplication and maximise complimentary	...helps align activities with other donor-funded programmes in the same country/region to minimise duplication and maximise complimentary
Country Activity Plan	Agree	Agree	Somewhat agree
Workplan	Agree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat disagree
Workplan	Somewhat agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat agree
Workplan	Somewhat agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat agree

Type of plan	...helps align activities within the OCPP to ensure minimal duplication and maximise complimentary	...helps align activities across the BPF portfolio to ensure minimal duplication and maximise complimentary	...helps align activities with other donor-funded programmes in the same country/region to minimise duplication and maximise complimentary
BPF Country Implementation Plan	Agree	Agree	Disagree
BPF Country Implementation Plan	Somewhat agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree

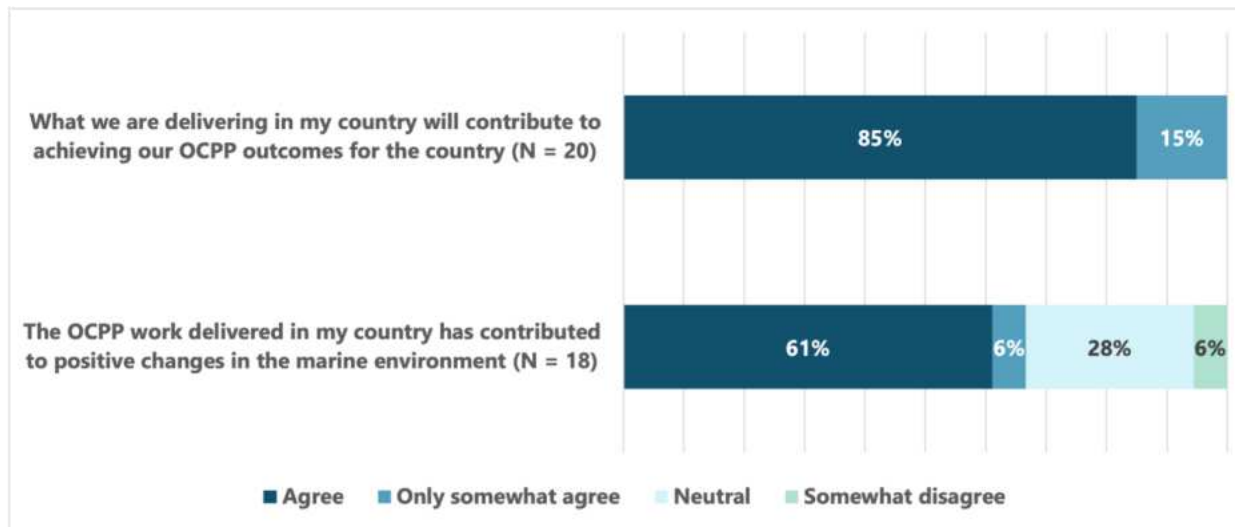
The survey collected the respondent's perceptions on whether what is being delivered is contributing to achieving the outcomes for the country.

This was assessed through two statements and a 5-point Likert scale.

The statements are:

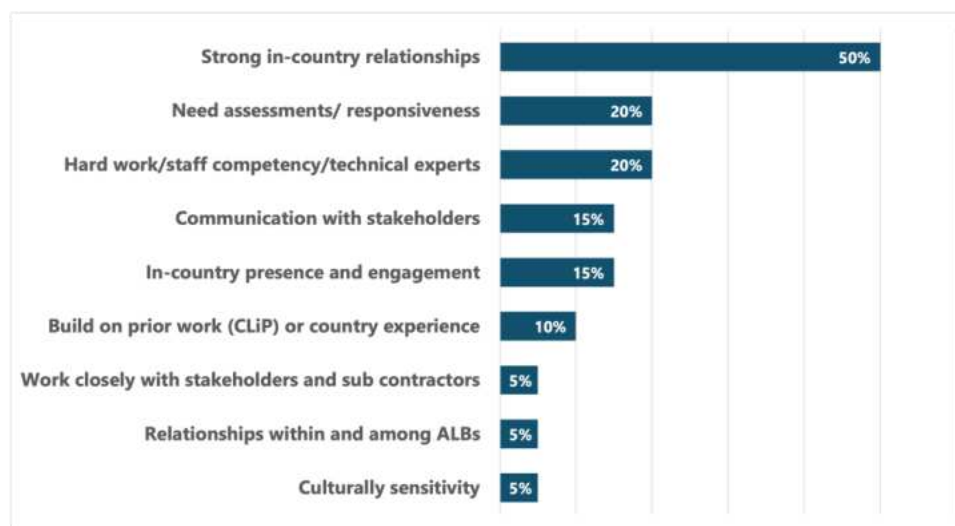
- What we are delivering in my country will contribute to achieving our OCPP outcomes for the country.
- The OCPP work delivered in my country has contributed to positive changes in the marine environment

The chart below shows an overwhelmingly positive about the delivery of activities that contribute to the OCPP objective. Almost all, 85%, agree with the statement, and 15% somewhat agree. The respondents are somewhat less positive about contributing to positive changes in the marine environment, yet, at 67% it is a majority of the respondents. Another 28% is neutral and only 6% disagrees, ie the program is not making positive changes.



Q: What do you think enabled those positive results to occur?

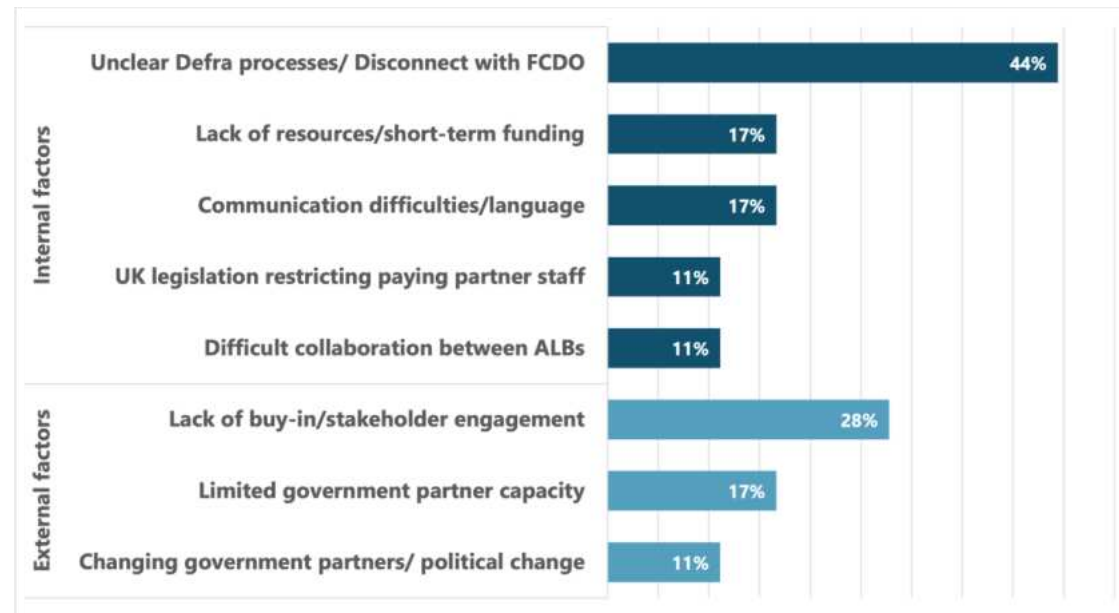
The question is exploring the underlying reasons for the changes in the previous chart. The question solicited open text responses which have been categorized and presented in the chart below. The strong in-country relationships is mentioned by 50% by the respondents. The conduct of needs assessments and responsive programmes, and the hard work and competency of delivery partner staff are both with 20% coming at a far second position.



Q: What challenges have you encountered that have been the most significant for the OCPP in your country?

The table below summarizes responses from this 'free text' question. The consultants categorized the responses, and further grouped them as internal or external to the programme. The most important group of factors is internal (44%): unclear Defra processes and the disconnect of OCPP with FCDO. The lack of buy/stakeholder engagement was the biggest external factor, with 28% of all the shared challenges.

In addition to what is presented in the chart, the following challenges were identified only once (6% of the respondents): inflation, unavailable consumables and staff changes among the delivery partners.

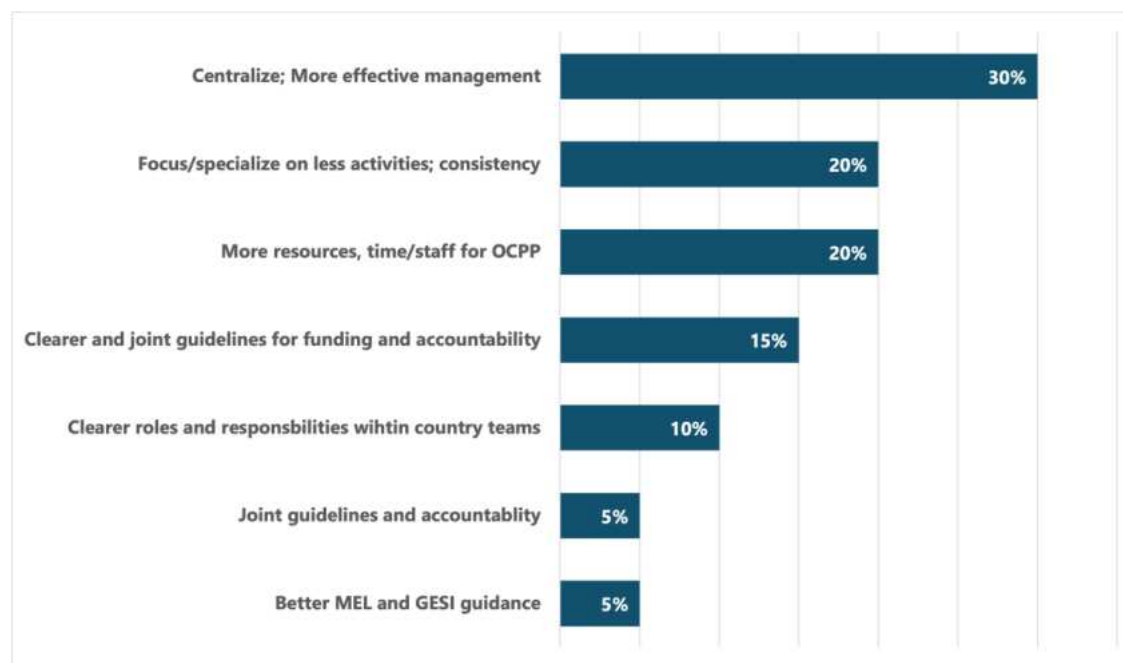


Q: If you could change something about the programme and/or project you are involved in to make it work more effectively, what would you change and why?

The survey provided a broad range of responses, with most focusing on the change only. The raised points were however usually self-explanatory. A number of responses were grouped in a category of similar points.

All but one response relates to the management of OCPP. Effective management, with the suggestion to centralize management, was mentioned most commonly, by 30% of the respondents. A fifth of the respondents would seek a more focused and consistent programming with less activities, and 15% would like the programme to have more resources. Higher budgets were not explicitly mentioned but are required for the suggested increased staff and time to allocate to OCPP.

A different stream concerned changes in management to unify and make clear guidelines for fund management, as well as clearer roles and responsibilities within country teams. While these only made up 5 - 15% each of the respondents, together they make a significant case that there is a demand for streamlining activities.



Sustainability - Transition strategies

On the question 'My country has a transition strategy, or will have a transition strategy, when the in-country partnerships end', four (20%) out of the 20 respondents indicated they will have a transition strategy in the future. One respondent does not know, while the remaining 70% state that 'No we have not discussed transition strategies yet'.

Annex 4

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Evaluation of Friends of Ocean Action – Blue Recovery Hubs; Project Summary Report; January 2024	Defra
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GOAP Milestone Report 1	GOAP
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Annex 5

Description and status of OCPP

Description of OCPP

The Ocean Country Partnership Programme

The OCPP is one of 12 programmes under the UK government's flagship £500m BPF. The BPF works through a portfolio of bilateral and multilateral programmes across four integrated themes — marine biodiversity, climate change, marine pollution and sustainable seafood — supporting eligible countries to protect and manage their marine environment sustainably and reduce poverty.

The OCPP is a five-year programme (2021 — 2026) led by Defra as a primary technical assistance programme with an original budget of £65m (equivalent to around 13 percent of the total BPF allocation). It is mostly operationalized through government to government bilateral partnerships with Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible countries (£55m), with £10m reserved for working through strategic partnerships. As of June 2024, at the time of writing, OCPP allocation is proposed at £71.9m and a Business Case addendum is being prepared for a ten percent uplift.⁷⁰

The support through bilateral partnerships is delivered by three UK government ALBs: Cefas, JNCC, and MMO. Through these bilateral arrangements the programme works to build local and regional marine science capabilities to improve policymaking and address multiple marine environment challenges by:

- Strengthening marine science expertise;
- Developing science-based policy and management tools;
- Creating educational resources for coastal communities.

The OCPP ALB work is intended to be demand-led, driven by scoping exercises to discuss needs with partner country stakeholders. Activities delivered by ALBs predominantly focus on capacity-building for partner governments, local universities, regional organisations, and civil society organisations to improve the delivery of applied scientific solutions. Partner country needs are identified according to one or more of three of the BPF's themes — marine biodiversity, sustainable seafood or marine pollution.⁷¹

The support provided under the two strategic partnerships is intended to strengthen the business case for sustainable ocean management. These partnerships were initially funded as separate initiatives, however in 2022, Defra integrated them into the OCPP, in order to broaden the support the programme can offer partner countries and reduce management costs.⁷²

- I. **The Friends of Ocean Action (FOA)** — is a platform hosted by the WEF, in collaboration with the WRI. FOA delivers on two priority areas for the BPF and OCPP: (1) improving the sustainability of blue food production, and (2) supporting developing countries to build sustainable ocean economies. There have been four distinct FOA projects receiving funding to date.

⁷⁰ Uplift consideration as outlined in a June 2024 OCPP Senior Management Board presentation.

⁷¹ The Marine Pollution theme builds on Defra's Commonwealth Litter Programme (CLiP), which was implemented from 2018–2021 across seven countries by Cefas. Sustainable seafood was previously referred to as 'One Health Aquaculture'.

⁷² DEFRA Annual report year 1

- *Blue Food Partnership (BFP)* — creating a global roadmap for sustainable aquaculture and implementing a pilot initiative in Ghana.
- *Blue Recovery Hubs (BRH)* — undertaking post COVID-19 situational analysis appraisals and accelerating sustainable blue economy strategies for Fiji, and Samoa, with regional buy-in.
- *Sea Food Loss and Waste (SFLW)* — convening a working group to eliminate fish industry waste and develop guidelines from a Namibia pilot to be applied globally.
- *Supply Chain Risk Tool (SCRT) project* — developing a Global Fishing Watch (GFW) platform as a fishing risk data solution to tackle Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, linking Stanford University to ODA countries to engage companies to test and roll out the data solution with regional government buy-in.

II. **The Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP)** — is a membership-driven partnership hosted by the University of New South Wales (UNSW), bringing together governments, international organisations, and research institutions to build a global community of practice for ocean natural capital accounting. Within OCPP, the GOAP programme supports countries to develop ocean accounting systems to inform decision-making on the sustainable and equitable use of marine resources, including overseeing a global expert panel to advance knowledge production and implementing ocean accounting in pilot countries. To date, across the programme, a total of 19 countries have received support (bilaterally, or through the strategic partnerships).

OCPP also supports ad-hoc initiatives on a needs-only basis in several non-OCPP countries, including an emergency response programme (in Peru), as well as an emergency response and technical assistance initiative in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR) (in Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Costa Rica).

Delivery against the Theory of Change and thematic areas of OCPP

The OCPP Theory of Change (Annex 6) seeks to address a central problem:

“The ocean is negatively impacted by human activities, endangering fragile environments and the livelihoods and wellbeing of vulnerable communities that rely on them. Increased capacity to generate and use scientific knowledge in policy-making and implement actions to address ocean pollution, biodiversity loss, access to sustainable seafood and the impacts of climate change are required.”

The programme recognises the ocean supports the global population’s economic, social, and environmental needs, with over three billion people depending on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods.⁷³ Careful management of the ocean is therefore a key feature of a sustainable future and ocean science is crucial to understand and monitor the ocean, predict its health status and support sustainable and equitable marine decision-making.⁷⁴

In order to respond to these challenges, the ToC identifies four *causal pathways*, through which support is channelled to partner countries to address identified problems:

⁷³ United Nations: Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water, n.d.

⁷⁴ [Global ocean science report: the current status of ocean science around the world; executive summary - UNESCO Digital Library](#)

1. **Capacity Building and Technical Assistance:** Training and TA support of partner country stakeholders in sustainable marine ecosystem science, and training in country stakeholders in monitoring of their marine environment, (including the provision of and training in the use of scientific equipment, infrastructure, data, and best practice guidance).
2. **Governance and Regulation:** Improving policies and regulatory frameworks, developing strategies and plans; developing integrated models and approaches for sustainable ecosystem management, including natural capital accounting, models for inclusive local marine ecosystem governance and spatial planning, national and local planning and budgeting.
3. **Science, Education and Knowledge Exchange:** Develops partnerships and engagements that enable science, education and knowledge exchange across multiple levels of stakeholders. The OCPP establishes, and/or strengthens ocean science-related networks between individuals, organisations (including universities), and ministries within partner countries, and between partner countries.
4. **Value Chain and Market Access:** Engaging market actors to develop market linkages for 'sustainable seafood' and to better underline the important linkage (to the private sector) between marine biodiversity and marine pollution.

Through these pathways the programme supports organisations to achieve tangible *programme outputs*, including training, guidelines or policy recommendations, knowledge products and datasets, sharing platforms, task forces and market relationships. When stakeholders adopt these outputs, this results in **intermediate-level outcomes** whereby partner country governments have *"improved policies or regulations and practices established for sustainable marine environment management and emergency response, with enhanced awareness, capabilities and inclusive governance in place to implement and enforce them."*

To achieve the final **outcome**, partner countries implement the outputs and will be able to demonstrate they are taking *"action to effectively and sustainably manage and protect their marine environments."* They will effectively enforce inclusive regulations that protect and conserve the marine environment; and there will be a strengthening of stewardship and sustainability through support from public-private partnerships, community engagement and ownership, and appropriate resourcing for policies, regulations and practices.

The OCPP ToC (Annex 5) illustrates the OCPP's vision for **impact** that by strengthening capacity, policy, monitoring systems and ocean finance in the long term will enable partner countries to *"...address the challenges to their marine environments and biodiversity, enhance marine dependent livelihoods, and the wellbeing of those that depend on them, sustainably, equitably and inclusively."*

OCPP delivery to date (portfolio assessment)

This section provides an overview of OCPP's bilateral and strategic partnerships implementation to date (May 2024). Information is drawn from the OCPP Annual Reviews (AR) FY 21/22 and FY 22/23 (in draft), the OCPP activity tracker for ALBs, GOAP quarterly milestone reporting and the FOA 2023 evaluation report. A number of constraints /challenges to this portfolio assessment are set out below:

- At the time of the assessment, OCPP's monitoring system was being redeveloped and therefore monitoring data was not available for FY 23/24 from the ALBs. Therefore, the ALBs provided activity data per the new activity tracker (designed to

monitor progress against the planned activities) for FY 23/24. The progress monitoring of ALB activities in FY 23/24 was completed retrospectively and some activities may be missing from the tracking tool or were completed in an earlier financial year.

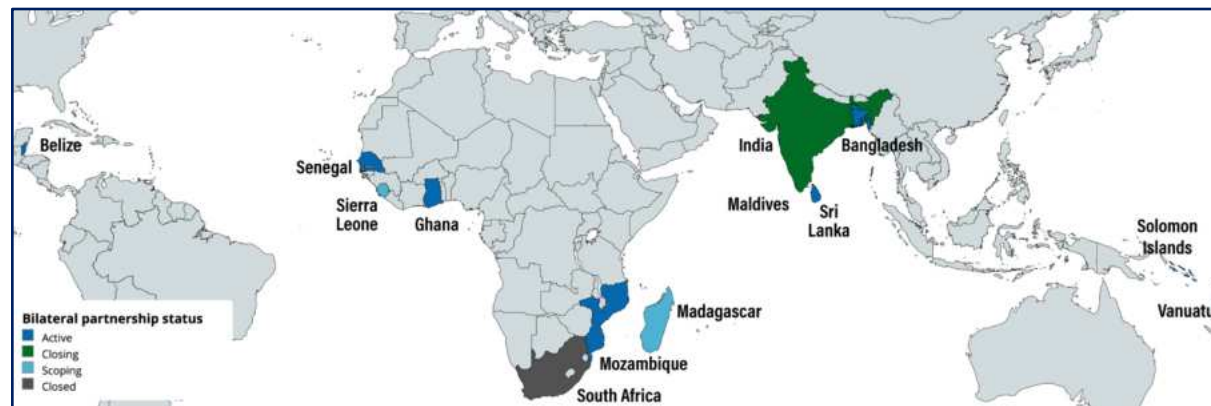
- The strategic partners – FOA and GOAP - follow a different reporting format to that of the ALBs.
- The OCPP Annual Review reports cover the period from July to June, while financial reporting covers the period from April to March. At the time of assessment, the OCPP Annual Review report for 22/23 was still in draft form.
- FOA did not provide Defra with the outputs achieved during the first annual reporting period, rendering the reporting for the overall portfolio incomplete.

Geographical footprint of OCPP

The number of bilateral partnerships under the OCPP have increased over time since the programmes' inception. In the first year of operations, the programme had seven active partnerships, increasing to ten by the end of year two (FY 22/23). By year three (FY 23/24), OCPP's partnerships grew to eleven active bilateral partnerships, meeting the 10–15 target set out in the Business Case (see Figure 0.1). These eleven active partnerships include the India programme (which is in the process of closing) and one country still in the scoping phase (Madagascar). Under the strategic partnerships with GOAP and FOA, a total of 13 countries have been supported, eleven of which continue to have an active programme.

Overall, a total of 19 countries have received support through OCPP to date, with 18 countries active as of May 2024. A full listing of countries and information on status can be found in annex 6.

Figure 0.1: OCPP bilateral partnership status. CC-BY-SA4.0. (Source: OCPP activity tracker)



OCPP progress and achievements

Activities being implemented under OCPP are wide-ranging across the three thematic areas — marine biodiversity, sustainable seafood and marine pollution. For the first two years of OCPP delivery, progress and achievements were recorded through annual review reporting and associated submissions to Defra only. At the start of year three a centralized 'activity tracker database' was launched to capture progress and achievements at the activity-level. In addition, following the refresh of the programme ToC and revision of the logframe for the programme in late 2023, a new monitoring system was developed and was being rolled out with support from the NIRAS MEL team from January – June 2024.

Years 1 and 2 — overall portfolio performance

Overall, from July 2021 to June 2023, OCPP had mixed results in terms of progress and achievements. Under the programme’s indicators for *increasing marine scientific and/or technical capacity in partner countries* all of the milestones were achieved or exceeded. This meant that more than 300 individuals received training (32 percent female trainees) across 57 institutions, and 45 scientific reports and papers were developed and published by partner countries, with 54 percent of the authors being women (100 percent of authors were women under GOAP). These excellent results are offset by the remaining indicators showing mixed results, from being partially accomplished to non-achievement of none of the indicator milestones (as shown in Figure 0.2).

Figure 0.2 Traffic light status of achievements against indicators, years 1 and 2. (Sources: OCPP Annual Reviews, 2021/22 and 2022/23 - unpublished)

Output Indicator categories	Achievements (Yr 1-2)
Increased marine scientific and/or technical capacity in partner countries	All indicator milestones achieved.
Enhanced education and exchange of knowledge in relation to marine management in partner countries	Some indicator milestones achieved, others falling behind.
Productive partnerships between the UK and priority coastal developing countries	
Global public goods contributing to or enabling sustainable management of the marine environment in coastal developing countries	
Improved regulation and/or governance of the marine environment in partner countries	None of the indicator milestones achieved.

Year 3 — Bilateral partnership performance through ALBs

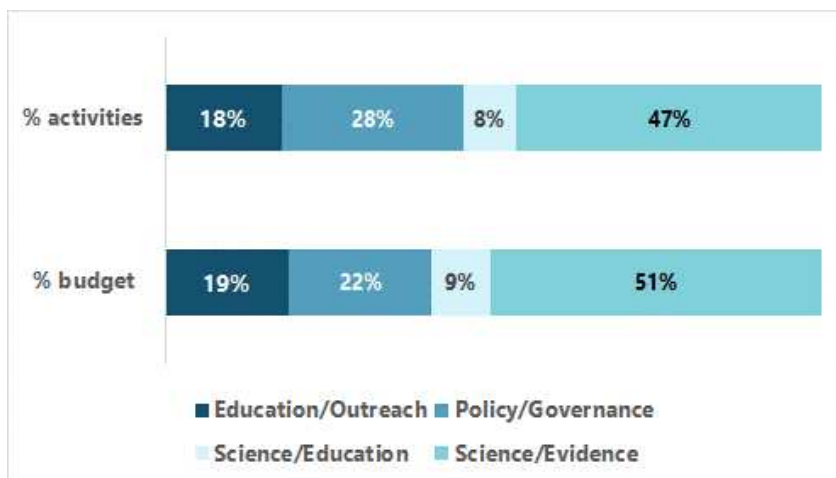
Following the development of the central activity tracker database in FY 23/24, it was possible for year 3 to see a more complete overview of progress and achievements for the bilateral partnerships, managed through the ALBs.

The results show that ALBs reported a total of 310 activities across the twelve countries. The latest activity tracker from FY 23/24 shows the implementation status of the reported activities⁷⁵, demonstrating that 42 percent of the activities are completed, and a further 20 percent are in progress or initiated. Nearly a quarter (24 percent) of planned activities were terminated. Reasons for terminations were predominantly related to the absorption of activities by another ALB, or postponement due to delays / absence of a signed MoU with the partner government.

Figure 0.3 Distribution of activities and budget across the causal pathways

⁷⁵ Several activities have incomplete data points, for example missing costs of activities. Activities with blank entries for a data point were excluded from the analysis.

Assessing the distribution of ALB-led activities and budgets across the programme ToC causal pathways reveals that the ALBs are concentrating more than half of their activities on the delivery of science, 47 percent on conducting research to generate evidence, and eight percent on science/education (Figure 0.3). The allocation of budget to pathways is commensurate with and aligned with the number of activities in each pathway.⁷⁶

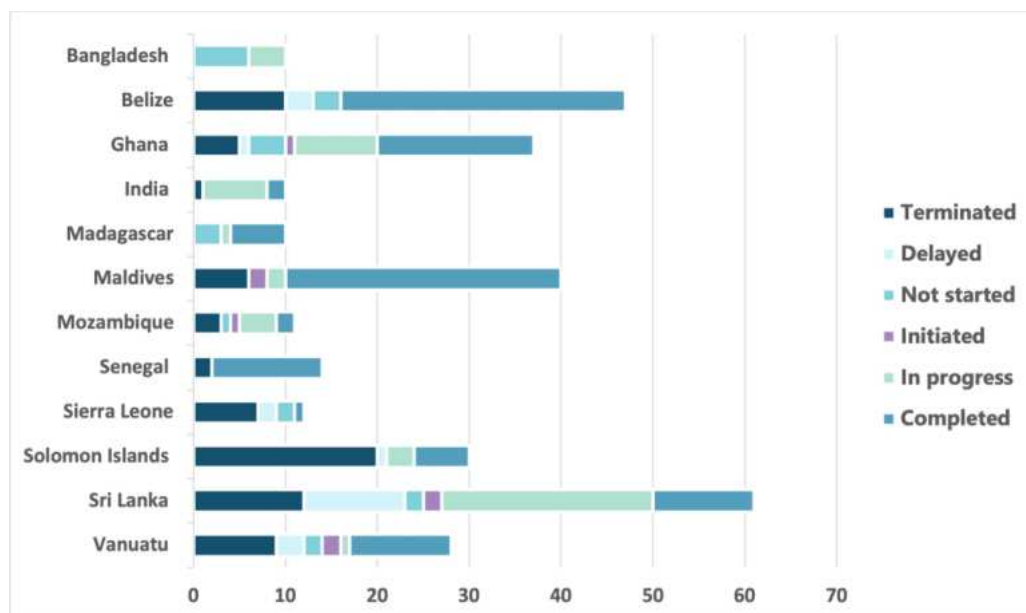


In terms of the portion of the portfolio activities and budget dedicated to each of the thematic areas, most activities (39 percent) fall within the pollution theme, compared to the biodiversity or sustainable seafood themes. The allocation of 51 percent of the budget for the pollution theme activities is much higher than the 36 percent anticipated in the Business Case. The biodiversity portfolio makes up 35 percent of reported activities, but accounts for only 21 percent of the budget expenditure.

The implementation status of ALBs' activities, at end of year 3, varies widely across supported countries, as shown in Figure 0.4. This chart presents the delivery status of activities in all twelve countries with active partnerships during year 3 of the programme. Newer partnerships in Madagascar, Senegal, and Sierra Leone, as well as the closing partnership in India, reported the lowest number of activities, while Belize and the Maldives reported the most completed activities. The Solomon Islands and Sierra Leone, respectively reported, 67 percent and 58 percent of planned activities terminated.

Figure 0.4 Activity implementation status across bilateral partnership countries (Source: OCPP activity tracker)

⁷⁶ The proportion of activities under the 'value chain and market access' is missing from this distribution because it is missing from the activity tracker. This causal pathway is the main area of focus of FOA work, though ALB delivery does feature value chain improvement activities.



Also in year 3, the OCPP commenced a pilot initiative awarding academic scholarships through the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). By March 2024, a total of 124 scholarships have been awarded, with an estimated cost of £2,265,181 (of which > 27 percent of funds has already been disbursed to date) (see Table 0.1). All but two of these scholarships are funding Master level degrees. Most of the participating students are enrolled at universities in their home country, with the exception of scholars from the Maldives and the Pacific (Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) who are studying at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji. From the 124 scholarship recipients, 52 percent are female.

The 43 listed degree titles include a wide variety of courses, with many relevant to all three of OCPP’s thematic areas; for example, climate change, marine environmental science, integrated coastal zone management and geospatial science. A small proportion of the degrees cover themes which are more at the periphery of OCPP’s scope, for example degrees in agriculture and inland water resource management.

Table 0.1 Number of ACU scholarships awarded by home country. (Source: OCPP Scholarships MEL reporting, 2024)

Scholar’s Home country	Number of scholarships awarded	% female scholars	OCPP theme			
			Biodiversity	Seafood	Pollution	Cross-cutting
Bangladesh	16	56%		✓		
Belize	10	40%	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fiji	1	n/a*			✓	
Ghana	13	46%	✓	✓	✓	✓
India	18	61%	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maldives	5	60%	✓		✓	✓
Mozambique	18	44%	✓			
Senegal	10	30%			✓	✓
Solomon Islands and Vanuatu	17	60%**	✓		✓	✓
Sri Lanka	16	63%	✓	✓		✓

Scholar's Home country	Number of scholar-ships awarded	% female scholars	OCPP theme			
			Biodiversity	Seafood	Pollution	Cross-cutting
Totals	124	52%				

* Gender unspecified ** Calculated out of 15 with available gender information

Year 3 — Strategic partnership performance

The four FOA projects (outlined in Table 0.2) were developed through an annual planning and proposal process, resulting in a set of quarterly and annual deliverables. Defra committed OCPP funding up to FOA up to end of FY23/24. Key achievements across the four projects, and their alignment with OCPP themes and causal pathways is set out in table 4. Of the four projects, WEF requested further support from OCPP for the Blue Food Partnership only. The Sea Food Loss and Waste project is considered completed, but WEF aims to link the stakeholders with other ongoing initiatives under the Blue Planet Fund. WEF also decided to continue the Blue Recovery Hubs, and the Supply Chain Risk Tool projects with funding from other sources.

Table 0.2 Key achievements of FOA projects. (Source: FOA evaluation)

OCPP Theme	Causal Pathway	Project Site(s)	Key achievements	Status
OCPP Theme: Sustainable Seafood				
Blue Food Partnership	Value Chain and Market Access	Global / Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Sustainable Aquaculture Roadmap Ghana Aquaculture Action Plan Organized private sector One Health training with Cefas Strong engagement of Ghanaian Chamber of Commerce Promotion of safe food through food festival 	Further funds requested from Defra.
Sea Food Loss and Waste	Value Chain and Market Access	Namibia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Namibian Ocean Cluster established with secretariat Completed research on utilization and processing of Hake waste production 	Completed and operating independently of donor support.
Supply Chain Risk Tool	Policy/Governance	Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vessel viewer platform established Private sector engagement in company risk assessments Engagement with APEC and governments on policy development re data transparency and combatting IUU fishing 	Continuing with funding from other donor sources.
OCPP Theme: Cross cutting				
Blue Recovery Hubs	Policy/Governance	Fiji, Samoa, Pacific Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appraisal report on post Covid-19 recovery and Sustainable Investment Pathways for Fiji and Partnership development for regionalization of the BRH intervention, for example with the Pacific Islands Forum. 	Continuing with funding from other donor sources.

GOAP received its first BPF allocation (Phase 1 funding) of £1m in FY2021/22, prior to a £200,000 cost extension, and Defra's three-year

commitment of £6m under OCPP (Phase 2 funding, ongoing to FY2024/25). Towards the end of 2023, GOAP was awarded an additional £7m (Phase 3) which runs parallel to phase 2 and is beyond the scope of this evaluation. Total GOAP allocation will be £14.2m by the end of OCPP. Under OCPP, GOAP activities in ocean accounting fall within the ‘Science, Education and Knowledge Exchange’ pathway, with the intention to influence policy development. Activities are focused on the creation of ocean accounts to contribute towards three OCPP thematic areas:

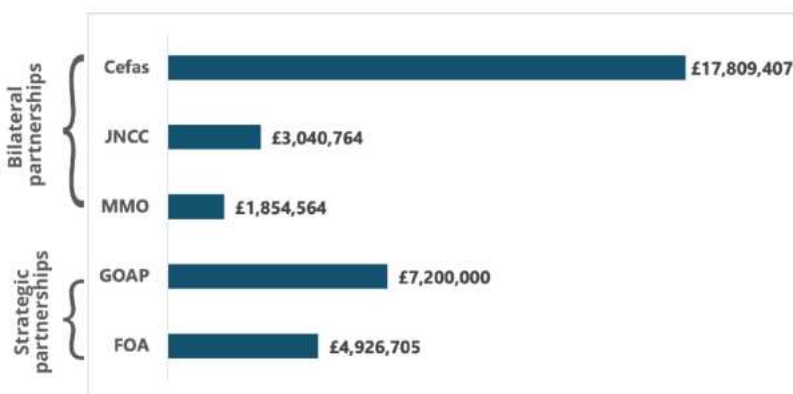
- **Marine biodiversity** — to provide the foundational data to support and leverage financing for the design, development and effective management of MPAs and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and preservation of critical marine habitats.
- **Sustainable seafood** — to provide data and evidence on the impact of aquaculture on the marine environment and evidence-based arguments for advancing sustainable practices and low-carbon approaches.
- **Marine pollution** — to monitor pollutant levels and impact on marine biota, to guide and inform policy development and decision-making.

GOAP has delivered effectively and consistently across all thematic areas and is on track to achieve all deliverables. Their quarterly reporting of milestones provides extensive data on progress made, with links to relevant documents, evidence, and accounts, prepared by GOAP, pilot countries or regional community practitioners engaged in programme delivery.

Financial allocations and spending to date

As of June 2024, the OCPP total expenditure was £35.6m. This is 55 percent of the overall programme budget (£65m) that runs from 2021 to 2026. Further, the total allocated amount for OCPP is proposed to increase to £71.9m.

Figure 0.5: Total OCPP expenditure over first three years by delivery partner (Source: SMB data).



Bilateral partnerships — the OCPP Business Case forecast that the ALBs would spend £30,360,000 by Year 3. At the end of FY 23/24, the total expenditure by ALBs to date was £22.7m⁷⁷, 75 percent their total forecast.

Strategic partnerships — GOAP’s expenditure trajectory is at 51 percent, with one year of Phase 2 implementation remaining and an

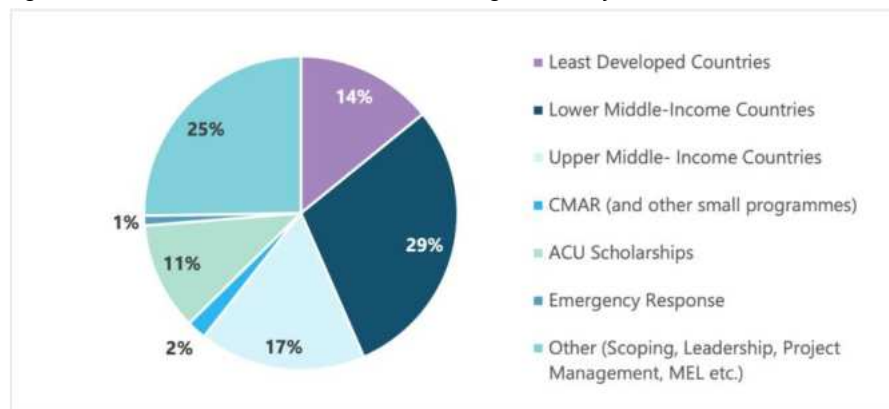
⁷⁷ As per SMB latest figures released in June 2024 – covering the period up to end of FY 2023/24.

additional year for Phase 3.⁷⁸ The FOA projects have been completed and reported an underspend of less than 1 percent.⁷⁹

Budget allocations by country income classification

Figure 0.6 provides data on ALBs spend across different country income classifications and wider programme categories. Least Developed Countries (LDCs) account for 14 percent of the spend, while lower-middle income countries have enjoyed a greater proportion of funds (29 percent).

Figure 0.6 Distribution of OCPP funds according to country income classifications and programme categories



OCPP Countries & status of programmes (June 2024)

Region	#	Country	Bilateral partnership status	GOAP status	FOA status
East Africa	1	Madagascar	Scoping	Active	
	2	Mozambique	Active	Active	
	3	Kenya		Active	
	4	South Africa	Closed	Active	
West Africa	5	Ghana	Active	Active	Proposal under review
	6	Senegal	Active (with MoU)		
	7	Sierra Leone	Scoping		
Southwest Africa	8	Namibia			Completed
Pacific SIDs	9	Samoa			Transitioned**
	10	Solomon Islands	Active		
	11	Vanuatu	Active		
	12	Fiji		Active	Transitioned**
Latin America & Caribbean SIDs	13	Belize	Active (with MoU)	Active	

⁷⁸ As per SMB latest figures released in June 2024.

⁷⁹ FOA Phase-3 Check-in – Update January 2024

South & Southeast Asia	14	Bangladesh	Active		
	15	India	Closing*		
	16	Maldives	Active (with MoU)	Active	
	17	Vietnam		Active	
	18	Sri Lanka	Active (with MoU)	Active	
	19	Indonesia		Active	

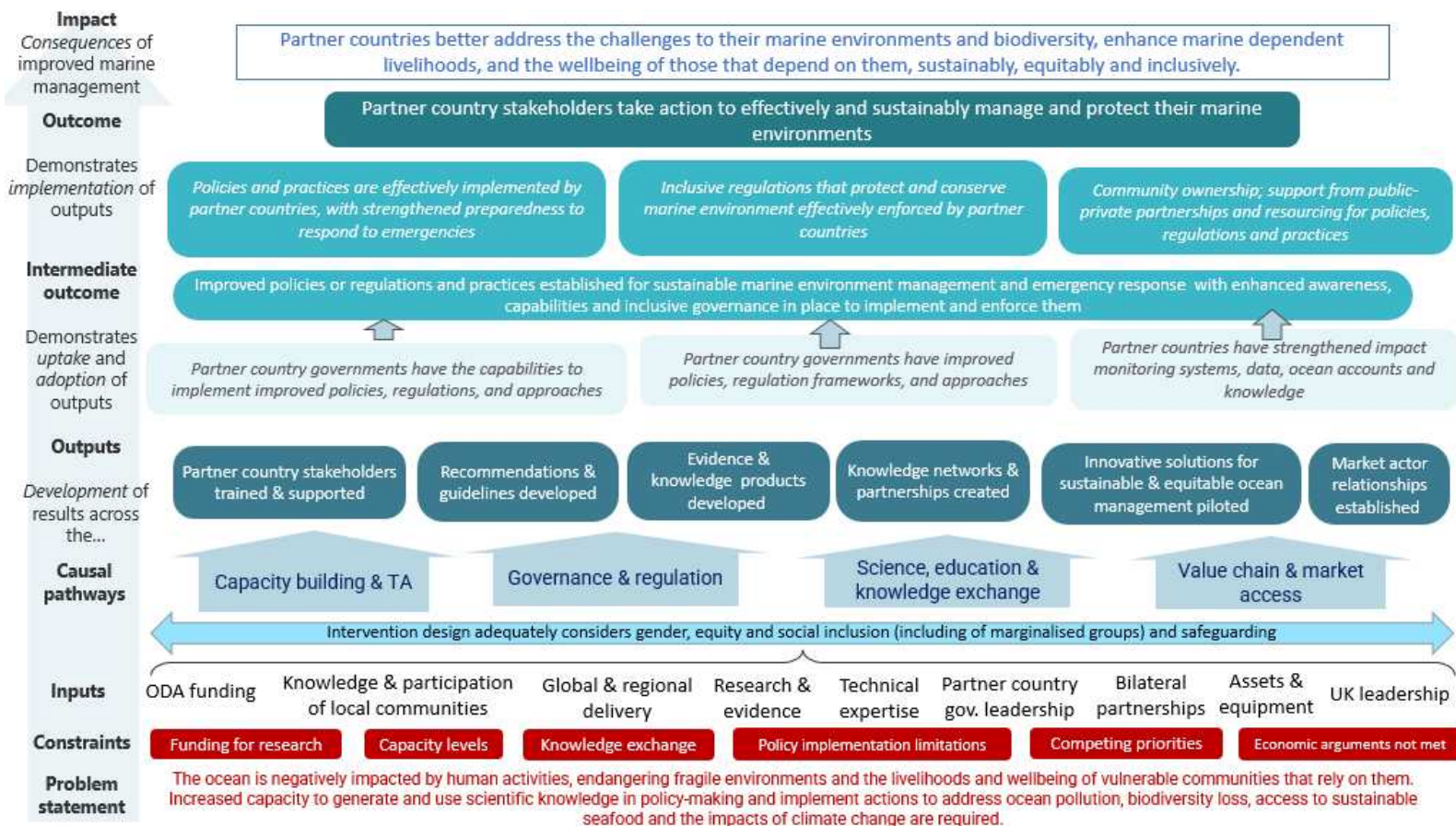
* The sustainable seafood theme is ongoing

** FOA initiatives in these countries are transitioning to be financed by other programmes from April 2024 onwards

Annex 6

OCPP Theory of Change and assumptions review

Figure 0.7 OCPP Theory of Change



The table below presents the ToC assumptions and their current rating when applied to the delivery partner. A 'green' status signifies the assumption is currently holding. 'Amber' warrants a review and consideration. A 'Red' rating means that the assumption does not hold true and must be addressed by delivery partners. For example, the evaluation team found the ALBs have struggled to deliver activities that are effectively tailored to local contexts. Because of this, the evaluation team have rated this assumption as 'amber' and therefore is in need of consideration by the OCPP ALB delivery teams in their strategic planning.

OCPP Theory of Change assumption	Delivery partner status rating
Delivery of pathways and activities are effectively tailored to local contexts.	FOA and GOAP
	ALBs
Capacity, capability and evidence generated through the programme effectively translate into policy and management change	FOA and GOAP
	ALBs

<p>Programme delivery adheres to Do No Harm principles, Safeguarding Principles and signed Frameworks</p>	<p>All delivery partners</p>
<p>HMG funding and priorities continue to support improvements in the marine environment and ocean economies</p>	<p>All delivery partners</p>
<p>All OCPP interventions are coherent with UK and partner country international agreements (e.g. CBD, ILO, CEDAW) to which all parties are signatories policies</p>	<p>All delivery partners</p>
<p>Public-private funding and innovations in financing are available to support implementation of improved policy, regulatory framework, and improvement in the sustainable ocean economies in partner countries</p>	<p>FOA and GOAP</p>
	<p>ALBs</p>
<p>Interventions are targeting marginalised groups, including the poorest, and women and girls</p>	<p>All delivery partners</p>

Annex 7

Key results of the programme

Key identified results and emerging changes to management of the marine environment

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
ALBs - Belize Sustainable Sea-food theme	<p>Key Change:</p> <p>The OCPP is strengthening animal health systems through delivering training and knowledge exchange to stakeholders on data and monitoring in biosecurity measures and risk mitigation on tilapia hatchery farms; and training in histology techniques, field sampling techniques, basic fish farm level diagnostics, disease recognition, anaesthesia, and antibiotic mixing protocols.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>The shrimp and tilapia industries are vital to Belize, with the ability to bring in foreign markets, employment opportunities, and enhanced food security. In 2015, the country's export of shrimp contributed <u>14.8% of its export earnings</u>. In 2016 a bacterial infection incurred a \$40 million loss to the industry and shut down a number of farms and <u>livelihoods</u>.</p> <p>Belize has a limited number of small-scale aquaculture farms, <u>including for exotic tilapia</u>. All the fish produced by the small number of farms, including those run by the Ministry of Agriculture, are sold at local markets and used for family consumption within communities.</p> <p>Many laboratories and farms utilise poor practices that do not effectively profile and screen for diseases that can affect both tilapia and shrimp farms. There is limited capacity to manage, monitor and regulate the marine environment efficiently and holistically.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>This work increased the capacity and capability of BAHA and Minis-try of Agriculture technicians to conduct laboratory analyses and respond to biosecurity threats through training on biosecurity measures plans, highlighting practical ways to risk assess and mitigate on an individual farm basis. Training and knowledge exchange for Aquatic Animal Health staff (including Technical Directors, technicians and Border Inspection Officers) was also delivered.</p> <p>OCPP also delivered histology equipment that strengthens stake-holder capacity to use their new training to test for vibrio isolation on shrimp. According to stakeholders, BAHA and Ministry of Agriculture would not have this capability without OCPP support (figure 4.2). Their work directly impacts value chains (shrimp and tilapia) and ensuring relevant staff are trained, reduces production</p>	<p>Capacity Building & TA</p> <p>Evidence of intermediate outcome level change: enhanced capacity in relation to sustainably managing their marine environment. The stakeholders have the equipment and training needed to meet their government requirements for bio-security measures.</p> <p>Potential for outcome level change to be followed up in 2026.</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway change
			<p>losses, and promotes economic growth through trade.</p> <p>OCPP is advising on policy guidance and supporting the development of disease surveillance plans for the shrimp industry in response to pollution events and investigations. At the time of the evaluation, no outputs or policy guidance or disease surveillance plans were produced or yet available.</p>	
ALBs – Belize Marine Pollution	<p>Key Change: for marine plastics and litter, the OCPP is building capacity and training in pollution, specifically plastic pollution and water quality monitoring with the Department of Environment and University of Belize. It is supporting the Government in Belize in the implementation of key actions from the Belize Marine Litter Action Plan: Belize - Blue, Clean, Resilient and Strong, which was adopted under CLiP.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Although identified as priority area by the government, Belize has limited capacity to manage, monitor and regulate the marine environment efficiently and holistically. Water and marine pollution monitoring faces particular challenges such as lack of coordination, no lab certifications, limited lab space, lack of training and skills in results interpretation, lack of sustainable financing (public labs). The DoE consider water quality and their ability to test their rivers one of the most pressing issues.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>The programme has enabled Belize to implement its National Marine Litter Action Plan by providing equipment and training that has increased capacity and capability of stakeholders to conduct laboratory analyses. Two new MicroFTIR microscopes were installed: one at the DoE and the other at the University of Belize staff, with staff trained on their use to further advance Belize’s scientific capacity to support microplastics and other pollutant analysis. The University of</p>	<p>Capacity Building & TA</p> <p>This demonstrates Outcome level change with the DoE laboratory equipment and training increasing Belizean capacity to better monitor rivers in the country, thereby contributing to the outcome - Belize is taking action to effectively and sustainably manage and protect their marine environments. The OCPP is helping the DoE implement the 2020 Law of Banning Single Use Plastic. With the FTIR and training, they can test commercial</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
			<p>Belize's Hummingbird laboratory is used by ten students, three of which are ACU scholars. The latest research indicates both laboratories supported by OCPP is helping these institutions with method development, baselining, understanding impact, sources, pathways and transport, and monitoring of pollutants. It also affirms that these laboratories are a part of a wider international network set up under CLiP and OCPP that are coordinating and producing comparable data. (Source: "Creation of an international laboratory network towards global microplastics monitoring harmonisation." Adil Bakir (Cefas), et al. Unpublished.)</p>	<p>products for biodegradability. The government has a timeline for companies to phase out single use plastic: by 2026 the OCPP impact evaluation can assess the extent the DoE has been able to enforce the law using the equipment and training provided by OCPP.</p> <p>For the University of Belize, this demonstrates Intermediate Outcome level change with their enhanced capacity and ability to train scientists and students, and conduct research.</p>
<p>ALBs – Belize Marine Pollution theme</p>	<p>Key Change: A maritime advisor has designed and delivered a National Maritime Policy that considers Belize's current and future needs and addresses climate change and GESI considerations. The OCPP has conducted a feasibility study to understand the potential investment needs for port(s) infrastructure in Belize to</p>	<p>High: Stakeholders, policies and activities in the maritime sector were coordinated between agencies, making it difficult for DoE and Belize Ports Authority to effectively and sustainably manage maritime spaces.</p> <p>Belize is currently non-compliant with IMO ship generated waste requirements due to port facility and other infrastructural challenges but have special International</p>	<p>High</p> <p>OCPP conducted a Port Reception Facilities Upgrade Feasibility Study. From this, the programme drafted a Revised Belize National Maritime Transport Policy paper and also a Maritime Transport Policy Gazettal, which</p>	<p>Governance & Regulation; Science, Education and Knowledge Exchange.</p> <p>For the Revised Belize National Maritime Transport Policy paper, it will be Intermediate Outcome level change if it is adopted, and Outcome level change if it is</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
	enable and accommodate MARPOL-compliant waste management activities within Belize.	<p>Maritime Organisation exemption status. However, Belize's ports also face climate change challenges such as increased frequency of severe weather and rising sea-levels.</p> <p>As Belize grows and generates more waste, the recycling sector will need to grow to accommodate. However, the lack of a unified platform for waste producers and recyclers is hampering efforts for the sector to coordinate limited resources and leverage investments to develop the infrastructure and services required to meet growing demand.</p>	<p>aligns the relevant policies and activities in sector.</p> <p>MARPOL SIDS Committee Representation: due to the Ports work, Belize now has a position at the MARPOL international committee representing SIDS. Since Belize has managed to get more Caribbean countries on board, it is now called the Pacific-Caribbean coalition. This coalition successfully negotiated at the latest IMO working group to meet their demands on shipping emissions.</p>	<p>implemented. These changes will be followed up in the 2026 impact evaluation of OCPP.</p> <p>The government's involvement in MARPOL and the formation of the Pacific-Caribbean coalition to negotiate on climate change related maritime issues is an unintended Outcome level change that was catalysed by the programme.</p>
ALBs – Ghana Biodiversity theme	<p>Potential Change: The OCPP is building MSP capacity through: addressing MSP evidence gaps; scoping additional technical MSP capacity building needs and requirements; advise and assist LUSPA on producing a country-specific MSP guidance document; holding MSP capacity building workshops and training; producing guidance/materials for LUSPA. Working with both LUSPA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), this work will culminate in the preparation of Marine Spatial Development Framework for</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Ghana is one of the most populous countries in west Africa. Its 550 km coastline is home to one quarter of the country's rapidly growing coastal population, which is outpacing the rest of the country. The Government in Ghana recognises the importance of the growing maritime sector. Extractive industries are becoming more predominant and active along the coastal zone (oil, gas, fishing), with the President Akufo-Addo saying that his government 'is committed to intensifying efforts towards the discovery of oil and gas onshore in the Voltaian Basin'.</p> <p>Even though Ghana is signatory to and has ratified a number of international conventions</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>This work will generate new marine spatial planning evidence to address priority evidence gaps and identify evidence to inform MSP preparation processes. Scoping of technical MSP capacity-building needs and requirements will be done; and to deliver targeted in-country MSP capacity-building. The programme will seek to produce a Marine Spatial Development Framework with government partners. If developed and approved it will need to be allocated some</p>	<p>Capacity Building & TA; Governance & Regulation</p> <p>This output is the most likely of all of Ghana's thematic pathways to result in outcome level change, if the Framework is developed, adopted and then implemented, given the existence and current delivery of the Mami Wata Project and Sustainable Ocean Plan that the Framework could feed directly into.</p> <p>Neither the Intermediate Outcome nor Outcome</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
	<p>Ghana's Western Region that covers all six districts within the western region.</p>	<p>and agreements relating to the marine and coastal environment in general and biological resources in particular, the country has been unable to translate many of them into national legislation for implementation purposes. There is no current integrated marine management plan, although there is a draft plan through the Mami Wata project delivered through the IUCN.</p>	<p>government funds; currently, there is no indication yet if a MSP Development Framework will be given funds to implement. If staff trained in MSP remain in place and with the resources to use their MSP training, and if the MSP Framework is funded and used, it will help the Government of Ghana to sustainably use their marine environment with MSP to enable sustainable growth of their maritime sector. The Framework can also be used as a mechanism for driving the delivery of other government plans and strategies relevant to the marine environment, specifically the Mami Wata Project delivered through IUCN and also the development of a Sustainable Ocean Plan.</p>	<p>level change will be reached without the MoU being signed.</p>
<p>ALBs – Ghana Marine Pollution theme</p>	<p>Potential Change: Improved capacity and capability in marine litter management through training and equipment. The OCPP is building capacity and training in pollution, specifically marine litter and ALDFG, through the development of the first Marine Litter short course focused on</p>	<p>High Marine litter is prominent across the coastal and marine environment of Ghana, impacting communities, ecosystems, and the blue economy potential of the region. Fishing related litter can have significant impacts of marine environments and therefore impacts communities reliant on these ecosystem services. Also, some types of fishing gear</p>	<p>High The programme will provide increased understanding of what types of fishing related litter is prevalent in Ghana, how it gets into the environment and how governments, private sector and communities can avoid this through increased capacity and</p>	<p>Capacity Building & TA; Governance & Regulation This work is likely to lead to IO level change: enhanced capacity and capability, and enhanced awareness, and improved policies in relation to responding to marine pollution (plastics, ALDFG,</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
	<p>West Africa and through target marine-litter training. It is supporting various organisations build their microplastic analysis capabilities. It will develop and draft a National Marine Litter Monitoring Framework to guide long-term harmonized monitoring of marine litter with government partners.</p>	<p>are banned but are still being used and lost to the environment.</p> <p>Ghanian stakeholders report problems with metal pollution both inland and offshore, which is believed to be linked to illegal mining. Contaminants from mining and landfills represent serious threats to both aquatic environments and humans who depend on these environments for food/livelihoods.</p>	<p>capability of CCM-UCC, CSIR with the microplastics lab and training of researchers and government.</p> <p>OCPP will draft a National Marine Litter Monitoring Framework to provide long-term and harmonized monitoring which looks at beach litter assessments, use of drones to augment beach litter data, and investigates the suitability of landed fish species to monitor microplastics in Ghanaian waters.</p>	<p>contaminants), if the National Marine Litter Monitoring Framework is developed and adopted.</p> <p>If the government were to adopt the Framework and implement it, this would be an outcome level change.</p>
<p>ALBs - Ghana Sustainable Seafood theme</p>	<p>Potential Change: Compliance and enforcement to address IUU. The OCPP is providing capacity building and training to the Fisheries Commission (FC) and the Landing Beach Enforcement Committee (LaBEC) to support the existing Fisheries Management Plan of Ghana 2022-2026.</p> <p>Sustainable Seafood: One Health Aquaculture. The programme is collaborating with the FC to support the Ghanaian Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development's national action plan for aquaculture development.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Many fish stocks in the coastal zone are at risk of collapse, driven by the reliance of fish as a main source of protein and further pressure through Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.</p> <p>These illegal practices in Ghana include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fishing without a license or quota for certain species, - failing to report catches or making false reports, - keeping undersized fish or fish that are otherwise protected by regulations, - fishing in closed areas or during closed seasons and using prohibited fishing gear, and 	<p>High</p> <p>Improved capability of the Fisheries Commission to manage, monitor and regulate existing fishing activities by 'training the trainer'</p> <p>LaBEC work will provide enhanced awareness of community members and volunteers, training fishers and observers, enhancing capacity of FC personnel on fishing gears.</p> <p>This workstream also delivered the One Health Aquaculture Workshop in Accra in February 2024, which used the One Health framework to integrate key</p>	<p>For the Compliance and Enforcement work: Capacity Building & TA; Governance & Regulation Pathways.</p> <p>This work demonstrates a potential IO level change, improved practices established for managing the marine environment, with enhanced awareness and capabilities in place to implement and enforce them.</p> <p>For the One Health Aquaculture work: Science, education and knowledge</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
		<p>– the use of child labour and trafficking.</p>	<p>issues in animal, environmental, and human health. The Conference established Communities of Practice between stakeholders, including from the private sector.</p>	<p>exchange; Value Chain and Market Access. This work demonstrates potential for Intermediate Outcome level change, improved practices established for managing the marine environment.</p>
<p>ALBs – Maldives Biodiversity theme</p>	<p>Key Change: The Maldives has a strategic document to guide the National Framework for Management of Protected and Conserved Areas (2024 – 2029)</p>	<p>High If the authorities roll out the Framework, then management of PCAs will follow the same guiding principles, including sites established under the Fisheries Act and OECMs within tourist resort boundaries.</p>	<p>High OCPP experts co-drafted the policy and financially supported consultations with the government and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Capacity Building & TA; Governance & Regulation IO level change. Once implemented and enforced, policies/regulations established for sustainable environmental management.</p>
<p>ALBs – Maldives Biodiversity theme</p>	<p>Key Change: The government and other stakeholders have a National MPA Research and Monitoring Framework to guide research activities in MPAs.</p>	<p>High If this framework is adopted and disseminated, then the Environmental Protection Agency will have guiding principles on incorporating research and monitoring activities into management plans and activities. This is vital to PCA management as neither the status of marine resources within MPAs or the threats to them are well understood. The manual can also be used by other (local) governments and private entities managing MPAs.</p>	<p>High OCPP experts co-drafted the policy and financially supported consultations with the government and other stakeholders. The policy was developed with the EPA.</p>	<p>Capacity Building & TA; Governance & Regulation IO level Change. Once implemented and enforced, policies/regulations established for sustainable environmental management.</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
ALBs – Maldives Marine Pollution Emergency Response	Key Change: MPA website providing public access to information on all 93 MPAs in the Maldives in English and Dhivehi. In addition, the site allows the public to book licenses to visit the MPAs. The website will be further developed in FY 2024/25	Medium If the website remains operational and is fully utilized as intended, then it will prove a highly valuable resource. The website serves as a portal to publish information and increase transparency around permit allocations and financial transactions around their purchase.	Medium The MoCCEE and other institutions provided data for the website. OCPP supported the development cost of the website. The website is operational, but will undergo an update	Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange Potential IO level change. Improved practices established for managing the marine environment.
ALBs - Sri Lanka Marine Pollution theme	Key Change: Ban on plastics in Sri Lanka. A ban on manufacturing and sale of single-use plastics took effect October 1, 2023.	High Sri Lanka is considered one of the five worst offenders when it comes to plastic waste inputs from land to the ocean, according to a study published in Science Magazine in 2010. Sri Lanka has become increasingly concerned about the deaths of wildlife due to ingestion of litter, in particular plastics. It is recognized that plastic pollution poses a serious threat to wildlife, including aquatic and terrestrial species . Forbes reported around 80 percent of all marine pollution is plastic waste. Fishing gear makes up a major part of this.	Low OCPP supported the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The development of a Marine Litter Database (with CLiP) now housed at the Industrial Technology Institute (ITI). - The gathering of beach survey data and resourcing key institutions with laboratories and equipment to analyse marine litter. OCPP and its predecessor CLiP gathered an extensive body of evidence demonstrating the scale plastics featured in marine pollution - The implementation of multi-media campaigns to raise public awareness of marine litter issues and a 	Governance & Regulation; Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange Outcome level change. Policies/practices effectively implement by partner countries.

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
			focused campaign in 2024 on bans of seven specific single use plastic items.	
ALBs - Sri Lanka Marine Pollution – Emergency Response theme	Key Change: Increased capacity in Oiled Wildlife response, and production of an Oiled Wildlife Response Plan for the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)	Medium If approved the Oiled Wildlife Response Plan will feed into the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan. If the plan is approved, it will be allocated some government funds; these are likely to be insufficient in view of the constrained fiscal environment in Sri Lanka. Nonetheless the plan will provide the Ministry with a tool it can use to go to donors to request assistance and funding to support implementation.	High OCPP’s partner, the South African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB), delivered in February 2024 a three-day Oiled Wildlife Response training to 30 frontline responders across Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka. This training has in turn led to the development of the Oiled Wildlife Response Plan – currently in draft form (still a work in progress during the preparation of the case study).	Capacity Building & TA; Governance & Regulation Potential IO level change. Policies/regulations established for sustainable environmental management.
ALBs -Sri Lanka Marine Pollution – Emergency Response theme	Key Change: Strengthened capabilities to improve the effectiveness and coordination of marine pollution emergency responses.	High Emergency response training was delivered to over 70 delegates and 28 agencies in November 2023 by OCPP. Sri Lanka established a Command Unit and has started taking steps towards ratification of 10 conventions. By OCPP’s training of trainers, the capacity of the	Medium OCPP supported: – Emergency Response training ⁸⁰ in November 2023 – Report: Recommendations for Better Readiness in	Capacity Building & TA This is an Outcome level change . Improved practices established for marine environment emergency response.

⁸⁰ Workshop title was “Working towards proactive preparedness: showcasing science and strengthening collaboration in marine pollution environmental response”.

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
		<p>Sri Lankan authorities to deal with emergencies has been strengthened.</p> <p>If the responsible authorities in Sri Lanka took forward and implemented the recommendations in the Better Readiness in Marine Pollution Emergency Response (2024), Sri Lanka would be able to better protect its marine environment in the event of an emergency incident.</p>	<p>Marine Pollution Emergency Response (2024).</p> <p>The course training manual is regarded by MEPA as a resource and tool for future use when training is rolled out.</p>	<p>The better readiness report is Potential IO level change. Policies/regulations established for sustainable environmental management.</p>
ALBs - Sri Lanka Biodiversity theme	<p>Key Change:</p> <p>Three of the five MPA assessments prepared by OCPP will be taken forward by the Sri Lanka Coral Reef Initiative to act upon the findings of the assessments.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Sri Lanka Coral Reef Initiative (SLCRI) will take forward the issues raised in three MPA assessments, with the expectation that it will lead to improvements in the management of these MPAs.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>OCPP supported DWC in completing the METT-4 assessments⁸¹ in five of its MPAs to better understand the current management effectiveness of each site. Three MPAs have been selected for inclusion in the Sri Lanka Coral Reef Initiative (SLCRI)⁸², for which IUCN acts as a convening agent, namely: Kalpitiya Bar Reef Marine Sanctuary, Kayankerni Marine Sanctuary and Pigeon Island Marine National Park.</p>	<p>Capacity building & TA IO level change. OCPP's initial assessment work will feed into GFCR's desired change to bridge the financing gap for the conservation of MPAs and strengthen the management of coral reefs.</p>
FOA - Blue Recovery Hub Cross - theme	<p>Key Change:</p> <p>Appraisal and investment pathways documents in place for Fiji</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>The documents are important and reportedly have informed government plans (unverified)</p>	<p>High</p> <p>The studies and all associated consultations were fully</p>	<p>Governance & Regulation; Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange</p>

⁸¹ First developed in 2002, the METT assessment is one of the first Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) tools.

⁸² SLCRI is funded by the Global Fund for Coral Reef (GFCR) which is the first multi-partner trust fund for Sustainable Development Goal 14⁸².

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
	<p>and Samoa to guide recovery and sustainable development of key economic sectors.</p> <p>The appraisal studies and Investment pathways for Fiji (aquaculture) and Samoa (resilient tourism and marine transport) have drawn interest from multiple donors to support initiatives with a regional scope through a regional body.</p>	<p>but will only become meaningful when there is broad support within the government, other stakeholders, and donors to implement the Pathways.</p>	<p>supported by OCPP, including one round table discussion each in Fiji and Samoa.</p>	<p>Potential IO outcome level. Improved data and knowledge to inform policies, regulations, and practices.</p>
<p>FOA – Seafood Loss and Waste project</p> <p>Sustainable Seafood theme</p>	<p>Key Change:</p> <p>There is strong company commitment from six companies as founding members of the Namibian Ocean Cluster (NOC) committing to bring fish by-products on shore and stop dumping at sea, thereby reducing marine pollution.</p> <p>Market research for four hake by-products completed and one operational feasibility report available to help the NOC continue product development.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>The project successfully brought together companies in the hake industry, and established an independent body, the NOC, to push forward the interest of the industry to develop waste into commercial products.</p> <p>The project has been completed and the project’s gains are continued by the NOC with contributions of the private founding members.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>OCPP provided all the funding for the project.</p>	<p>Value chain and market access; Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange</p> <p>Outcome level change, Improved practices established for managing the marine environment. The change is led by the private sector.</p>
<p>FOA – Supply Chain Risk Project</p> <p>Sustainable Seafood theme</p>	<p>Key Change:</p> <p>The tools are in place for companies to assess their risk of IUU fishing within their supply chain and take action accordingly. The data solution has reportedly been used</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>It is estimated that at least 20 percent of global catch involves IUU. Companies are getting more conscious, and more regulated, with proof increasingly required as to the source of their products.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>OCPP started support in FY 2022/23, contributing to the development of the online platform vessel viewer. Other donors</p>	<p>Governance & Regulation; Value Chain & Market Access</p> <p>Outcome level change.</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
	<p>by the enforcement agencies. A coalition of governments in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation region have publicly committed to coordinate action against IUU fishing including data transparency to enable more robust risk assessments.</p>	<p>The SCRCP helps companies to trace the origin of their products, and advocates for transparency in the fishing industry to make this possible.</p>	<p>also supported other components of the platform. In FY 2023/24 OCPP support continued to be important but shifted to research and advocacy.</p>	<p>Improved data and knowledge. Governments are utilizing data generated by the platforms.</p>
<p>FOA – Blue Food Partnership Sustainable Seafood theme</p>	<p>Key Change: The BFP Ghana Initiative stakeholders have produced a BFP Ghana Aquaculture Action Plan (GAAP) which is supported by government, businesses, research bodies and NGOs. Global aquaculture stakeholders have helped produce a Global Sustainable Aquaculture Roadmap (GSAR) which 16 global aquaculture stakeholders have endorsed with their logos.</p>	<p>High Sub-Saharan Africa only makes up 4.1 percent of global aquatic foods production – 92 percent from capture fisheries and 8 percent from aquaculture – but has far more production potential according to FAO. Despite growing almost twice as fast as the rest of the world, aquaculture production in Sub-Saharan Africa still accounts for less than 1 percent of global production. The OCPP (through FOA) is catalysing collaboration in regions particularly affected by blue food challenges to stimulate innovation and change in policies and business practices related to blue food value chains. The Blue Food Partnership Platform was set up to support sustainable aquaculture and engage stakeholders both in Ghana (44 members) and globally (69 members) through national and international events.</p>	<p>High OCPP has provided all the support for the BFP project, including all the consultation required and development of the GSAR. The Ghanaian stakeholders were supported in the development of the GAAP and establishing the Chamber of Aquaculture and Task Forces to conduct assessments.</p>	<p>Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange; Value Chain & Market Access. If the project implementation pipeline is developed from the road maps, then there is a strong potential for Intermediate Outcome level change. Improved practices established for managing the marine environment, through the uptake of the Roadmaps.</p>
<p>GOAP – Indonesia</p>	<p>Key Change: The establishment of an Indonesian National Standard (SNI) for</p>	<p>High The SNI draft is seen as a landmark achievement. The standard ‘...is a testament to the</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Governance & Regulation; Capacity Building & TA</p>

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
Cross - theme	Ocean Accounting, ensuring the valuation of marine ecosystems and their services is embedded with national economic planning and environmental governance, reflecting a strong commitment by the country to sustainable ocean management.	project's success in bridging the gap between scientific research, policy-making, and practical conservation efforts'. (GOAP Milestone report 8). Together with the other achievements in Indonesia, this policy will be an example for the Global community.	OCPP continues to provide significant support to Indonesia, including for this work.	Intermediate outcome change with potential of outcome level change . Policies/regulations established for sustainable environmental management.
GOAP – communities of practice (Africa & Asia) Cross – theme	Key Change: GOAP Communities of Practice in Africa and Asia through its engagements with governmental and institutional partners is making progress to nest ocean accounting into the regional policy discussion and sustainable ocean planning.	Medium Ocean accounting provides countries with data on changes in ocean wealth, trends in ocean-related income, welfare, and ocean-based economic production. This knowledge helps countries to weigh different development alternatives, for example inform Marine Spatial Planning. Exposure at, for example, the Nairobi Convention is important because policy decisions can be made at a collective level, for example the embedding of the ocean accounting in regional plans like the Western Indian Ocean Action Plan.	High The COPs and the leads do not receive support from other agencies or programmes for these activities.	Governance & Regulation; Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange; Capacity Building & TA Potential IO level change. Improved data and knowledge to inform policies, regulations, and practices
GOAP – Asia Cross-theme	Key Change: Systemic change in three Asian countries towards the integration of ocean accounting with national accounting.	High Ocean accounting provides countries with data on changes in ocean wealth, trends in ocean-related income, welfare, and ocean-based economic production. This knowledge helps countries to weigh different	Medium The BPF supported the first year of GOAP catalysing the promotion of ocean accounting. Crucial to the change has been the will of the respective governments to adopt ocean accounting, and	Governance & Regulation; Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange; Capacity Building & TA Potential Intermediate Outcome level change. Improved data and knowledge

Component	Key / Potential Change	Significance of the Change	Contribution of OCPP to change	ToC Impact Pathway
		development alternatives, for example inform Marine Spatial Planning.	while OCPP continued funding activities, the countries were on their own, or with support from GOAP able to mobilize additional funds from other sources.	to inform policies, regulations, and practices.
GOAP – Global Biodiversity theme	Key Change: GOAP’s partners have established ecosystem accounts covering 111 Marine Protected Areas spanning 29 million hectares of ocean. Pilot projects delivered predominantly by in-country institutions have also mapped and measured 11 different types of ecosystems including 92,000 ha of coral reefs, 10.5m ha of mangroves, 31,000 ha of seagrass meadows and 770,000 ha of kelp forest habitat.	High The data is essential in the enabling of countries to measure and manage ocean sustainable development. The data will allow the monitoring of three critical trends ⁸³ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in ocean wealth, including produced assets (e.g., ports) and non-produced assets (e.g., mangroves). - Ocean-related income and welfare. - Ocean-based economic production. Overall, knowing marine ecosystems and the valuation of them helps policy formulation and decision-making on the use of marine resources.	Medium GOAP catalysed the interest in ocean accounting in the 11 pilot countries from which the Figures are derived. In a number of countries like Indonesia, Maldives and Vietnam OCPP is not the sole funder anymore of ocean accounting. GOAPs worked has attracted the support of the Australian Government and the World Bank among others.	Science, Education & Knowledge Exchange Potential Intermediate Outcome level change. Improved data and knowledge to inform policies, regulations, and practices

Funds Leveraged by GOAP

⁸³ <https://www.oceanaccounts.org/why-are-ocean-accounts-important/>

Donor	Original Currency	GBP equivalent (Forex 19 April 2024)	Description
NORAD	NOK 4m	289, 918	Support mobilised for ocean accounting in Indonesia.
Australia DCEEW	Usd 2,288, 106	1, 824, 456	Direct support to GOAP for work in Indonesia.
	Aud 1.5M*	774, 963	To the GOAP Secretariat to conduct training and ensure an ocean accounting lens to coastal ecosystem restoration programmes in Indonesia (3) and PNG (1). Collaboration with IUCN.
UNESCAP	USD 100K	79, 736	Palau and Samoa – funds directly for GOAP.
UNDP-GEF	USD 500K	398, 683	Maldives – funds for ocean accounting work by GOAP/UNSW under ENDhERI project.
	USD 1.4m	1, 116, 311	Vietnam – funds for INSPONRE to expand GOAP work supported by BPF/OCPP.
	USD 100-200K	79, 736-159, 473	Maldives – unconfirmed.
Unspecified Source	EUR 1.5 m	1, 281, 821	Togo – funds for ocean accounting work adjacent to the Ghana pilot project area.
Total		5, 845, 624 – 5, 925, 361	

OCPP Countries & status of programmes (June 2024)

Region	#	Country	Bilateral partnership status	GOAP status	FOA status
East Africa	1	Madagascar	Scoping	Active	
	2	Mozambique	Active	Active	
	3	Kenya		Active	
	4	South Africa	Closed	Active	
West Africa	5	Ghana	Active	Active	Proposal under review
	6	Senegal	Active (with MoU)		
	7	Sierra Leone	Scoping		
Southwest Africa	8	Namibia			Completed
Pacific SIDs	9	Samoa			Transitioned**
	10	Solomon Islands	Active		
	11	Vanuatu	Active		
	12	Fiji		Active	Transitioned**
Latin America & Caribbean SIDs	13	Belize	Active (with MoU)	Active	
South & Southeast Asia	14	Bangladesh	Active		
	15	India	Closing*		
	16	Maldives	Active (with MoU)	Active	
	17	Vietnam		Active	
	18	Sri Lanka	Active (with MoU)	Active	
	19	Indonesia		Active	

* The sustainable seafood theme is ongoing

** FOA initiatives in these countries are transitioning to be financed by other programmes from April 2024 onwards

Annex 8

Belize Case Study



OCPP IE Case Study -
Belize.pdf

Annex 9

Ghana Case Study



OCPP IE Case Study -
Ghana.pdf

Annex 10

Maldives Case Study



OCPP IE Case Study -
[Text] Maldives (1).pdf

Annex 11

Mozambique Case Study



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Annex 12

Sri Lanka Case Study

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