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Global Ocean Accounts Partnership Mid-Term Evaluation

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<https://www.oceanaccounts.org/>



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Executive summary

Introduction

The Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP or the Partnership) is a multi-institutional partnership established to enable countries and other stakeholders to go beyond GDP to measure and manage progress towards sustainable ocean development using ocean accounts. Co-chaired by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), Indonesia and Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, GOAP brings together governments, international organisations and research institutions to build a global community of practice for ocean accounting. The GOAP secretariat is based at the Centre for Sustainable Development Reform (CSDR) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney. GOAP is an action group of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel). It also supports progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (the Sustainable Development Goals) and the Global Biodiversity Framework targets, particularly target 14 on the value of nature.

Ocean accounts are integrated records of regularly compiled and comparable data concerning ocean environment conditions (e.g. extent/condition of mangroves), economic activity (e.g. sale of fish) and social conditions (e.g. dependence). They align with existing international accounting standards and frameworks and retain a similar structure to national accounts maintained by national statistical offices or finance ministries.

Mid-term evaluation

This mid-term evaluation aims to assess the relevance, performance, management, success and functioning of GOAP (both the Partnership and the secretariat) to provide learning across the Partnership and accountability to members and stakeholders. Specifically, the evaluation will:

- Assess the extent to which the Partnership has achieved its stated objectives and outcomes within the specified timeframe and determine what impact it is achieving.
- Evaluate the relevance and coherence of activities in addressing the needs and priorities of participating countries and agencies.
- Examine the efficiency of resource utilisation and value for money, including financial, human and technical resources.
- Analyse the effectiveness of coordination mechanisms among governments, agencies and the secretariat in Partnership implementation.

A mixed-methods evaluation design was adopted, including an inception phase, document review, in-depth interviews with 53 stakeholders and a survey and partnership assessment tool completed by 65 respondents. All attempts were made to ensure the evaluation was conducted ethically and responsibly.



Findings

Governance and operations (efficiency)

Evaluation question (EQ) 1: To what extent is GOAP's structure fit for purpose?

GOAP's structure is fit-for-purpose and intentionally designed to reflect the systemic change GOAP aims to facilitate.

Hosting the secretariat in a university-based structure delivers key strengths for facilitating delivery of GOAP's objectives. A key element identified by stakeholders interviewed was that positioning the secretariat within the university brought a perception of policy neutrality. Being housed in a large institution was also seen to add value through having access to institutional resources, academic expertise and the broader university network. While overall the university home for the secretariat was seen to positively contribute to GOAP's successes, it is not without its challenges. Administrative processes such as contracting and payments are often slow and cumbersome and do not always meet the expectations of collaborators, many of whom operate in resource constrained environments. This means additional resources are required by the secretariat to overcome operational constraints.


The structure and roles in the Partnership are broadly outlined in the members terms of reference, however, this does not include all key roles. The full structure includes co-chairs, the secretariat, members, partners, the panel of technical experts, regional communities of practice, fellows and a broader network of non-members. The existing partnership structure supports the creation and coordination of a global network of members and experts, along with a decentralised model to support regional and national level implementation.

GOAP's current funding structure is centred around funding received from the UK Government, as part of the UK's official development assistance (ODA) funded Blue Planet Fund (BPF) which supports developing countries to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty. The funding is provided to GOAP through the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The evaluation found that the relationship with Defra was positive and effective, reflecting a collaborative donor partnership with a willingness to accommodate GOAP's adaptive and developmental approach within the bounds of a deliverables-based, outcome-focused, funding arrangement.

EQ 2: Is GOAP managed effectively?

GOAP is being managed effectively, with evidence of a high level of stakeholder satisfaction and confidence in the Partnership. Opportunities for further strengthening are in areas of communication, engagement with partners and risk management.

GOAP performed very well in the partnership checklist tool, putting the Partnership in the highest category: *"a partnership based on genuine collaboration has been established. The challenge is to maintain its impetus and build on the current success"*. GOAP was seen to foster a collaborative and supportive culture, with strong personal connections among secretariat team members and more broadly across the Partnership, as well as a collective focus on achieving common goals. The evaluation found all stakeholder groups perceived the secretariat to have experienced and capable leadership committed to GOAP's goals. The highest levels of satisfaction related to the need and complementarity of the Partnership and commitment to continuing collaboration. Elements identified for improvement



included clarity around lines of communication and the decision-making structure, expectations of partners and coordination between institutions.

To date, GOAP's risk management approach has been included as part of overall risk management at the CSDR, UNSW. There is not a specific formalised risk management approach for GOAP itself beyond the delivery level, where a delivery chain risk map is operational.

Delivery (relevance and effectiveness)

EQ 3: To what extent is GOAP being implemented as intended?

GOAP is being implemented as intended and in alignment with the objectives and actions. Year-on-year scaling has been successful but comes with the challenge of maintaining pace with growing demand and momentum.

When asked to describe the value that GOAP adds to the area of ocean accounts, survey respondents identified technical expertise and guidance, collaboration, knowledge sharing and awareness-raising. In relation to GOAP's vision and strategy, the co-chairs' ambition statement outlines their shared goals and vision for GOAP over the next two years (2024-2026). While there was generally a shared understanding of GOAP's vision and purpose, developing a clear overarching long-term strategy could assist in further strengthening strategic alignment among current and future stakeholders.


Overall, the year-on-year scaling of GOAP has had a positive impact on its effectiveness and delivery. The timing of GOAP's growth and investment from Defra, coinciding with broader global conversations on ocean economy, has positioned it well to capitalise on momentum and opportunities. GOAP has successfully leveraged opportunities, built a strong team and expanded its global reach. However, it is important to address the challenges associated with rapid growth to ensure the GOAP's ambition remains aligned with its operational capabilities and maintaining pace with growing demand.

EQ 4: Is the overall model and approach of GOAP appropriate?

GOAP's overall model is appropriate, particularly being a demand-led model with the inclusion of awareness raising and active promotion of ocean accounts and the Partnership.

Across each of its outcome areas GOAP works at national and global levels to achieve its goals. Operating at a global level allows GOAP to establish consistent standards and guidelines for ocean accounting, ensuring comparability and reliability across different regions and countries. At the national level, GOAP provides tailored support to countries based on their specific needs and challenges, ensuring ocean accounting approaches are relevant and effective to inform development planning. By working at both levels GOAP is also able to assist in aligning national policies and strategies with global frameworks and goals and promote the integration of ocean accounting into national and international policies and decision-making processes. At the global level, GOAP guides and influences discussions and aspirations relating to ocean accounts to provide a framework for the design and implementation of country priorities in national development planning. Working across these levels is intrinsic to the design, implementation and outcomes GOAP has achieved to date. There was strong consensus that GOAP has played a pivotal role in embedding ocean accounting approaches.

GOAP's demand-led approach is evident in its flexibility and adaptability. Support is tailored to the specific needs and development priorities of each country. GOAP is effective in tailoring approaches as



required, adapting support depending on level of experience, capacity, priorities and aspirations in relation to implementing ocean accounts. For this model to be effective, GOAP actively raises awareness of the utility of ocean accounting and works to build coalitions of countries committed to this approach. This element of promotion as part of the demand-led model reflects the need for GOAP to actively promote ocean accounts, particularly in early phases, and then focus on providing tailored support once countries have expressed interest.

GOAP's route to impact nationally, regionally and internationally is multifaceted and involves a combination of enhancing partnerships and networks, leveraging policy entry points at national and global levels, capacity building, knowledge sharing and awareness raising. However, these approaches to facilitating change bring some common challenges and risks in partnership-based implementation. Specifically, key challenges identified included scaling impact, particularly in countries with more limited resources or institutional capacity, maintaining long-term engagement with partners and stakeholders and adapting to remain relevant and effective when the contexts change.

EQ 5: How aligned is GOAP's work with member and country objectives, both for ocean accounting and the sustainable use of the ocean in general?

The evaluation identified strong alignment between GOAP's work and member and country objectives for ocean accounting and sustainable use of the ocean more broadly.


Indicators of alignment included shared goals, tailored technical support through availability of technical expertise across a wide range of topics (e.g. marine spatial planning, ecosystem accounting, marine plastics pollution and blue economy development) and GOAP's partnership approach. Key factors in creating the enabling environment for this included: strong leadership and governance structures that ensure alignment with member and country priorities; open communication with countries that leads to building trust and ensuring GOAP's work is relevant; the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and needs of countries; and building strong partnerships across stakeholder groups to leverage additional expertise and resources.

The evaluation found that the membership has increased with additional representation across regions that had previously been underrepresented, such as Latin America and the Caribbean. The focus on governments and research institutions as members was felt to be appropriate and reflective of the membership profile targeted. However, some members expressed dissatisfaction with the current level of engagement and communication, suggesting a need for more frequent interactions across more diverse channels. Several stakeholders noted that exploring the potential for more regionalised approaches could further enhance relevance and delivery, particularly as work continues to scale.

EQ 6: How does the programme account for and support gender equity and social inclusion in both design and implementation as well as outcomes?

GOAP has critical gaps in integrating gender equity and social inclusion into its work, but there is growing recognition of their importance and concrete efforts are underway to address them.

Efforts are underway in relation to the development of social accounts as an intrinsic component to ocean accounting, including a newly established working group to develop accounting methodologies for Indigenous, traditional, and local knowledge and creating social accounts with membership from 15 countries. This will help embed GESI considerations and data in long-term decision-making processes.



GOAP stakeholders interviewed acknowledged the potential for GESI integration and recognised its importance. In alignment with the WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale criteria, GOAP was seen to be gender sensitive with opportunity to further consider gender norms, roles and relations as they relate to ocean accounts and work within the Partnership,

Objectives and impact (effectiveness and impact)


EQ 7: Is the programme contributing to the intended outcomes and impact?

GOAP has been successful in achieving the intended results and specified deliverables within planned timeframes, including results achieved across 15 ODA eligible countries. Only five years into the Partnership, evidence on higher-level outcomes and impact are still emergent. However, the evaluation found that GOAP has contributed to change in ocean policies and strategies, particularly in Indonesia, Maldives, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

Since the initial package of financial support from UK Government for Partnership activities in 2021, GOAP's contributions to the field of ocean accounting have been substantial. At the national level, GOAP has delivered results in 15 ODA-eligible countries, including supporting pilot ocean accounts projects, the development of national roadmaps for ocean accounting, the integration of ocean accounting in national policies, as well as capacity building and knowledge sharing. The level of results achieved across the countries is varied, often reflective of the length of time countries have been engaging with ocean accounts and their priorities for ocean accounts. The longer-term support provided to Indonesia and outcomes realised has established Indonesia as a global exemplar and fostered south-to-south learning and peer exchange between countries and institutions.

At the regional level GOAP has worked with partners to establish and support networks and communities of practice to facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing among countries, promote ocean accounts and develop local expertise. Internationally, GOAP has played a key role in shaping the global discourse on ocean accounts. It has contributed to the development of international standards, approaches and guidelines and built a successful global partnership. This has in turn supported national level work by creating interest and understanding in the value and utility of ocean accounts. Influence and engagement at the international level has led to key results, including ocean accounts being mentioned in the Global Biodiversity Framework and formally integrated into the Nairobi Convention's framework. The second progress report from the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy emphasised the crucial role GOAP played in integrating ocean accounts into sustainable ocean planning. The ability of GOAP to work successfully across national, regional and international levels amplifies its impact and relevance.

Although evidence of higher-level outcomes and impact are still emerging, GOAP has contributed to national level ocean policy and strategy change. Examples include the use and integration of ocean accounts, including case studies on mainstreaming ocean accounts and improving ocean literacy in Maldives, establishing Indonesia as a global exemplar country and improving solid waste management in Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam. Key enabling factors where notable change had been achieved included long-term and consistent relationships, local partners and champions, multiple exposure points to ocean accounts, alignment with policy interests, high-level political buy-in, appropriate national institutional structures, national frameworks, multiple capacity development and engagement events, secretariat coordination and technical backstopping, and funding resources.



In relation to higher-level ODA development impact, GOAP was seen to support sustainable ocean development, including healthy ecosystems and enhanced biodiversity, by supporting a holistic approach to ocean management. Members also identified that GOAP's connection to broader economic development and growth, including macro-level poverty reduction, as well as informing policy that better addresses poverty and inequality for coastal communities. The current development of GOAP's pathway to change and strengthening MEL systems should include focus on evidencing change at outcome and impact levels.

EQ 8: What features of the programme were most effective at creating change?

Alongside enabling factors explored above, GOAP being flexible, adaptable, member-driven, fostering shared ownership and covering a broad spectrum of expertise were all seen to set GOAP apart from other initiatives.

Almost all consulted felt GOAP was unique compared to others they had worked with, with a range of reasons provided. The most common response was that GOAP was very flexible and adaptable. GOAP was seen to prioritise partnerships, with a secretariat that was willing to adjust the approach to meet the needs of its partners. Being member-driven was seen to provide for a more responsive approach, empowering members and countries to meaningfully take ownership of their work and contribute to decision-making. The broad scope of expertise and topics addressed by GOAP was also seen to be a point of differentiation compared to others. As the enabling environment and momentum surrounding ocean accounts continues to build, GOAP's role in the overall coordination of ocean accounting activities needs to continue to be negotiated and agreed among stakeholders leading initiatives with countries.

Sustainability and funding (sustainability)

EQ 9: To what extent will the programme's contributions continue over time?

GOAP's design and implementation has intentionally supported sustained and lasting change. Securing long-term strategic funding, along with continued diversified funding sources, should be a priority to continue momentum and successes to date.

The partnership-based approach, demand-led model, development of embedded capacity and local expertise, and south-south exchange and collaboration, are all examples of a programme developed to ensure contributions continue over time. Continuing these approaches will further strengthen the results already achieved at national and global levels.

BPF investment is by far the largest component of GOAP's funding structure. GOAP's design and implementation provides strong strategic alignment with BPF, including developing evidence-based policy and management tools and science-led policy, and the UK Government's commitment to ocean accounting as both a donor and member of GOAP. This investment has been catalytic to GOAP's operations and impact. This support has also attracted interest from other funders and BPF backing was seen to enhance GOAP's credibility and visibility globally. While having a singular primary donor presents some efficiencies and flexibility in delivery, the concentration of funding also presents some risk without long-term funding secured beyond 2026.

While much of GOAP's work is focused on supporting ODA-eligible countries, as a global partnership with diverse needs among members further donor support is needed to continue to respond to demand and momentum. GOAP can manage funding its full programme of work with the assistance of smaller grants and funds provided by the World Bank Blue Economy Program, Australia's Oceans Leadership Package, and the Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership.

GOAP does face significant challenges in resourcing going forward. Securing long-term strategic funding, along with continued diversified funding sources, should be a priority to continue to support sustainability and continuity of GOAP's work going forward. Developing an overarching long-term strategy that outlines GOAP's long-term goals and outlines a clear path forward can also support building a more sustainable and resilient future for the Partnership.

EQ 10: What has GOAP's influence been on mobilising funds for ocean accounting?

GOAP has played a significant role in leveraging funds for ocean accounting initiatives.

The broader OCPP evaluation calculated that GOAP had leveraged more than £5.8m, noting this as a significant achievement given GOAP spend to date was approximately £5.5m. Since the OCPP evaluation, this figure has grown exponentially due to the confirmation of Global Environment Facility funding for ocean accounting projects in Vietnam and Maldives, raising this figure to **£33m**. In addition to this, GOAP played a major role in Indonesia securing a **£163m** World Bank funded project on natural marine resource management and livelihoods, with ocean accounting mainstreamed throughout, bringing the total of leveraged funds for initiatives featuring ocean accounting to **£197m**, a leverage ratio of approximately 1:28.

Lessons

Drawn from the strengths and successes of GOAP to date, the evaluation has highlighted key lessons that can provide relevant learning for other global partnership-based programmes.

Lessons learned	
01.	The perception and position of policy neutrality supports widespread uptake of technical approaches and partnership building.
02.	Partnerships should be intentionally structured to reflect the systemic change they wish to address.
03.	Strong partnerships deliver sustainable change and efficient results, while requiring ongoing investment and resources.
04.	Tailored and flexible approaches support alignment with diverse member priorities, requiring trusted relationships, clear communication and supportive systems to be effective and sustainable.
05.	Broader situational awareness enables external factors to be strategically leveraged when creating change.
06.	An effective demand-led model is not wholly passive in its design and delivery, with GOAP also incorporating promotion and awareness raising.
07.	Achieving shared ownership and collaborative investment leads to long-term commitment to the vision, beyond current funding cycles.
09.	As momentum builds for an initiative and decentralised implementation grows, the positioning of an effective Partnership needs to be continuously negotiated and agreed.



Recommendations

The evaluation identified the following recommendations for GOAP (both the Partnership and the secretariat) to build on the successes and strengths to date and to continue to improve.

Governance and operations	
01.	Strengthen operational capacity in the secretariat and CSDR/UNSW host to support efficient and effective administrative operations.
02.	Better leverage the strengths of being positioned in the university including the breadth of cross-disciplinary expertise available.
03.	Further formalise GOAP's partnership structure including consistent documentation of the full structure.
04.	Improve consistency of, and opportunities for, internal communication and information sharing among key groups within the Partnership.
05.	Introduce a more formalised and tailored approach to risk management for GOAP.

Delivery	
06.	Develop a clear long-term strategy for GOAP, such as an overarching strategic plan.
07.	Provide clear guidance on how to engage with GOAP and access its services and support.
08.	Further strengthen, build and diversify the membership.
09.	Continue to invest in and engage expert talent among the secretariat and partners, as well as through the expert panel and fellows.
10.	Further explore regionalised approaches to meet the needs of countries particularly as work continues to scale.

Objectives and impact	
11.	Enhance external communication and explore new ways to disseminate knowledge, including a more accessible website and knowledge platform.
12.	Mainstream GESI considerations in both GOAP's implementation and technical work.
13.	Revise the wording of the current GOAP objectives and improve the articulation of higher-level ODA impacts GOAP and ocean accounts aim to contribute to, including poverty alleviation
14.	Regularly assess GOAP's contributions to outcomes and impacts and share learnings.

Sustainability and funding	
15.	Prioritise securing long-term strategic funding and with ongoing diversified funding for GOAP beyond 2026.



Abbreviations

BPF: Blue Planet Fund
CCGHR: Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research
Cefas: Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
CoP: Community of Practice
CSDR: Centre for Sustainable Development Reform
Defra: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DE: Developmental Evaluation
EQ: Evaluation Question
GESI: Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
GOAP: Global Ocean Accounts Partnership
ISPONRE: Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment
IUCN: International Union Conservation of Nature
JNCC: Joint Nature Conservation Committee
KMFRI: Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
LAC: Latin America and Caribbean
LMMA: Locally Marine Managed Area
MCCEE: Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
MEL: Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MSP: Marine Spatial Planning
MMAF: Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries
MMO: Marine Management Organisation
MPA: Marine Protected Area
NGO: Non-government organisation
OCP: Ocean Country Partnership Programme
ODA: Official Development Assistance
ORM: Ocean Revolution Mozambique
PCoP: Pacific Community of Practice
SEEA: System of Environmental-Economic Accounting
SEEA-CF: System of environmental-economic accounting - central framework
SEEA-EA: System of environmental-economic accounting – ecosystem accounts (post-adoption as a statistical standard in 2021, previously referred to as SEEA-EEA)
SEEA-EEA: System of environmental-economic accounting – experimental ecosystem accounts (preadoption as a statistical standard in 2021, afterwards referred to as SEEA-EA)
TA: Technical Assistance
ToRs: Terms of Reference
SPC: The Pacific Community
SNA: System of National Accounts
ToC: Theory of Change
UNSW: University of New South Wales
WIO: Western Indian Ocean

I. Introduction

1.1 About GOAP

The Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) is multi-institutional partnership established to enable countries and other stakeholders to go Beyond GDP to measure and manage progress towards sustainable ocean development using ocean accounts. Co-chaired by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), Indonesia and Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, GOAP brings together governments, international organisations and research institutions to build a global community of practice for ocean accounting. The GOAP secretariat is based at the Centre for Sustainable Development Reform (CSDR) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney.

GOAP supports the acceleration of progress 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (the Sustainable Development Goals: SDGs), in particular national implementation of the targets underpinning SDG 14 (life below water), target 15.9 (valuing nature in decision-making) of Goal 15 and target 17.19 (measurement of progress complementing GDP) of Goal 17. GOAP further supports implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework targets, especially target 14 (value of nature). GOAP is an action group of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel), and is committed to supporting all countries to pursue the commitment to 100% sustainable management of national waters and associated sustainable ocean plans and the priority actions for ocean accounting in the Ocean Panel's Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy.

Ocean accounts are integrated records of regularly compiled and comparable data concerning ocean environment conditions (e.g. extent/condition of mangroves), economic activity (e.g. sale of fish) and social conditions (e.g. coastal employment). They align with existing international accounting standards and frameworks and retain a similar structure to national accounts maintained by national statistical offices or finance ministries.

1.2 Background / purpose of the programme

1.2.1 GOAP's objectives

GOAP's objectives are set out on the website and key documents such as the Partnership Terms of Reference (ToRs). **GOAP's objectives** are to:

- Build a global community of practice for ocean accounting to ensure the diverse values of the ocean are recognised in all decision-making about social and economic development.
- Develop a globally recognised and standardised ocean accounting guidance by 2023.
- Support at least 30 countries by 2030 to build complete sequences of national ocean accounts.
- Facilitate the global uptake of ocean accounts in decision-making, development planning, policies, laws, and other ocean governance processes.

GOAP's actions are:


- GOAP is an [Action Group](#) of the [High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy](#) (Ocean Panel). GOAP ensures its objectives accelerate, scale, and implement the Ocean Panel's commitments, as well as [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) (life below water), [15.9](#) (valuing nature in decision-making), [17.19](#) (measurement of progress complementing GDP), and other relevant international agendas.
- GOAP assists in sourcing financial or in-kind support for the development and implementation of ocean accounting initiatives.
- GOAP catalyses and connects ocean accounts experts to establish a global expert panel, Technical Working Groups, and facilitate the creation of ocean accounting knowledge products to advance the development and global uptake of ocean accounting.
- GOAP provides a communication and collaboration platform for the global community of practice to engage in mutual capacity building and share knowledge on ocean accounting.

1.2.2 UK Government funding

The UK Government (via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Defra) is a member of GOAP and approved an initial package of financial support through the Blue Planet Funded (BPF) Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP). BPF-OCP funding supported Partnership activities implemented during 2021-22, and in November 2022 Defra approved a subsequent package currently under implementation to March 2025 (Phase 2). An additional uplift was agreed in December 2023 which continues aspects of the programme to March 2026 (Phase 3). This support comes under the UK's BPF which supports developing countries to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty.

The UK Government is supporting the GOAP to achieve a series of deliverables before March 2025 (Phase 2), including:

- **Advance ocean accounts**, including to: support 6 continuing pilots and initiate a further 6 pilots (2 per year) in countries determined through OCP collaboration, focusing on technical accounting progress and policy / practice impacts; write activities and outcomes reports for all pilots; and provide updated ocean accounts and associated policy / practice outcomes. (Outcome 1)
- **Build ocean accounting capabilities and communities**, including to: support and report on communities of practice, capacity building activities and outcomes, ocean accounting fellowships / training opportunities; host annual regional dialogues through GOAP regional communities of practice; and to host annual global dialogues on ocean accounting. (Outcome 2)
- **Knowledge production to underpin ocean accounting**, including to: host the Global Policy Advisory Panel; produce recommendations for future action; and finalise technical papers addressing knowledge gaps identified in a knowledge products needs statement / research agenda. (Outcome 3)
- **Global mainstreaming of ocean accounting**, including to: co-develop an OCP collaboration plan and deliver an impact/outcome assessment; develop regionalisation and mainstreaming collaboration plans and deliver an impact/outcome assessment; and publish a formal outcome report and action agenda from GOAP Global Dialogue, including revised annual collaboration plans. (Outcome 4).



Through the December 2023 uplift, the UK government is further supporting the GOAP to achieve a series of deliverables by March 2026 (Phase 3):

- Establish Indonesia as a global exemplar country integrating a comprehensive national ocean accounting system into national policy making and decision making, thereby creating a pathway for other countries to follow and providing enhanced opportunities for south-to-south learning and peer exchange.
- Use accounts to strengthen the transparency and integrity of the global agreement to end plastic pollution, establishing a global exemplar issue where ocean accounting can underpin data-driven national and international action planning.
- Secure the global architecture to ensure the long-term viability of ocean accounting and phase-out of reliance on donor support, through investment in building coordination structures, technical capacity and finance collaboration in ODA-eligible countries.

As noted above, BFP funding is delivered through OCPP. OCPP's overall outcome is:

- Partner country stakeholders take enhanced collaborative action to effectively and sustainably manage and protect their marine environments¹.

At the intermediate outcome level, OCPP will result in:

- Improved policies and regulation with enhanced capabilities and inclusive governance in place to implement and enforce these.

This intermediate outcome is achieved through the uptake and adoption of outputs where:

- Partner country governments have the capabilities to implement improved policies, regulations and approaches.
- Partner country governments have improved policies, regulation frameworks and approaches.
- Partner countries have strengthened impact monitoring systems, data, ocean accounts and knowledge.

1.2 Evaluation purpose

This mid-term evaluation aims to assess the relevance, performance, management, success and functioning of GOAP (both the Partnership and the secretariat), providing learning across the Partnership as well as accountability of the secretariat to members and stakeholders. The evaluation will cover process and performance evaluation, examining impact at national and international levels. It will examine the impact GOAP has had at both the national and international levels and the influence the organisation has on the agenda to go beyond GDP for the ocean. The evaluation will answer the agreed evaluation questions and assess the programme against the DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

The evaluation will:

¹ Niras, 2023, OCPP Theory of Change Narrative for Defra Bilateral Technical Assistance Programme of the Blue Planet Fund, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. 17 pp.

- Assess the extent to which the Partnership has achieved its stated objectives and outcomes within the specified timeframe and what *impact* it is achieving.
- Evaluate the *relevance* and *coherence* of Partnership activities in addressing the needs and priorities of participating countries and agencies.
- Examine the *efficiency* of resource utilisation and value for money, including financial, human, and technical resources.
- Analyse the *effectiveness* of coordination mechanisms among governments, agencies, and the secretariat in Partnership implementation.

In addressing the above, the evaluation should:

- Include learning from a systemic point of view to strengthen the GOAP programme.
- Review the GOAP as a whole programme and organisation.
- Include local, national and global contextual considerations for GOAP's impact.
- Evaluate the impact of recent year-on-year scaling on the effectiveness and delivery of the organisation.

The evaluation is intended to inform the members and co-chairs of the Partnership, administrative secretariat, internal and external technical teams, supporters and donors, and the wider ocean accounting community. The evaluation will be used by secretariat and co-chairs to improve, design and implement projects under the GOAP umbrella. The evaluation will further inform the development of a road map to 2030 to ensure policy and decision-making impact. It will provide information on value for money and impact to inform future funding allocations as well as accountability.

1.3 Evaluation approach

Given the operating contexts and aspirations of GOAP, the evaluation will be informed by a developmental evaluation approach and an understanding of complexity². The evaluation will be used to improve, design and implement projects under the GOAP umbrella, as well as inform the development of a road map to 2030 to ensure policy and decision-making impact. Developmental Evaluation (DE) is a structured way to monitor, assess and provide feedback on a project or programme while it is being designed or modified (Patton, 2011). Taking a developmental evaluation approach acknowledges the complexity and uncertainty that is faced by programmes that seek to address complex problems where solutions may be unknown, and programmes need a more responsive and adaptive approach (Patton, 2011). This approach allows us to monitor the aspects of the programme that are knowable, as well as learn from and adapt the aspects of the programme that are still untried. This DE approach will be informed by the key evaluation questions which reflect an ongoing approach to learning and adaptation for both the Partnership and the secretariat.

² Complexity definition utilised: A 'complex' problem is where the relationship between cause and effect is unpredictable. For example, understanding the many interacting socio-ecological factors affecting land use change. Solutions require systems thinking, engaging with a plurality of stakeholders with decision makers learning and acting as they go. *Source:* McGonigle, D.F., Berry, P., Boons, F., et al. (2021). A Primer for Integrating Systems Approaches into Defra. Report from the Defra Systems Research Programme. [Available online](#).



II. Evaluation principles

The following principles for the evaluation were identified following stakeholder consultation during the inception stage of the evaluation.

Comprehensive:

The evaluation should assess both process (communication, relationships, institutional approaches) and performance (achievement of goals, technical aspects). The evaluation should consider the programme's relevance for long-term sustainability and future investment decisions.

Contextually relevant:

Diverse national, regional, international and sectoral implementing contexts should be considered to ensure a nuanced understanding. The evaluation should ensure GOAP is evaluated on its own terms.

Developmentally focused:

The evaluation should acknowledge the developmental nature of GOAP, with the development and implementation of GOAP evolving and adapting as it progresses.

Actionable:

The evaluation should provide useful and constructive ideas for future work, considering technical, administrative and relational aspects.

Reciprocity and learning:

The evaluation should be a two-way street, fostering reciprocity by using feedback to strengthen relationships and inform future planning. A learning focus should guide the evaluation, supporting an adaptive approach that can be informed by the findings.

Stakeholder centred:

The evaluation should be designed to reflect the interests of different partners through the evaluation questions and approach. It should balance the need for stakeholder input with potential evaluation or reporting fatigue.



III. Evaluation questions

Governance and operations

1. To what extent is GOAP's structure fit for purpose?

- a. How does the GOAP's structure (both of the Partnership and secretariat) help or hinder the delivery of the objectives?
- b. What is the funding structure of the GOAP and what are the implications of this in relation to key areas of investment?

2. Is GOAP managed effectively?

- a. Is GOAP well managed? What could be done to improve the management of the secretariat and GOAP more broadly?
- b. How satisfied are GOAP members and country partners with the secretariat's performance and support?
- c. Have risk management approaches evolved adequately with the growth of GOAP?
- d. What are the gaps in the Partnership both operationally and in delivery?

Delivery

3. To what extent is GOAP being implemented as intended?

- a. Is there a shared understanding of the purpose and value of GOAP among partners?
- b. Are the stakeholders reached as intended?
- c. Are activities delivered efficiently?
- d. How does GOAPs global work embed OA approaches across organisations and country level?
- e. What has been the impact of year-on-year scaling on effectiveness and delivery of the organisation?

4. Is the overall model and approach of GOAP appropriate?

- a. Is the balance between GOAP's global work and country-based implementation appropriate?
- b. What is GOAP's route to impact nationally, regionally and internationally and what are the positives associated with this. Are there alternative routes to impact?
- c. Is GOAP innovative in its delivery of work and the objectives?
- d. The model is demand led, GOAP does not 'push' onto countries ideas and approached. Is this an effective delivery model? Does GOAP have the capacity to tailor approaches and pace as required?

5. How aligned is GOAP's work with Member and country objectives, both for ocean accounting and the sustainable use of the ocean in general?

- a. How does GOAP identify priorities at the national level?
- b. Is GOAP fulfilling Member's expectations and how are these expectations balanced and delivered on?

6. How does the programme account for and support gender equity and social inclusion in both design and implementation as well as outcomes?



Objectives and impact

7. Is the programme contributing to the intended outcomes and impact?

- a. To what extent does the programme address the identified need?
- b. What are the most significant outcomes or impacts achieved to date?
- c. How does the programme contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable ocean development and other identified needs in countries it operates?
- d. How effective is the GOAP fellows programme, what are the benefits and costs of the approach to the programme and how likely are the objectives to be met?
- e. What is the impact of GOAP's on the ground work to create an enabling environment for ocean accounting work to exist?
- f. What has the impact been of GOAP on the international accounting agenda and sustainable ocean planning, how linked into international processes is GOAP?

8. What features of the programme were most effective at creating change?

- a. How does GOAP engineer systems change in the areas it works?
- b. How does GOAP and GOAP's impact compare to others working in the ocean accounts space?

Sustainability and funding

9. To what extent will the programme's contributions continue over time?

- a. Do GOAP's funding sources / arrangements support sustainability and continuity of the work going forward?
- b. Is the diversity of funding adequate going forward? Are there funding gaps or restrictions in areas warranting further investment?

10. What has GOAP's influence been on mobilising funds for ocean accounting?

- a. To what extent has the UK (Defra) investment been catalytic to GOAP operations and impact?
- b. Has there been impacts on other country funding mobilisation?



IV. Methods

4.1 Inception phase

The inception phase included key stakeholder consultations to finalise the scope of the evaluation, provide feedback on the draft evaluation questions and identify the key principles underpinning the evaluation. Those consulted included GOAP secretariat staff (6), GOAP former and current co-chairs (2), expert panel member (1) and an implementing partner (1). Feedback provided informed the evaluation principles, evaluation questions and methods presented in this inception report.

4.2 Document review

A document review was undertaken using background documentation provided by the secretariat including milestone reports, proposals and design documents (see Annex 3), as well as documents and information available online via the GOAP website.

4.3 Sampling and primary data collection

Primary data collection was undertaken both remotely, and in person during the 5th Global Dialogue on Sustainable Ocean Development (the 5th Global Dialogue). This phase also included the finalisation of the sampling approach and the development of data collection tools (interview guides, surveys).

4.3.1 Sampling approach

The sampling approach was one of purposive sampling, inviting participation across all the key stakeholder groups relevant to GOAP. Through this approach we also looked for maximum variation, i.e. capturing diverse and varied experiences and perspectives across the Partnership and GOAP's broader network to date. Data collection methods were designed to ensure the inclusion of perspectives from all relevant stakeholder groups through both remote and in-person data collection. Stakeholder groups included:

- GOAP secretariat and technical teams
- GOAP members
- Other relevant developing and developed countries and regions
- Government ministries and departments
- Relevant research organisations, academia and institutions
- Other relevant beneficiaries and related stakeholders
- Centre for Sustainable Development Reform, University of New South Wales.

The 5th Global Dialogue provided opportunity for in-person stakeholder consultation as well as observation of GOAP partnerships and networks. In-depth interviews supported deeper contextual understanding and analysis, with interviewees representing variation across regions, partners, local and national contexts, and partnership interactions. An online survey enabled broader participation across GOAP and relevant stakeholders globally.



4.3.2 In-depth interviews

Data collection included in-depth interviews with 53 people, including 26 individual interviews and 9 small group interviews according to the preferences of respondents. Twenty-four participants were interviewed in-person and 29 remotely via Zoom. The consultant worked with the secretariat and key stakeholders to identify specific stakeholders for inclusion to ensure a range of perspectives. It was decided that in-country visits were not to be included in the methodology as during the Global Dialogue interviews were completed with 25 stakeholders from 14 countries, with additional interviews able to be done via zoom. Annex 4 provides and de-identified interview list.

Those interviewed represented the breadth of involvement across GOAP from foundational involvement (founders, members and secretariat staff), project-based involvement (those working on specific projects or initiatives, technical experts or researchers), government representatives and policy development, network involvement (attending workshops, training or connected to GOAP through existing networks or partnerships), and peripheral involvement (those who observed GOAP activities but had no direct role). Length of involvement also varied.

4.3.3 Observation


Attendance at the Global Dialogue provided opportunity for observation to understand further about work presented and discussed, and GOAP's partnerships, networks and stakeholders at local, national and international levels.

4.3.4 Survey and partnership assessment tool

To complement the above data exploring the *depth* of perspectives of those interviewed, an online survey was also included to explore a broader *breadth* of perspectives across GOAP's programming portfolio and range of country, partner, government and other implementation contexts. The survey was developed for completion online in English and addressed key evaluation questions across the DAC criteria. Given the partnership focus of GOAP, the survey included a *partnership assessment tool* and questions to inform *social network analysis* (mapping).

The partnership assessment tool was used to assess the level of satisfaction of GOAP's stakeholders in the Partnership. The tool was an adapted version of the Victoria Health Partnership Assessment Tool including all elements of their checklist other than section 5 (GOAP survey questions 7 to 12) with questions added from the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research (CCGHR) Partnership Assessment Toolkit on fairness and effectiveness (GOAP survey question 13). To maintain the integrity of the aggregated checklist score, the score from the adapted tool was normalised to the Victoria Health Tool. For the aggregated scores, question responses that included "don't know" to any of the sub-points in a question were removed from aggregated scores for that question to calculate mean and aggregated scores. These questions were not removed when reporting on individual survey items.

Questions were also included in the survey from the Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health (Partnershiptool.net) to look at key elements of administration, leadership and management in the Partnership (GOAP survey questions 31 and 32).



The survey also included questions relating to social network analysis to explore extended relationships, collaborations and partnerships across GOAP's network. This information is intended to be used to inform planning going forward and is not presented as part of this evaluation report.

The survey was completed in full by 65 respondents. As it went to the full GOAP mailing list, a screening question was included at the start of the survey to identify whether the respondent's organisation collaborated or partnered with GOAP in any way (question 3). This meant that while 133 people started the survey, a substantial proportion were filtered past the Partnership related questions as only 82 (62%) answered 'yes' to this question. Those who completed the survey represented the cross section of GOAP stakeholders, and included those working for government (34%), research or academic institutions (34%), non-government or civil society organisations (13%), intergovernmental organisations (7%), private sector (3%), individual representatives (3%) and others (6%). Regions represented among respondents included Asia (38%), Africa (22%), Europe (15%), Oceania / Pacific (14%), North America (6%), South America (4%) and Central America (1%), there were no respondents from the Caribbean. In terms of gender, 51 respondents indicated their gender with 43% (22) men and 57% (29) women. Survey results tables are included in Annex 5.

4.4 Data analysis and draft report

All primary and secondary data sources were used in analysis, ensuring that all data sources informed valid, robust and credible analysis against the evaluation questions (see Annex 1 for the data analysis framework). Qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated.

The approach to qualitative analysis was a grounded theory approach using Strauss and Corbin's systematic approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Qualitative data was thematically coded and managed using a qualitative data analysis software, QualCoder. Direct quotations articulate key points through the words of respondents themselves. These quotations have been anonymised, noting only the stakeholder group the respondent was identified with.

The findings have been structured to align with the evaluation questions, with reference to the questions made to ensure connection between evidence and recommendations. To communicate the complexity of interactions in relation to process (implementation) visual maps have been included in some sections of the analysis output. As part of the developmental evaluation approach, unintended outcomes or consequences were also explored, including the ripple effects of outcomes which may intersect with other factors in ways that were not predictable (Patton, 2012).

4.5 Online validation and sense-making session

Preliminary findings were presented to key secretariat staff. The online workshop was one of sensemaking, validation and an opportunity for participants to provide additional input into the final evaluation report.



4.6 Final report and action planning workshop

Feedback on the initial draft report was used to produce this final report. To uphold good evaluation standards and practice, the draft report was also externally peer reviewed by another evaluation practitioner, Dr Alison Rogers³.

Following this evaluation report, an in-person dissemination and action planning workshop will be held with the GOAP secretariat and technical team to discuss recommendations and identify, if they are accepted, how these should be implemented. The workshop will support the objectives of the evaluation through building shared understanding and ownership for adaptations going forward.

4.7 Ethical considerations

All attempts were made to ensure the evaluation was conducted ethically and responsibly and comply with the Australasian Evaluation Society Code of Ethics and the UK Evaluation Society Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation. Respondents were invited to participate in interviews or surveys and provided with the necessary information to provide informed consent. Both written and verbal information was provided to those interviewed. Interviewees were also given the opportunity to ask questions about the evaluation prior to commencing the interview. Consent was provided verbally prior to interview commencement. Consent was sought to record interviews. Both recordings and interview notes are saved securely and password protected. Recordings will be deleted at the completion of the contract. Privacy and confidentiality were upheld. Data has been aggregated and individual responses are not identifiable.

4.8 Limitations

There are several limitations to be mindful of in relation to timing, sample selection and programme development.

4.8.1 Timing

The timing of the 5th Global Dialogue being during the data collection period presented a key opportunity for the evaluation to interview 24 stakeholders face-to-face and introduce the evaluation to many others. While this was a strength, it may also have biased the results given the positivity generated through the Global Dialogue, and the general appreciation for the organisation of the Dialogue among participants there. The timing of the evaluation survey, which followed feedback surveys from the Global Dialogue, may have negatively impacted the response rate. This was mitigated by delaying the survey commencement until 5 weeks after the conclusion of the Dialogue to create some separation.

³ Alison Rogers has a PhD degree from the University of Melbourne's Centre for Program Evaluation. She currently holds an Honorary Research Fellow position with the Assessment and Evaluation Research Centre at the University of Melbourne. She has published 15 scholarly articles and two books on evaluation and everyday activism. She won the Australian Evaluation Society's 2024 Award for Excellence in Evaluation Publication Award. She has worked in public health for over 20 years. She spent over 15 years of this time working in non-profit organisations including as an internal evaluator and an external evaluator.



4.8.2 Sample selection

While a wide range of stakeholders were sought for inclusion in the evaluation, both through interviews and survey, evaluations often work with selection bias, where those who elect to participate often have positive experiences with the programme in question. While divergent viewpoints did emerge through the evaluation, almost all interviewed were overall positive about the Partnership and progress to date. Similarly, survey results were also positive across all sections.

4.8.3 Programme development

As noted above, the evaluation approach accommodates the developmental nature of GOAP during this initial phase of the Partnership (2019-2024). At the time of the evaluation GOAP's "pathway to change" was in the process of being co-developed by the Partnership. This meant there was not a theory of change with which to test against for the mid-term evaluation. While GOAP has four key objectives, specific GOAP higher-level outcomes and impacts have not yet been articulated, so in place of these discussion on impact (section 5.3) mostly considers GOAPs contribution against OCPP and BPF higher-level outcomes and impact statements, as most (about 85%) of GOAP's funding comes through BPF / OCPP.



V. Findings

5.1 Governance and operations

5.1.1 Structure

Key evaluation question: To what extent is GOAP's structure fit for purpose? (EQ1)

GOAP is a global, multi-institutional partnership established to enable countries and other stakeholders to go beyond GDP to measure and manage progress toward ocean sustainable development. GOAP aims to bring together governments, international organisations, and research institutions to build a global community of practice for ocean accounting. GOAP works at both global and national levels.

The GOAP secretariat is hosted by the Centre for Sustainable Development Reform at the University of New South Wales and partnership activities are funded by the United Kingdom Blue Planet Fund, World Bank Blue Economy Program, Australia's Oceans Leadership Package, Global Environment Facility and the Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership.

The current co-chairs of GOAP are the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan Republik Indonesia), Indonesia and Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, and assumed their role as co-chairs in December 2023. The founding co-chairs were UN ESCAP and Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.


Secretariat structure (Q1a)

The secretariat being hosted in a university-based structure delivered key strengths to facilitating the delivery of GOAP's objectives. A key element identified by stakeholders interviewed was the perceived policy neutrality that the positioning in the university brought for the secretariat. This was seen to be further enhanced by the profile and reputation that UNSW itself has globally. This positioning was seen to provide a level of political detachment, enhancing credibility and trust, particularly among governments GOAP worked with (either as members or through technical support).

Being housed in a large institution was also seen to be of value through having access to institutional resources such as the university's infrastructure, governance processes and mechanisms, personnel and facilities.

The university-based structure was seen to position GOAP well in accessing expert leadership, where the university's academic expertise could contribute to technical support being provided through GOAP, particularly interdisciplinary expertise. The broader university's network connections were also seen to be able to facilitate partnerships and collaborations with other institutions. It was noted by some that the full potential of this positioning both in terms of academic expertise and network connections were yet to be fully realised.

While overall seen to positively contribute to GOAP's successes, the university-based structure was not seen to be without its challenges. Key challenges identified were related to institutional systems and processes, while suitable for a primarily tertiary education institution, these were not necessarily fit for purpose for the more dynamic and adaptive international development cooperation context of GOAP. Developed to meet the core business of the university, administrative systems such as the university's



contracting and payment processes and systems meant these processes were often slow and cumbersome, not always meeting the needs and expectations donors or collaborators, with many of latter operating in resource constrained environments. It has meant additional investment and resources required by the secretariat to overcome constraints in operations, despite the management and operations team still being relatively small. While many stakeholders identified no issues in payment or contracting, there were several who experienced lengthy contracting or payment processes, leading to delays in implementing research and other planned initiatives.

While there was external understanding of the role of GOAP and the benefit of the university-based structure, it was felt that the understanding of GOAP internally in the university was not as high. It was identified that the contribution of GOAP to the university's global impact objectives were yet to be fully understood internally by the university. Despite these challenges it was noted that the university had provided GOAP with the level of operational flexibility that was possible in the institutional setting and a productive environment to work through any operational or logistic constraints that arose.

Partnership structure (Q1a)

The primary document outlining GOAP's partnership structure is the Partnership ToRs published on the GOAP website, which includes GOAP's objectives and purpose, membership, roles and responsibilities, and decision-making and accountability. The current ToRs were updated in December 2023. While providing an overview of the key elements of the Partnership, including co-chairs, members, secretariat and non-members, other elements of the Partnership structure are not found in the ToRs. The following outline of GOAP's structure draws on the ToRs, GOAP website and stakeholder interviews.

Co-chairs

According to the ToRs, the co-chairs are responsible for providing leadership and direction to GOAP. They are accountable to the members and act in their best interests. The co-chairs are responsible for:

- Providing strategic direction and overseeing the performance of the Partnership and its secretariat.
- Attending regular meetings with the secretariat, approving the agenda and papers for Member meetings, chairing the regular Member meetings and the yearly Global Dialogue meeting, and agreeing on new members of the Partnership.
- Approving the access of non-members to financial and technical support subject to contractual requirements.
- Delegating responsibilities to the secretariat and secretariat (co-)directors as deemed appropriate.

Members

GOAP members play a critical role in shaping the Partnership's direction, participating in its governance, and supporting its activities. Specifically, the ToRs describe the role and responsibilities of members as follows:

- Having a central role in the administration of the Partnership, including agreeing to, supporting, and revising the strategic vision and mission of GOAP
- Participating in regular meetings

- Electing co-chairs and delegating decision-making to co-chairs and the secretariat
- Acting in a manner consistent with the Partnership's purpose and objectives
- Providing regular updates to the secretariat
- Leveraging secretariat support to facilitate alignment of ocean accounting activities and working towards aligning ocean accounting approaches and activities with other relevant global ocean accounting and related activities and policies
- Providing support and resources to the GOAP secretariat and ocean accounting community
- Working with other members and the secretariat to foster the development of ocean accounts through joint fundraising initiatives
- Sourcing assistance from the secretariat to support their activities.

Partners

GOAP engages the support of a range of technical partners to assist in implementing activities. Partners include organisations supporting activities in specific regions, such as AfriSeas in Africa and Kami Pasifiki Solutions in the Pacific, as well as partners supporting the development of technical approaches and guidelines such as the IDEEA Group and World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Partners are contracted to deliver agreed activities, with the contracts managed by the secretariat. The role of partners is not currently reflected in the ToRs or the GOAP website.

Expert panel

GOAP's Panel of Technical Experts (expert panel) comprises experts in various aspects of ocean accounting from around the world actively working to improve the understanding of economic and scientific factors affecting the health of the ocean and to generate information that will make more effective action possible. The expert panel has two primary missions: identify and assess new challenges in ocean accounting that will affect many countries, and provide advisory assistance to countries undertaking ocean accounts on technical economic or scientific issues. The role of the expert panel is not included in the current ToRs but outlined on the GOAP's website (although not easily found), including a list of the current 21 members.

Communities of Practice

Regional communities of practice (CoPs) have been established as part of GOAP. The CoPs are regional collaboration platforms bringing together governments, international organisations and research institutions who are interested in learning and developing ocean accounts in the region. There are currently five CoPs: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and the Pacific. Each CoP has its own objectives, with most having strategic documents available on the GOAP website, either in the form of ToRs (Europe), strategies (Latin America and Caribbean) or policies (Africa). Information on each of the CoPs, including events and other resources is easily found on the GOAP website. CoPs are not specifically referenced in the ToRs.

Fellows

Another element of the Partnership is the fellows programme with current fellows in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. The intent of the fellowships is not currently articulated in the ToRs, website or other strategic documents. Based on stakeholder feedback the way the fellows operate in each region differs,

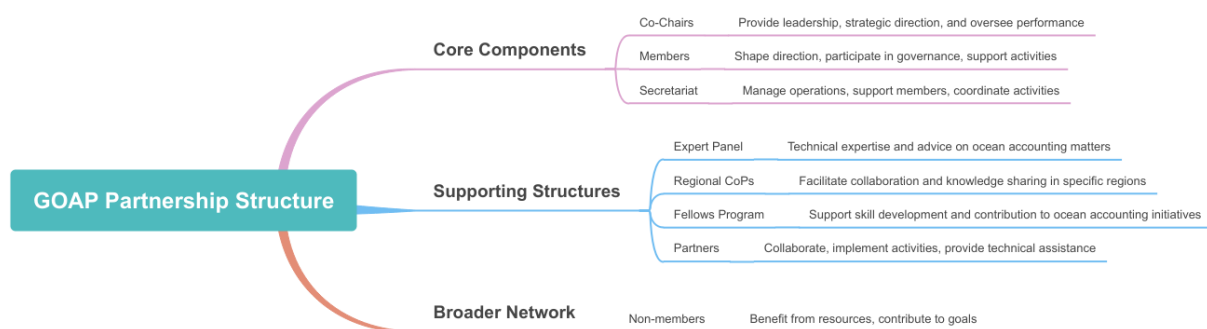
but the programme is generally a capacity-building initiative aiming to enhance knowledge and skills, facilitate the development of ocean accounts, and contribute to sustainable ocean management. Fellows are selected based on their qualifications, experience, and commitment to ocean accounting. Current fellows have backgrounds in government or academic / research institutions. Fellows are contracted through the secretariat and provided with funding to undertake research and collaborations to further ocean accounts in their specific settings. See section 5.3.1 for further discussion on the fellows programme.

Broader network


Beyond current members, partners, fellows and expert panellists is a broader network that GOAP has brought together through mechanisms such as events like the annual global dialogues and subscribers to the GOAP newsletter. The broader network is referred to as “non-members” in the ToRs. The ToRs outline that non-members have limited participation rights but can still benefit from the Partnership's resources and contribute to its goals by aligning their activities and sharing data openly. Specifically:

- Non-members can access financial and technical support, but with lower priority than members and subject to availability and can attend and present at events such as Global Dialogue meetings, but cannot vote or participate in member meetings
- Non-members receiving assistance from the Partnership are expected to provide regular updates and work towards aligning their ocean accounting activities with GOAP's objectives
- Non-members should strive to make their ocean accounting data open-source and aligned with national systems, and are encouraged to support the GOAP secretariat and the wider ocean accounting community, where possible.

Figure 1: GOAP partnership structure



The existing partnership structure supports the creation and coordination of a global network of members and experts, alongside a decentralised model to support implementing activities at the regional and national levels. Across each of its components, GOAP brings together an impressive large-scale network of individuals across diverse institutions and geographic spread. The elements of the current partnership structure support the delivery of objectives as discussed in the following sections. The complete structure of the Partnership, however, is not fully documented in the key strategic documents or the GOAP website. While those close to the management of GOAP, such as secretariat staff and key partners, were familiar with the overall structure, there was uncertainty among others of the overall structure beyond the immediate relationships they had in the Partnership.



Initially looking at the entire global dialogue we were not sure how it [GOAP] was structured... initially we thought it was a tripartite arrangement, but then with the dialogue we realised it is an entire global network. – GOAP member

Funding structure (Q1b)

GOAP's current funding structure is centred around funding received from the UK Government. UK Government funding to GOAP is part of the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) funded through official development assistance (ODA) as part of the UK's £500 million BPF which supports developing countries to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty. Current support is being provided through two phases of funding to GOAP, Phase 2 funding which goes to March 2025, and an additional uplift which continues aspects of the programme to March 2026 (Phase 3). The UK Government also provided an initial package of financial support in 2021-22, also through BPF, which enabled the implementation of six pilot projects in Fiji, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa and Viet Nam, as well as regional and global knowledge products and capacity building activities.

BPF investment is by far the largest component of GOAP's funding structure comprising of approximately 85%. As such the design of GOAP along with implementation of activities are largely structured around these investments (see sections 5.3 and 5.4). Current MEL and reporting systems and processes are focused on meeting the needs of OCPP reporting. GOAP's design and implementation provides strong strategic alignment with BPF investment, including developing evidence-based policy and management tools and science-led policy, and the UK Government's commitment to ocean accounting as both a donor and member of GOAP. While having a singular primary donor presents efficiencies and flexibility in delivery, the concentration of funding from a single donor also presents some challenges and risk. These can include the level of responsiveness or staff turnover in the main funding team impacting an organisation's ability to access support, and changes in government priorities or funding allocations posing risks to the organisation's long-term sustainability. As one stakeholder noted *"no matter who funds you you're always subject to changes in priorities"*.

While much of GOAP's work is focused on supporting ODA-eligible countries, as a global partnership with a broad membership base additional investment and activities are required in building this global coalition and growing momentum. GOAP can manage funding its full programme of work with the assistance of smaller grants provided by the World Bank Blue Economy Program, Australia's Oceans Leadership Package, and the Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership.

Although the close alignment with UK Government support has provided opportunities for GOAP, it also exposes the Partnership to potential risks without long-term strategic funding secured beyond 2026. Maintaining the UK as a keystone donor will support the long-term success of the Partnership, particularly given the flexibility and contribution the UK has provided which was highly valued among the Partnership. The longstanding and well-developed relationship with the UK means this also provides an enabling environment for GOAP to continue to grow, including the UK Government's strategic alignment, commitment and understanding of the Partnership to date and valued relationship with Defra as the relationship manager. Going forward, GOAP will need to continue to diversify its funding sources, strengthen its partnerships with existing donor partners, and explore new donor opportunities, although the latter comes with additional challenges such as ensuring strategic alignment across multiple donors and additional administrative and reporting requirements (and the resources required to accommodate these).

5.1.2 Management

Key evaluation question: Is GOAP managed effectively? (EQ2)

GOAP management (Q2a)

Evaluation results indicate that GOAP appears to be generally well-managed, with several strengths and areas for improvement. GOAP was seen to foster a collaborative and supportive culture, with strong personal connections among secretariat team members and more broadly across the Partnership, as well as a collective focus on achieving common goals. This was evidenced through both interview responses as well as survey results. This strong focus on personal connections and collective commitment, resulted in high expectations around communication and transparency. There were very few instances where relationships had not developed positively, however, where this did exist it resulted in deeper dissatisfaction than transactionally based agreements given the very relational nature of the Partnership approach.

All stakeholder groups consulted perceived the secretariat to have experienced and capable leadership committed to GOAP's goals. Survey respondents were asked to rate GOAP's leadership effectiveness across a range of elements (considering both those who provide formal and informal leadership for the Partnership). Across a five-point scale all responses were positive for each of the elements, with weighted averages ranging from 3.4 to 4.2 out of 5. Elements rated most highly were the leadership's effectiveness in "creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced" (average rating 4.19, 69% very positive) and "helping the partnership be creative and look at things differently" (average rating 4.09, 67% very positive). The elements rated least highly, although still positively, was "evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership" (average rating 3.4, 37% very positive). See Annex 5 for full survey results.

The secretariat itself has recently undergone a period of significant growth. This has included an expansion from six staff in 2021/22 to 22 staff in 2024/25 (including four fellows), as well as an increase from one to three Directors. Most of this growth was technical staff and only two additional operations positions added (1.6 FTE). With this, newer secretariat staff interviewed noted experiencing a well-structured onboarding process that provided the necessary information and support for new staff. In relation to managing membership, clear processes were also in place for institutions becoming members of GOAP, including orientation once on board. Since 2019 GOAP membership has grown from nine to 41, with fairly consistent growth year-to-year.

Stakeholder satisfaction (Q2b)

Overall, GOAP performed very well in the partnership checklist tool. The normalised total aggregate score of 146 out of 175 put the Partnership in the highest category which signals that *"a partnership based on genuine collaboration has been established. The challenge is to maintain its impetus and build on the current success"* (see scoring below).

Table 1: Vic Health Partnership checklist scoring

35-84	The whole idea of a partnership should be rigorously questioned.
85-126	The partnership is moving in the right direction but it will need more attention if it is going to be really successful.
127-175	A partnership based on genuine collaboration has been established. The challenge is to maintain its impetus and build on the current success

The aggregate score for all sections in the checklist were either 20 or 21, indicating consistently high satisfaction in all areas included in the checklist, with these listed in the table below along with their respective average and minimum and maximum values.

Table 2: Aggregate score by section

Aggregate score	TOTAL (average)	Min	Max
1. Need and purpose of the partnership	21	7	25
2. Partners involved	20	11	25
3. Making sure partnerships work	21	13	25
4. Planning collaborative action	21	14	25
6. Minimising the barriers to partnerships	21	12	25
7. Reflecting on and continuing the partnership	20	11	25
8. Fairness within the partnership	21	10	25
9. Effective communication, conflict resolution and respect	21	5	25
Total (normalised)	167 (146)		

Respondents were asked to rate partnership elements on a five-point scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). All elements were rated positively, with average scores ranging from 3.9 to 4.5 out of 5. The elements with the highest ratings at 4.5 were:

- *there is a perceived need for the Partnership in terms of areas of common interest and complementary capacity*
- *the perceived benefits of the Partnership outweigh the perceived costs*
- *there is a clear need for and commitment to continuing the collaboration in the medium term.*


While still rated quite highly, the elements with the lowest ratings (3.9) were:

- *differences in organisational priorities, goals and tasks have been addressed*
- *the administrative, communication and decision-making structure of the Partnership is clear and transparent*
- *the lines of communication, roles and expectations of partners are clear.*

High levels of satisfaction was confirmed through stakeholder interviews. Feedback included building positive relationships with the secretariat, positive experiences working with GOAP, finding GOAP to be welcoming and responsive, and satisfaction with the progress on pilots and technical work (see section 5.3 on objectives and impact). As indicated in the ratings above, while in the minority several stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction. Areas for dissatisfaction identified in the interviews aligned with those rated lowest in the survey where a few of the interview respondents noted a certain lack of clarity regarding budget allocation, two partners felt their contributions had not been adequately acknowledged, and abovementioned administrative issues and coordination leading to uncertainty or delays in implementation in a few instances.

Risk management (Q2c)

To date, GOAP's risk management approach has been covered as part of overall risk management of the CSDR at UNSW. This has meant there is not a specific formalised risk management approach for GOAP itself. While managing risk at the CSDR level may have been appropriate during the initial phases of GOAP, given the growth, maturity and uniqueness of GOAP this approach is likely to be inadequate



going forward. There is delivery chain risk map for BPF investment into GOAP that has been developed focussing on country and regional delivery plans, including funding allocations. It is a “live” document updated every 6 months and provides a brief assessment of risk at the activity level but is not a full risk management approach. Developing a formalised approach to risk management for GOAP will also support shared understanding and clear communication around the risk appetite, risk roles and responsibilities, systems, resourcing and capabilities required for risk management, and ensuring appropriate risk identification, monitoring and documentation.

The National Australian Audit Office have identified eight key lessons in relation to risk management⁴, which may be a useful guide as GOAP looks to mature its approach to risk management. These include:

1. Put the fundamentals in place – i.e. a formalised approach to risk management (e.g. risk management framework) and arrangements to operationalise them
2. Create a positive risk culture
3. Tailor administration based on risk
4. Embed risk management into decision making
5. Establish fit-for-purpose risk controls and treatments
6. Keep a watch out for emerging risks
7. Consider additional factors for shared risks, and
8. Continually monitor and review.

⁴ ANAO, 2024, ‘Risk management’, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra. Available online: <https://www.anao.gov.au/work/insights/risk-management>

5.2 Delivery

5.2.1 Design

Key evaluation question: To what extent is GOAP being implemented as intended? (EQ3)

Evaluation results indicate GOAP is implemented as intended and remains aligned with the objectives and actions set out, with adaptations undertaken to meeting increased demand over recent years.

Shared understanding of purpose and value (Q3a)

There was general consensus among stakeholders when describing the overall purpose of GOAP. Among the 58 survey respondents who responded to this open-ended question, most described the importance of ocean accounts as being essential for sustainable ocean management and decision-making, and GOAP should play a central role in promoting and supporting the development and use of ocean accounts.

Differences of opinion were still in the bounds of GOAP's goals and objectives, where some respondents emphasised the importance of developing standardised methods and approaches, while others focused on providing tailored guidance and support for implementation. Some stakeholders interviewed felt there were some differences across the Partnership in how GOAP's overall purpose was understood due to the different roles GOAP plays across countries and regions and that the range of mechanisms through which GOAP provides support, or how to access it, not being clearly understood by all. In terms of connecting with GOAP's long-term vision and purpose, some noted GOAP lacked a clear strategy making it difficult to build a shared understanding and expectations. In relation to GOAP's vision and strategy, the co-chairs ambition statement outlines their shared goals and vision for GOAP over the next two years (2024-2026), and regional CoPs (Latin America and Caribbean, and Africa) and their own strategies and vision documents. Currently, GOAP does not have an overarching long-term strategy, such as a strategic plan.

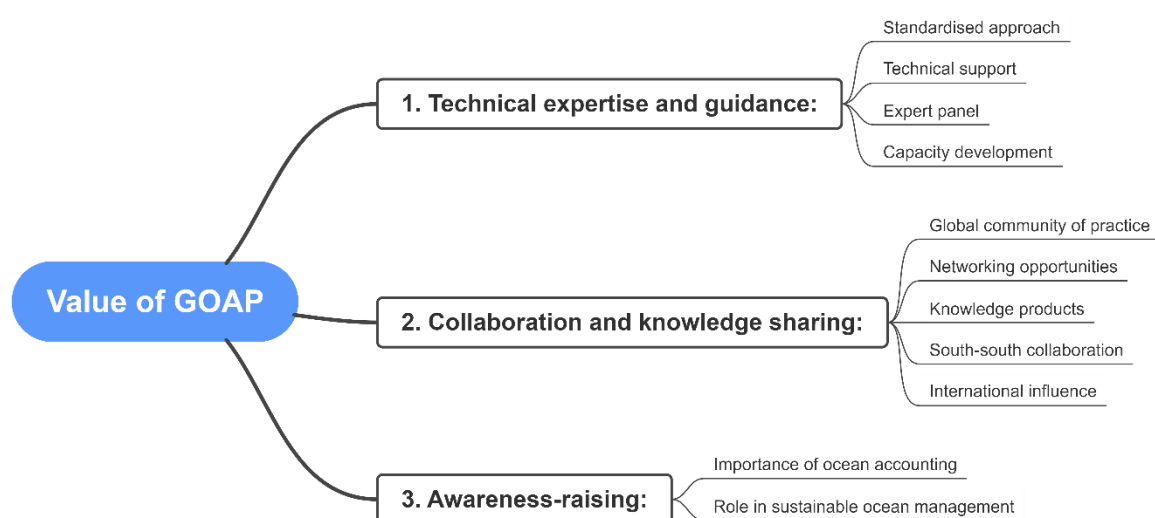
When asked to describe the value GOAP adds to the area of ocean accounts, 55 survey respondents provided answers relating to technical expertise and guidance, collaboration and knowledge sharing, and awareness-raising. Key components identified were:

- **Technical expertise and guidance:**
 - GOAP provides a standardised framework and methodology for ocean accounting, ensuring consistency and comparability across countries.
 - GOAP offers technical guidance, expertise, and capacity building to support countries in developing and implementing ocean accounts.
 - GOAP's expert panel provides valuable insights and guidance on technical issues related to ocean accounting.
 - GOAP supports capacity building in ocean accounting, including training and technical assistance.
- **Collaboration and knowledge sharing:**
 - GOAP brings together a global community of practice around ocean accounting, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange.

- GOAP provides opportunities for networking and building relationships among stakeholders.
 - GOAP develops and shares knowledge products, such as guidance documents and case studies.
 - GOAP facilitates south-south and regional collaboration in ocean accounting.
 - GOAP is involved in, and influences, international processes and agreements connected to ocean accounting (e.g. High Level Panel, Global Biodiversity Framework Goals, UN Our Ocean Conference, etc.)
- **Awareness-raising:**
 - GOAP raises awareness of ocean accounting among policymakers, researchers, and the public, and the importance of ocean accounting and its role in sustainable ocean management.

Survey respondents also strongly agreed that “the Partnership brings added prestige and value to partners individually as well as collectively” (average score of 4.3 out of 5).

Figure 2: Value of GOAP




Stakeholder reach (Q3b)

As noted on the GOAP website:

GOAP membership is open to national governments, intergovernmental institutions, representative bodies of the private sector, and research-intensive institutions (who have been granted formal not-for-profit status in their country of origin) who seek to ensure that the diverse values of the ocean are recognised in all decision-making related to social and economic development.

In terms of reach in relation to representation among members, it was felt that the membership had continued to grow to positively increase representation across regions that had previously been less represented such as Latin America and the Caribbean. The focus on governments and research



institutions as members was felt to be appropriate by most of those interviewed, and reflective of the membership profile targeted. Some felt the membership lacked diversity from other groups, specifically private sector and research NGOs and civil society, however the decision on eligibility for membership was agreed by members in their December 2023 meeting. Survey respondents were very positive about the make-up of the partnership. Respondents agreed that “there is enough variety among partners to have a comprehensive understanding of the issues being addressed” (average score of 4.3 out of 5), “partners see areas of connection between their core businesses” (4.2 out of 5) and “partners share common ideologies, interests and approaches” (4.1 out of 5).

Some members expressed dissatisfaction with the current level of engagement and communication, suggesting a need for more frequent interactions and more diverse channels. The GOAP newsletter and members' meetings were seen as primary communication channels. Some members felt meetings were not frequent enough and the newsletter could be complemented by more diverse interactions. A few stakeholders also noted that it was sometimes difficult to know what other partners or members were doing. Others acknowledged GOAP's efforts in building partnerships but still felt more could be done to reach a wider audience. Secretariat and partner staff recognised the challenges in balancing multiple stakeholder needs while maintaining a consistent and concerted focus on outreach. It was also noted that outside of this evaluation stakeholder satisfaction was unknown, with no other mechanisms or analysis undertaken to determine stakeholder sentiment, including among the membership.


Efficiency (Q3c)

While a comprehensive value for money assessment was beyond the scope of this review, evidence from the OCPP interim evaluation, and from this evaluation, suggests resource utilisation to date has largely been efficient, including financial, human, and technical resources.

Milestone reporting and evidence provided through surveys and stakeholder interviews indicate GOAP has been successful in achieving the results and deliverables it has set out to in the planned timeframes. The substantial positive change achieved by the Partnership to date indicate efficiency in relation to outcomes generated relative to costs given expenditure to date has been ~£5.5m as noted by the OCPP interim evaluation. The OCPP interim evaluation investigated value for money across the OCPP. In relation to GOAP cost categories it found staff costs for 2022-2026 were estimated to be approximately 50% of the budget, with overheads being relatively low at 4.5%. GOAP was also found to have performed positively in relation to overall spending performance.⁵

In relation to human resources, the partnership approach and structure of GOAP support efficient delivery of activities. GOAP's access to topic experts provides valuable technical guidance and support, and with high-level expertise included in the secretariat this further enables technical assistance to be deployed and used efficiently and responsively. Despite this, the secretariat's relatively small size and limited resources may constrain its ability to provide comprehensive support to all members. While certainly an identified strength and enabling factor for much of GOAP's success, taking a partnership and member driven approach also requires additional time coordinating activities among staff and partners. While potentially time-consuming and complex, this also delivers more sustainable and

⁵ Niras, 2024, Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning – Interim Evaluation Report. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Supplied.



relevant outcomes in the long-term. The model of delivery being largely through regional and national-level partners, with support from a globally based secretariat, also provides for efficiency.

I find the work of GOAP very inspiring and transparent. All possible resources are always going to partners and trying to have the most possible impact in-country. – Survey respondent

Stakeholders rated “fairness in financial resource sharing” positively at 4.5 out of 5. While still rated positively, survey respondents were less positive about GOAP’s effectiveness in “evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership” (rated 3.4 out of 5).

Embedding ocean accounts (Q3d)

As GOAP aims to facilitate the global uptake of ocean accounts, the review looked to identify key mechanisms through which GOAP embeds ocean accounting approaches at organisational and national levels. The question was asked to both survey respondents and explored with those interviewed. There was strong consensus that GOAP has played a pivotal role in embedding ocean accounting approaches across organisations and at national level, as well as internationally. Mechanisms identified related to technical assistance and capacity building, addressing data gaps and challenges, strategic engagement at all levels, facilitating knowledge sharing and developing standardised approaches.

Technical support provided to countries to develop their ocean accounts was identified as a key mechanism for embedding ocean accounts among survey and interview participants. GOAP is currently working with 15 ODA-eligible countries, including supporting the design, resourcing and implementation of pilot ocean accounts projects (see outcomes and impact for further detail on these results). Another cornerstone to GOAP’s approach to embedding ocean accounts was seen as through building locally based skills and knowledge in participating countries and organisations. Stakeholders interviewed noted the wide range of workshops on building ocean accounts and a diverse list of connected topics in the sustainable ocean development space GOAP has undertaken, reflective of the needs and priorities of members and partners (see section 5.3.1 for further detail). GOAP has also developed more in-depth education programmes, such as tertiary curricula, to ensure deeper understanding of ocean accounting in countries like the Maldives and Ghana. With the implementation of pilots also comes intentional capacity development of locally based counterparts and stakeholders to ensure knowledge and sustainable change is supported.

Stakeholders also discussed the ways in which GOAP recognises the global issue of data gaps and challenges related to ocean accounts and aims to address this by developing data collection methods, knowledge products, and checklists. As identified in milestone reporting, some of the technical assistance GOAP has provided has also focused on data quality and investigating the accuracy and reliability of data sets that would potentially be used in the development of ocean accounts.

Alongside country-level implementation is strategic level engagement at regional and global levels. Stakeholders noted how this has resulted in strategic results including ocean accounts being formally integrated into the Nairobi Convention’s framework, the second progress report from the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy emphasising the crucial role GOAP has played in integrating ocean accounts into sustainable ocean planning, and technical support on ocean accounts such as that provided to the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) Oceans Working Group.



As a global ocean accounting network GOAP shares experiences and best practices through events like the Global Dialogues and knowledge products. Stakeholders spoke of the value of these events in embedding ocean accounts across the network, as well as participation in non-GOAP events internationally, such as the UN Ocean Conference Side Event (2022), Our Ocean Conference (2023), and the Ocean Decade Conference (2024), and regionally like the 1st Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management (2023) and the Marine Regions Forum 2023 (Western Indian Ocean). GOAP also fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing through regional communities of practice. As a result of these international events ocean accounts have been included in the Ocean Decade Programme for Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management as well as the related Ocean Decade working paper.

Scaling (Q3e)

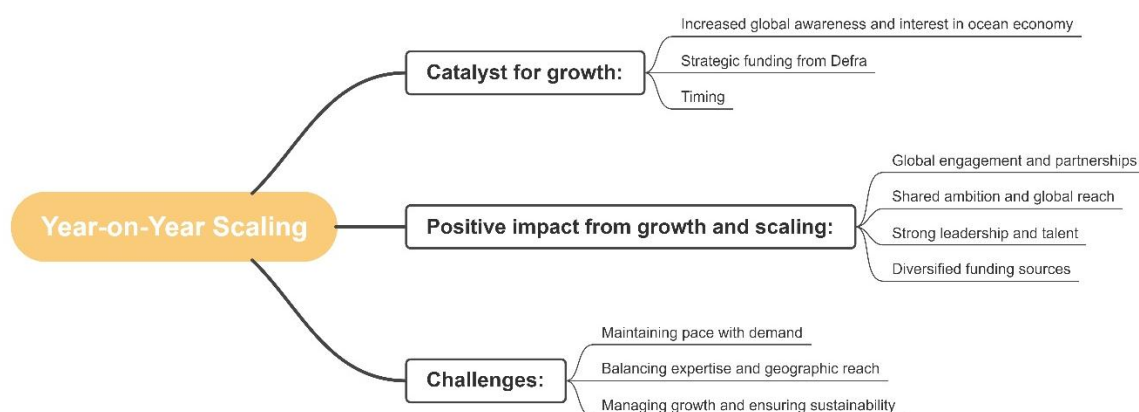
The past five years have been a period of growth and sustained scaling of the reach and work of GOAP. In examining the impact of year-on-year scaling on the effectiveness and delivery of GOAP, key themes emerge in relation to both the reasons and impact of this growth.

When asked about what factors have led to the growth seen in GOAP, stakeholders identified key catalysts for growth. Increased global awareness and interest in the ocean economy or blue economy was seen to create a favourable environment for GOAP's growth. This was seen to be both an external influence as well as contributed to by GOAP itself. Simultaneous to this rising interest was the substantial strategic funding received from the UK Government which provided the necessary resources to scale operations and meet growing demand. The timing of GOAP's growth coinciding with broader global conversation on ocean economy was seen to position it well to capitalise on momentum and opportunities.

Overall, the year-on-year scaling of GOAP has had a positive impact on its effectiveness and delivery. GOAP was seen to have successfully leveraged opportunities, built a strong team, and expanded its global reach. The ongoing expansion of global engagement, partnerships and relationships with countries from diverse regions has expanded GOAP's network and opportunities. This also included building collective high levels of ambition for ocean accounting across the Partnership. The development of strong leadership and talent in the secretariat and network of implementing partners, including the addition of three experienced directors, was seen to significantly enhance GOAP's capabilities and strategic thinking. There has also been some diversification of funding sources which was seen to help mitigate risks associated with grant-based funding models.

It is also important to address the challenges associated with rapid growth to ensure GOAP's strategic goals remain aligned with its operational capabilities. Key challenges identified included the difficulties of maintaining pace with growing demand and momentum. Rapid growth creates challenges in terms of staffing, organisational systems and processes, resource allocation, and ensuring ongoing high quality of work. GOAP faces the ongoing challenge of maintaining in-depth expertise in specific ocean sectors while expanding its reach. Recent recruitment in the secretariat was seen to be in response to such challenges. Going forward, it was also noted GOAP needs to carefully manage its continued growth to ensure long-term sustainability and avoid overextending its resources.

Figure 3: Cause and effect of year-on-year scaling on GOAP



5.2.2 Appropriateness

Key evaluation question: Is the overall model and approach of GOAP appropriate? (EQ4)

Balance between global and national level implementation (Q4a)

Across each of its outcome areas GOAP works at national and global levels to achieve its goals. In understanding the appropriateness of GOAP's model and approach, the review explored whether the balance between GOAP's global work and country-based implementation was appropriate.


Operating at a **global level** allows GOAP to establish consistent standards and guidelines for ocean accounting, ensuring comparability and reliability across different regions and countries. A global platform facilitates the exchange of knowledge and best practices among countries, fostering innovation and learning. Globally, GOAP also works at influencing international support for mainstreaming and embedding ocean accounts through supporting and working in UN SEEA Ecosystem accounting framework, collaborations with multilateral agencies including UNESCAP, intentionally maintaining presence at high-level ocean events, and the inclusion of global agencies as GOAP members.

At the **national level**, GOAP provides tailored support to countries based on their specific needs and challenges, ensuring ocean accounting approaches are relevant and effective. Additionally, GOAP provides targeted capacity building to support countries and institutions develop the required skills and expertise.

At the global level the secretariat is aiming at ensuring consistent and high-quality standards for the accounts that are somehow adaptable for all countries, so they are universally applicable but flexible enough to have unique adaptations at the national level. – Secretariat staff

I would say it's more country and local based rather than international... it's a good balance because the work that needs to be done is country based, bringing it to the international stage is being driven by those countries that the work has already been done in. – Secretariat staff

Through working at **both levels**, GOAP is also able to assist in aligning national policies and strategies with global frameworks and goals, and advocate for the integration of ocean accounting into national



and international frameworks and decision-making processes (see sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 for further discussion of these achievements to date). As GOAP's global network also brings together experts from different regions, by operating at both levels, GOAP can address challenges specific to different countries or regions while also contributing to global solutions. This approach also allows GOAP to scale its impact and leverage synergies between global and national efforts to achieve greater results.

Working across these levels is intrinsic to the design, implementation and impacts GOAP has achieved to date. Evidence from stakeholder interviews and project documentation suggests the balance between global and national implementation appears to be appropriate, with GOAP making significant strides in both areas. Going forward, national-level engagement and partnership building were areas identified as needing continued effort and focus to remain relevant and effective, particularly as new countries and pilot projects are added to GOAP's membership and portfolio of work. Also, GOAP's regional approach to building communities of practice was appreciated, alongside this several stakeholders noted that exploring the potential for a more regionalised approach to implementing activities could enhance the relevance and impact in specific geographic areas and better meet the needs of countries in those regions, particularly as work continued to scale.

Route to impact (Q4b)

Route to impact refers to the approaches or pathways an organisation or initiative takes to achieve the intended outcomes, or put another way, the way in which it makes a meaningful difference. GOAP's route to impact nationally, regionally, and internationally is multifaceted and involves a combination of strategic partnerships, capacity building, knowledge sharing and awareness raising.

GOAP's leadership in the secretariat identified drawing on theory and lessons relating to international development and high-level policy and political change in shaping the strategies and approaches taken in GOAP. Demonstrating intentionality in how the route to impact is designed and implemented, although not documented. Stakeholder interviews also explored the approach adopted by GOAP that led to and facilitated changes identified. The following pathways to impact emerged from this review:

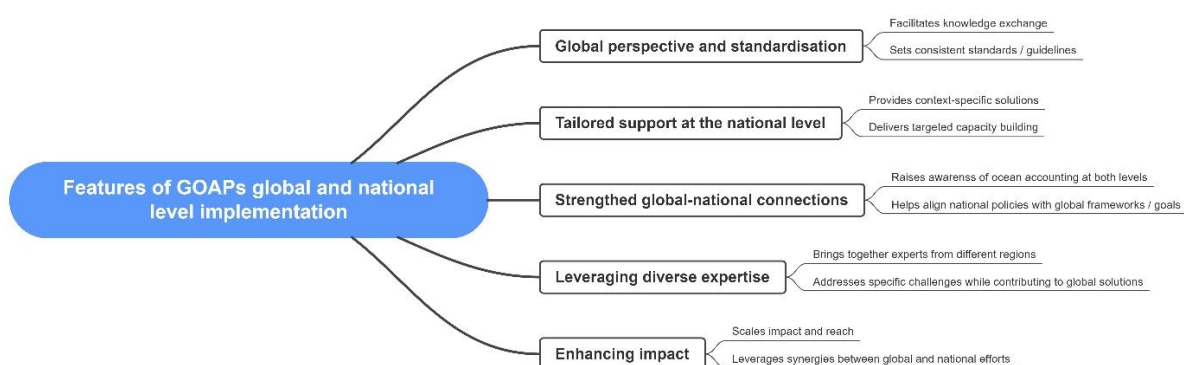
- **Leveraging partnerships and networks:** GOAP collaborates with a wide range of partners, including governments, international organisations, academic and research institutions and NGOs to enhance impact and reach. This included partnerships and networking between members, as well as the formal partnerships that make up GOAP.
- **Leveraging policy entry points:** GOAP can leverage multiple policy entry points and opportunities at national and global levels in sustainable ocean management. Those identified included current interest in the "blue economy", and topics such as marine spatial planning and plastic pollution where there were easy connections to make with the utility of ocean accounts to support these existing policy priorities.
- **Capacity and technical capability:** GOAP provides training, workshops, and other capacity-building activities to strengthen the skills and knowledge of stakeholders at all levels. This also included south-to-south exchanges between members and among the broader network. The technical capacity in the secretariat enables secretariat staff to directly undertake training, and provide technical backstopping as needed.

- **Knowledge sharing:** GOAP facilitates knowledge exchange through events, conferences, publications, and online platforms, promoting the adoption of ocean accounting and common approaches.
- **Awareness raising:** GOAP raises awareness of the utility of ocean accounts and advocates for the integration of ocean accounting into national and international policies and decision-making processes.

These approaches to facilitating change bring some common challenges and risks in partnership-based implementation. Specifically key challenges identified by stakeholders included scaling impact particularly in countries with more limited resources or institutional capacity, maintaining long-term engagement with partners and stakeholders as this was seen as crucial for ensuring sustained impact, and always needing to be adaptable to changing political, economic, and social contexts to remain relevant and effective.

As GOAP was seen to be largely successful both as a partnership and through the results achieved, alternative routes to impact were not seen as necessary by stakeholders, although recommendations were made to continue to enhance and improve current approaches taken noted in previous sections, and securing long-term resourcing for GOAP to continue building on momentum and support.

Figure 4: Features of GOAP's global and national level implementation




Demand-led model (Q4d)

By design GOAP has a demand-led model. In practice this means GOAP primarily focuses on providing support to countries that have expressed interest in ocean accounting, while also actively promoting and raising awareness of the benefits of this approach at the national and international level.

GOAP's demand-led approach is evident in its flexibility and adaptability. Support is tailored to the specific needs and priorities of each country, rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all solution. This approach is highly appreciated by members, as it demonstrates respect for national sovereignty and GOAP's commitment to providing relevant assistance. Stakeholder feedback suggests GOAP is effective in tailoring approaches as required, adapting support to specific needs by considering local experience, capacity, priorities and aspirations. This is further supported by the capacity for GOAP to directly fund local implementation partners, building direct relationships and local capabilities.

Because of the flexibility of how GOAP implements ocean accounts, [our country] can decide the way to do it... In the beginning [our] government do not know how to do it with the methodology, so the



first six months they provided training [and] guidance... They identified through the scoping and diagnostic tools how the framework can be implemented in [country]... highlighting how the first initiatives for ocean accounting can be developed through consultation with stakeholders” – GOAP member

For this model to be effective, GOAP also incorporates promotion and awareness-raising. GOAP actively raises awareness of the utility of ocean accounting and works to build coalitions of countries that are committed to this approach. This is essential for supporting adoption and building a coalition and partnership approach.

In [country] the government has expressed interest to get support in natural accounting. They weren't so aware about GOAP, so they never knew about having GOAP as an option... So it takes two to tango, need to have someone from government to champion it and from our side we need someone to be the partner. Without knowledge of what is on offer we miss the opportunity for that.
– Non-member (Government)

The demand-led model ensures GOAP's efforts are aligned with the needs of members and countries it supports, with it being important to complement this approach with strategic promotion to ensure long-term success. Promoting the adoption of ocean accounting also helps to build momentum and creates a supportive environment for countries implementing ocean accounting.

This kind of space and community of learning is a really good platform to promote the exchange of experiences and learning together from countries that are way advanced to the ones just showing some interest... good strategy to not leave a country behind” – GOAP member

5.2.3 Alignment


Key evaluation question: How aligned is GOAP's work with member and country objectives, both for Ocean Accounting but sustainable use of the ocean in general? (EQ5)

Alignment with national priorities (Q5a)

The review identified strong alignment between GOAP's work and member and country objectives for ocean accounting and sustainable use of the ocean more generally. Indicators of alignment included shared goals, where countries identified ocean conservation and sustainable development as priorities, tailored technical support through GOAP's ability to provide technical expertise and support in areas like marine spatial planning, ecosystem accounting, plastics pollution and blue economy development, and GOAP's collaborative approach focussing on building partnerships that foster trust and cooperation.

I think it is aligning to national level strategies... Now we know it [GOAP] exists... it is totally aligned with the national strategy, even the fact that the [focus on] blue economy started two years ago means a lot. – Non-member

In [country] in the ministry, there is marine spatial management and their main KPI is how to best manage the marine space, so ocean accounts really make sense as a tool for that. They have a really tangible interest because... marine spatial management is about planning, decision making and policy which ocean accounting does provide. So they have a very strong buy in. – Non-member (Government)



Key factors in creating the enabling environment for this alignment were identified. These included:

- Strong leadership and the partnership structure that ensure the work is aligned with member and country priorities and effectively implemented
- Open communication with countries that leads to building trust, understanding their needs, and ensuring GOAP's work is relevant
- The ability to adapt to changing circumstances and the evolving needs of countries, and building strong partnerships with governments, NGOs, academia, and other relevant stakeholders to enhance impact and leverage additional expertise and resources.


GOAP's efforts to build capacity in countries enables ownership at the national level of their marine resource management efforts, and ocean accounting more specifically, and tailor initiatives accordingly.

In providing tailored technical support, the approach taken by secretariat when working with countries included: conducting initial assessments to understand each country's individual environmental, social, and cultural contexts as well as their strategies and policies; recognising the importance of cultural sensitivity and perspectives and adapting approaches accordingly; having consistent contact points in the secretariat to support relationship development; identifying who among the secretariat team goes on individual engagements depending on the country's needs; and, adapting tools, frameworks or systems to individual countries' needs. These approaches were well generally well understood and practiced by staff in the secretariat, requiring a diverse skill set to have both high-level technical expertise as well as the interpersonal skills required for this approach in cross-cultural contexts.

Building and maintaining trust and transparency were seen to be key to national level work. This was evident as countries may have had negative experiences with previous projects or partners leading to scepticism and mistrust that needed to be overcome with GOAP needing to demonstrate its commitment to adapting the approach to each country's specific needs. National stakeholders with long-term relationships with GOAP, including both secretariat and partners, noted that GOAP had successfully built and maintained trusted relationships (see section below on points of differentiation).

In building on lessons learned, stakeholders identified capacity building, communication and engagement as key areas to continuing investing in to further improve alignment. Tailored capacity building was seen to be a core area of alignment, with opportunities for further alignment as this area continued to develop. As GOAP's collaborative approach was key to ensuring alignment, as identified by stakeholders interviewed, further strengthening communication and engagement with member countries could help to ensure GOAP continues to be aligned with their evolving priorities and needs. Another area for increased focus was continuous evaluation, learning and improvement, identified by stakeholders and survey responses, to enable GOAP to continue learning from its experiences, evaluating its performance and making necessary evidence-based adjustments to improve.

Discussions on alignment also highlight the importance of a demand-led and tailored approach. It was noted that countries faced challenges in accessing data necessary to develop ocean accounts and support sustainable ocean management, with the availability of data also potentially limiting GOAP's ability to provide support in developing accounts. It was generally agreed that global standardisation and frameworks for developing ocean accounts and capacity building aligned with national objectives relating to improving data availability. Some stakeholders felt GOAP could play a more active role in supporting data collection, whereas others felt this was an internal national level responsibility. There



were also divergent viewpoints in relation to resource allocation, where most felt it was appropriate, a few stakeholders felt there may be a need to allocate resources more strategically to ensure support was focused on areas where it will have the greatest impact. These comments related to the call for an overarching GOAP strategy, that could then support strategic resource allocation.

Member expectations (Q5b)

The positive ratings from the partnership assessment tool, along with feedback from stakeholders, demonstrate GOAP is largely meeting member expectations. Key areas where members' expectations have been met and balanced centred around GOAP's collaborative approach and focus on partnerships which has fostered trust and cooperation among members. The technical expertise and guidance and efforts in relation to capacity building were also commonly cited as evidence of how GOAP has met expectations among members.

Areas where expectations had not been fully met for some members were centred around communication, engagement and clarity of expectations. Some members felt there could be more frequent communication and engagement opportunities, such as more regular meetings and technical sessions. A few also noted a need for clearer communication and expectations regarding membership benefits, project implementation, and budget for in-country activities. These themes also align with those raised above in relation to stakeholder satisfaction and associated survey results.

I thought that we would be meeting more with other members... If we have regular meetings or technical sessions besides the Global Dialogue it allows us to be more informed and we can have a clearer picture of what the options are so we can implement ocean accounts in our local context... I think the members have meetings once or twice every six months, it's not what I initially expected. – GOAP member


We have many different projects under the Ministry... In terms of planning, if we know we have 100,000 for this project item, we can know how to plan for resources. – GOAP member

These concerns raised by a few stakeholders in relation to understanding budget allocation for in-country activities reflect GOAP's current balance between nationally led implementation design and being adaptive to changing contexts with planning and budget allocation. As the preference is to lead with understanding need, rather than budget, and adapting priorities across the portfolio of work in existing implementation, challenges can arise when working across partner and member expectations and institutions.

Points of differentiation and innovation (Q8b, Q4c)

Stakeholders were asked to identify how GOAP compares to others working in the ocean accounting space or in sustainable ocean development more broadly. Almost all consulted felt GOAP was unique compared to others they had worked with. The most common response was that GOAP was very flexible and adaptable. GOAP was seen to prioritise partnerships, with a secretariat that was willing to adjust their approach to meet the needs of members and the broader network.

"I find GOAP more receptive to input, more of a bottom up from the members, their needs and their requirements and how those can be met... They have been very accommodating, with the patience to deal with government and the [organisation] bureaucracy which requires multiple levels of approval before you can proceed. They have handled it really well." – GOAP member



Another strong theme was GOAP's membership base. It was noted that GOAP had a very diverse membership, allowing for a wide range of perspectives and expertise to be brought to bear on ocean sustainability challenges. Being member-driven was seen to provide for a more responsive approach, empowering members to meaningfully take ownership of their work and contribute to decision-making. The level of high commitment to the Partnership among partners and members was also noted as being something unique. This contrasted with other organisations that may have a more top-down approach.

GOAP is a network collection of people that are working towards a goal. You can speak to anyone and they are really passionate about ocean related issues. – GOAP secretariat staff

It's very open and very member driven... We have truly developed from the bottom up, from a very small group of people just doing this very gradually... And that seems different to me. It's not at all connected to political cycles and commitments. – GOAP secretariat staff

The broad scope of expertise and topics addressed in GOAP was also seen to be a point of differentiation. Unlike specialised organisations that focus on specific ocean issues, GOAP was addressed a wide range of topics and challenges related to sustainable ocean development, including plastics pollution, fisheries, shipping, energy and climate-related issues. This interdisciplinary approach was seen to allow for a more holistic understanding of ocean ecosystems and their interactions with human activities.

They try to make research available and operational for decision makers, it's a niche activity and not many institutions that can do that. Researchers usually don't have very good access to ministries, and international organisations usually rely less on experts nominated from the countries, so working with national expertise in the longer term... [is] pretty unique. – Non-member (Government)

GOAP's global perspective, focus on international collaboration, capacity building and knowledge sharing were other points of differentiation identified. GOAP's global approach to establishing partnerships, promoting standardised methodologies, and facilitating capacity building and knowledge transfer were all seen to uniquely promote sustainable ocean management on a global scale compared to other partners. This also included being directly involved in projects at national and provincial levels, as well as high-level international forums such as the UN SEEA working group, ocean conferences and negotiations such as the Global Plastics Treaty process.

These same characteristics identified as points of differentiation were also seen to be reflective of the ways in which GOAP cultivated a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. Its partnership-centric approach fostered innovation, including a high degree of flexibility and adaptability in adjusting to meet the needs of its members and broader network. A diversity of viewpoints and expertise, with members empowered to take ownership of their activities and decision-making, fostered a more innovative and creative environment, and contextually relevant solutions. Similarly, GOAP's global approach and focus on international partnerships facilitated the exchange of ideas and best practices, leading to more innovative and informed solutions.

5.2.4 Gender equity and social inclusion

Key evaluation question: How does the programme account for and support gender equity and social inclusion in both design and implementation as well as outcomes? (EQ6)

Evidence from project documentation and stakeholder interviews indicate GOAP has critical gaps in integrating gender equity and social inclusion into its work, but there is growing recognition of the importance of these issues and efforts underway to address them.

At the design and implementation level, GESI has not yet been systematically considered. For an initiative such as GOAP this is critically important as GESI activities ensure all stakeholders, regardless of gender or social background, have a voice and are empowered to participate, and partnerships and coalitions are inclusive. In terms of awareness, GOAP does monitor gender disaggregation of secretariat staff, participation at events like the 5th Global dialogue and representation in visible roles such as trainers and leadership.

Findings from the broader OCPP interim evaluation indicate this is a systemic issue across the overall investment portfolio. Specifically, the evaluation found “the [OCPP] 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” (OCPP finding 5). The OCPP evaluation did not separate results across the delivery partners or initiatives. To date, GOAP has not received any GESI-specific guidance from Defra, despite the grant agreement containing clear obligations to safeguarding. Since the OCPP evaluation findings the GOAP secretariat has begun implementing changes including strengthening gender sensitive MEL, including adding gender disaggregated indicators.

Given current gaps, GOAP could consider the following strategic level actions and activities:

- A GESI needs assessment to identify potential barriers or challenges to participation or engagement with GOAP that arise from intersecting social identities, and how these may affect GOAP meeting its objectives.
- GESI integration activities such as: establishing procedures to identify marginalised, vulnerable, and excluded groups; ensuring meaningful participation of key groups; and assessing GOAP activities using a gender responsive assessment tool.⁶
- Developing a GESI statement, strategy or action plan for GOAP.
- Undertaking gender analysis, including a gender baseline study.
- Reviewing Partnership related policies, procedures, ToRs and other agreements for inclusions such as collection of GESI disaggregated data and representation on steering committees or other decision-making bodies.
- The inclusion of relevant GESI specific MEL indicators for GOAP activities and at the outcome / impact level.

At the outcome level, while GOAP has focused on environmental and economic aspects of ocean management, GESI has received less attention. Stakeholders identified a need for a deeper

⁶ THET Partnerships for Global Health (2019) Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Toolkit for Health Partnerships. London. Available online: <https://resources.peopleinneed.net/documents/1017-thet-gesi-toolkit.pdf>

understanding of social dynamics and how to incorporate GESI considerations into ocean accounting frameworks. Efforts were underway in relation to the development of social accounts as an intrinsic component to ocean accounting, on track for substantial delivery in 2025. The integration of GESI into GOAP's technical work was seen to hold some challenges due to factors such as limited data, institutional barriers and the need for specialised expertise. A new strategic GOAP working group was established at the 5th Global Dialogue to develop accounting methodologies for Indigenous, traditional, and local knowledge and creating social accounts. Membership includes 40 participants from 15 countries. Their immediate priorities include piloting social accounts in selected countries and launching preliminary guidance for developing social accounts at various levels and piloting how local knowledge can be reflected, alongside western science, in ecosystem accounts. GOAP stakeholders interviewed acknowledged the potential for GESI integration and recognised its importance, particularly in developing country contexts. There was also consensus that by incorporating GESI into its frameworks, methodologies and technical support, GOAP can have a significant impact on promoting equity and inclusion in ocean management more broadly.

The WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale provides criteria for assessing programmes and policies. It is not a detailed programme analysis but does provide an indication of where a programme is situated and how GESI integration could be improved. In considering the above results against the WHO criteria, GOAP would currently be gender-sensitive, although while it does not ignore gender norms, roles and relations (a gender-blind criteria), it has not yet fully considered or analysed gender norms, roles and relations as they relate to ocean accounts and work within the Partnership.



Table 3: WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale: criteria for assessing programmes and policies

1. Gender-unequal	2. Gender-blind	3. Gender-sensitive	4. Gender-specific	5. Gender-transformative
<p>Perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing unbalanced norms, roles and relations.</p> <p>Privileges men over women (or vice versa).</p> <p>Often leads to one sex enjoying more rights or opportunities than the other.</p>	<p>Ignores gender norms, roles and relations.</p> <p>Very often reinforces gender-based discrimination.</p> <p>Ignores differences in opportunities and resource allocation for women and men.</p> <p>Often constructed based on the principle of being "fair" by treating everyone the same.</p>	<p>Considers gender norms, roles and relations.</p> <p>Does not address inequality generated by unequal norms, roles or relations.</p> <p>Indicates gender awareness, although often no remedial action is developed.</p>	<p>Considers gender norms, roles and relations for women and men and how they affect access to and control over resources.</p> <p>Considers women's and men's specific needs.</p> <p>Intentionally targets and benefits a specific group of women or men to achieve certain policy or programme goals or meet certain needs.</p> <p>Makes it easier for women and men to fulfil duties that are ascribed to them based on their gender roles.</p>	<p>Considers gender norms, roles and relations for women and men and that these affect access to and control over resources.</p> <p>Considers women's and men's specific needs.</p> <p>Addresses the causes of gender-based health inequities.</p> <p>Includes ways to transform harmful gender norms, roles and relations.</p> <p>Objective is often to promote gender equality.</p> <p>Includes strategies to foster progressive changes in power relationships between women and men.</p>

Source: World Health Organization, 2010, WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale: criteria for assessing programmes and policies.

5.3 Objectives and impact

Key evaluation question: Is the programme contributing to the intended outcomes and impact? (EQ7)

5.3.1 Objective 1: Global community of practice

GOAP objective 1: Build a global community of practice for ocean accounting to ensure the diverse values of the ocean are recognised in all decision-making about social and economic development.

Alignment with UK OCPP funding Phase 2, Outcome 2

GOAP has successfully built a global community of practice (CoP) for ocean accounting in a relatively short amount of time. GOAP was identified by stakeholders as the global CoP for ocean accounts, with growth in membership and the regional CoP approach a key element to its global growth and development. The 5th Global Dialogue in July 2024 was a key event for the global CoP, bringing together over 600 people with a focus on knowledge exchange and shared learning. While the CoP has seen substantial growth since the first Global Dialogue in 2019 with 89 participants, it is still just five years in, with further coordination required to capitalise on the recent Dialogue and continue to mature regional CoPs and the GOAP fellows programme.

Growth in membership

GOAP's members are the foundational component to the global community of practice for ocean accounting. While GOAP's broader network / CoP goes beyond its members, members are "collectively responsible for ensuring the Partnership realises its global coordination role, ambition and Objectives"⁷. There are currently 40 members of GOAP, having grown from nine members in 2019. The most recent to join have expanded membership in Africa, Central America and South America.


Global Dialogues

Annual Global Dialogues are the key mechanism through which the Partnership brings together the global community of practice for ocean accounting. The Dialogues are the headline partnership events that the GOAP convenes. The 5th Global Dialogue on Sustainable Ocean Development held in July 2024 was particularly instrumental as the first face-to-face dialogue since the COVID-19 pandemic, and the largest event thus far.

The 5th Global Dialogue on Sustainable Ocean Development was hosted by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), Government of Indonesia and organised by the GOAP secretariat 1-5 July, 2024. It was the largest Global Dialogue to date, bringing together approximately 600 participants (from about 50 countries and over 200 organisations to discuss ocean accounting, sustainable ocean development, and related topics. Gender disaggregation among participants was 49% men, 43% women, 8% prefer not to say / unknown. Key highlights noted in programme documentation (milestone 9 report and the Global Dialogue report to funders) were:

- 17 training courses delivered, covering topics like marine spatial planning, sustainable ocean finance, and ocean ecosystem accounting. Around 260 people attended at least one training

⁷ GOAP, 2023, A Global Ocean Accounts Partnership for Sustainable Development General Objectives and Terms of Reference, p.4. [Available online.](#)



session (47% men, 52% women, 1% preferred not to say). Results from training feedback surveys showed that participants were very satisfied with the training (average score of 4.4 out of 5) and found training relevant (average score of 4 out of 5). 85% reported improved understanding of the key concepts and skills from the training.

- 21 side events hosted by various organisations, focusing on regional knowledge exchange, youth engagement, and specific marine ecosystems.
- The launch of several initiatives, including a strategy for advancing ocean accounts in Latin America and the Caribbean, a consultation draft strategy for the African ocean accounts collaboration, Indonesia's national Ocean Accounts Dashboard and launch of co-chairs Ambition Statement.
- Identification of priority areas for future work, such as enhancing support for ocean accounting in various regions, strengthening the role of national statistical offices, and developing standardised frameworks for plastic pollution accounting. Accounting for indigenous, traditional and local knowledge and the creation of social accounting frameworks (to illuminate GESDI issues) to compliment ecosystem and economic accounts was a key priority.

When asked to identify the most significant achievements or outcomes achieved by GOAP to date, the 5th Global Dialogue on Sustainable Ocean Development was noted by many. Stakeholders highlighted the Dialogue as a significant outcome for GOAP due to the networking opportunities, capacity development / trainings provided, and resulting collaborations that were fostered through this face-to-face event. It was also noted that the Dialogue provided the opportunity for the sharing of lessons learned, approaches and knowledge across regions, including different approaches to growing the regional communities of practice. Building a global network and knowledge sharing was also a key theme, including the building of communities of practice and the growth in membership evident at the Dialogue. The Dialogue also provided opportunity to further key pieces of work by the Partnership as people came together in person, including the [co-chairs vision statement](#), strategy and ToR documents for several of the regional CoPs, activities of the expert panel, and [technical guidance documents](#) and [policy briefs](#).

Other partnership events


In addition to the Global Dialogues are a range of over 40 events organised by GOAP, including standalone events as well as side events at notable international fora. These have included those organised by the secretariat, as well as members and partners and associated with GOAP. Internationally, GOAP has had a presence at ocean conferences at the global level such as the UN Ocean Conference Side Event (2022), Our Ocean Conference (2023), and the Ocean Decade Conference (2024), and regionally like the 1st Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management (2023) and the Marine Regions Forum 2023 (Western Indian Ocean). Nationally, events include high-level events in countries such as Indonesia, Fiji, Tonga, Norway, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Maldives covering ocean accounts as well as related topics like marine spatial planning, ocean policy and legislation and blue carbon. A list of notable events are included in annex 6.



Regional communities of practice

Regional communities of practice (CoPs) are a crucial component to building GOAP's global community of practice. Each regional community of practice is led by regionally based partners and members, with regionalised approaches to the development of each CoP, including their associated strategies and priorities. The regional CoPs have grown and evolved over time, with most having recently developed their strategies or ToRs in 2024 around the 5th Global Dialogue. For example, the Asia-Pacific CoP began as one CoP established to cover Asia and the Pacific, with engagement and collaborative efforts during the Global Dialogue resulting in two distinct communities of practice, one for the Pacific and one for Asia, each with tailored approaches and capacity-building initiatives to advance ocean accounts. The profile of each CoP is further described below:

- **Africa CoP:** GOAP Africa CoP promotes ocean accounting to support sustainable ocean governance in Africa. The Vision and Strategy for the Africa Community of Practice was developed by the Africa CoP through virtual stakeholder engagements and in-person sessions at the 5th Global Dialogue. The strategy addresses Africa's ocean governance needs, emphasising research, capacity building, and stakeholder inclusion. Planning is underway for a joint GOAP and South Africa National Research Foundation workshop to be held in South Africa in November 2024. The key GOAP regional partner coordinating the Africa CoP, including to support African pilots, has been AfriSeas.
- **Asia CoP:** The GOAP Asia Community of Practice is a regional collaboration platform bringing together governments, international organisations, and research institutions interested in learning about and developing ocean accounts in the Asia region. A revised Capacity and Support Plan for the Asia CoP was developed at the 5th Global Dialogue. The Asia CoP is coordinated by the UNSW and supported by GOAP's regional partners, including the Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE) (Viet Nam), and Rekam Nusantara Foundation (Indonesia).
- **Europe CoP:** The Europe CoP developed new [terms of reference](#) in August 2021, and included representatives from 32 organisations at its first meeting in April 2024, five of which are official GOAP members. It is co-chaired by representatives from Statistics Norway and the Netherlands Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. The CoPs objectives include knowledge sharing, capacity and knowledge development, policy support, collaboration and coordination, awareness and advocacy and international learning in the field of ocean accounting.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean CoP:** The GOAP Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) [Summary Strategy](#) was launched during the 5th Global Dialogue during an in-person meeting of representatives from the region. The Strategy aims to leverage existing knowledge and build capacity to collectively advance ocean accounting by 2030. The Dialogue also provided opportunity to engage with partners and stakeholders in detailed discussions about pilot location preferences and scale in the region, which will be embedded in an action plan for the upcoming months. A communication plan and draft Terms of Reference for the CoP have been developed. The first official meeting of the LAC CoP occurred in October 2024.
- **Pacific CoP:** The Pacific Community of Practice (PCoP) aims to advance the development and implementation of ocean accounts across the Pacific region. This initiative is a collaborative effort involving regional partners, Kami Pasifiki, and the Pacific Community (SPC), supported by



the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP). The PCoP seeks to address the unique challenges and priorities of Pacific nations by fostering knowledge exchange, building capacity, and promoting sustainable ocean governance. A revised Capacity and Support Plan for the Pacific CoP was developed at the 5th Global Dialogue.

GOAP fellows programme (Q7d)


Associated with the regional CoPs is the GOAP fellows programme. The GOAP fellows programme is a collaborative initiative with either GOAP members or partners, with fellowships currently operating in the Asia, Pacific and African regions. The programme involves individuals, often with government or academic backgrounds, who are selected to participate in a fellowship programme focused on ocean accounting and related topics. There are differences in how the fellows model is run in each region. The approach with the fellows in Africa leans more towards an academic post-graduate model, with fellows having a clear research question they aim to explore through their fellowship that is applicable to local uptake and utilisation of accounts, with a designated academic supervisor in the same university or institution. The African fellows included a mix of full-time, part-time and short-term fellows. The Pacific model engages fellows currently employed in government positions across relevant sectors, and one regional academic-based fellow, and is more focused on practical rather than research application. The Pacific fellows share the same supervisor, who is also one of GOAP's implementing partners. The Pacific fellows are part-time fellows and receive a monthly stipend. The Asian fellows are embedded in the secretariat and seen as staff, although differ to other technical staff as they are nationally based.. They are supervised by senior secretariat staff.

Fellows and supervisors shared key benefits to the fellows programme, including professional development, knowledge sharing and the potential for making a significant impact on policy decisions relating to ocean conservation and management. Fellows identified gaining valuable experience, skills, and knowledge in ocean accounting and related fields, as well as the programme contributing to building capacity more broadly in their institutions. The programme was also seen to contribute to knowledge sharing, where fellows can learn from, and access, experts in the field.

Fellows and supervisors also shared facing challenges. Some noted facing barriers to the progress fellows could make in their fellowships and furthering ocean accounts in their contexts, including the availability of equipment, data and human resources to support research, as well as broader institutional support for embedding and using ocean accounts. Administrative challenges were also noted, with some fellows experiencing issues such as delayed payments. Some part-time fellows also faced competing demands from their regular jobs. Coordination and collaboration across the different regions and organisations involved in the fellows programme seemed limited.

Global coordination

The intentional development of a global community of practice has required global coordination by GOAP, particularly the secretariat to provide coordinate global activities, build and engage membership, build a broader network and community of practitioners, support regional communities of practice, and resource and support the GOAP fellows programme. This initial five years of community building has successfully positioned GOAP as the global community of practice for ocean accounts, further strengthened through the recent 5th Global Dialogue. As noted earlier, the structure



of having a secretariat to continue to coordinate, build and centralise the “home” of the global community of practice was seen by stakeholders as appropriate and necessary going forward.

As the Dialogue was also seen to generate important momentum for a range of GOAP CoP activities, interest and exchange, the role of the secretariat to continue to support and coordinate other arms of the Partnership (e.g. regional CoPs, expert panel, fellows, etc), will be important to capitalise on the strengths of the Dialogue in the short to medium term. Ongoing funding and future sustainability raise some uncertainty for the resourcing of the secretariat and global community of practice events and support beyond the current UK BPF investment (see Section 5.4 on sustainability and funding).

As the partnership and enabling environment created for ocean accounts matures, there are also some complexities emerging relating to which members and partners play a key role in coordinating ocean accounting activities. A couple of examples were provided where GOAP members or partners had gone on to develop ocean accounting projects with countries outside of secretariat coordination or partnership. While this reflects the success of GOAP in building networks, momentum and the environment for ocean accounting, it could lead to some risk in the future health of the Partnership and sustainability of supporting mechanisms such as the secretariat, should fragmentation occur rather than an environment of collaboration, strong communication and engagement, and coordination.


GOAP provided capacity building for [Country 1] Statistic Office... [Country 2] was also supporting this through bilaterals [and] are also a member of GOAP but provided support not through GOAP. Some felt GOAP should be able to play that role of coordinating these things. – Non-member (Government)

GOAP's structure including a centralised secretariat and membership base, and ability to operate at multiple levels, has been key to its success in promoting ocean accounts thus far. As the enabling environment and momentum surrounding ocean accounts continues to build the secretariat and broader Partnerships' roles in overall coordination of ocean accounting activities needs to continue to be negotiated and agreed among those leading initiatives with countries (both inside and outside of GOAP).

GOAP's network and engineering systems change (Q8a)

GOAP's network plays a crucial role in creating systems change through facilitating knowledge sharing, collaboration, awareness raising and mutual support. Members and non-members can learn from each other's experiences, challenges, and successes, leading to more informed decision-making and effective implementation. The network also provides a platform for collaboration, enabling members, partners and even non-members work together on projects and initiatives. The network collectively advocates for the importance of ocean accounting and promotes its adoption at national, regional and international levels for decision making on ocean sustainable development.

GOAP's broader network is substantial, as evidenced through the reach of the GOAP newsletter produced and distributed by the secretariat. 'The Ocean Account' is the secretariat's quarterly newsletter dedicated to sharing ocean accounting and sustainable ocean development news from around the world. Volume 7 was shared in August 2024 and distributed to GOAP's mailing list of over 3,800 subscribers. The Newsletter is also publicly available on the GOAP website. As noted in previous sections, specific examples of how the network contributes to change include south-south cooperation,



knowledge sharing, capacity building, technical assistance and awareness-raising. GOAP's events and platforms provide opportunities for members, partners and non-members to share knowledge and learn about new developments in the field.

As the core component of GOAP and the change it achieves, many of the findings already noted aim at further strengthening GOAP to more effectively leverage its network and amplify impact and lasting change in ocean accounting and sustainable ocean development.

5.3.2 Objective 2: Develop ocean accounting guidance

GOAP objective 2: Develop a globally recognised and standardised ocean accounting guidance by 2023.

Alignment with UK OCPP funding Phase 2, Outcome 3

GOAP technical guidance document

The GOAP technical guidance is the cornerstone knowledge product produced by GOAP through the global expert panel. The newly re-launched technical guidance is now presented as a web-based resource. This enables it to be a "live" document, allowing for ongoing input, ensuring the guidance remains relevant and comprehensive. By providing a shared measurement framework, the website facilitates the consistent and reliable combination of data. The expert panel's role in guiding and updating the content ensures the guidance remains an invaluable tool. The website it is officially attached to the GOAP website and accessible via

<https://sustainabledevelopmentreform.github.io/GOAP-Technical-Guidance/>

As well as being the key knowledge project produced by GOAP, the technical guidance is itself a key component of GOAP's history and development, having been the key piece of work that characterised the formation of the Partnership itself. In 2018, United Nations Statistical Commission accepted ESCAP and UNEP's offer to contribute guidance on ocean ecosystems to the SEEA Ecosystems revision for 2021. A [regional expert workshop](#) was convened in Bangkok with 85 participants from national, regional, academic and international institutions. The workshop agreed on the parameters of the Technical Guidance, including that it would explain how to do ocean accounts to statisticians, explain the way to non-statisticians (i.e. scientists and policy specialists), link to existing standards (SNA, SEEA-CF and SEEA-EEA), provide a foundation for testing and experimentation, and contribution to the SEEA Ecosystems revision where appropriate⁸. Following the Bangkok workshop GOAP was established through ESCAP and UNSW in 2019, with the preliminary Technical Guidance draft being a key focus of the First Global Dialogue in November 2019, and then shared more broadly in December 2019 (Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development).

Stakeholder consultations confirmed GOAP was globally recognised as being the source of ocean accounting guidance, with many being aware of the technical guidance and acknowledging the leadership of the late Micheal Bordt of UNESCAP in driving this. The initial technical guidance was published under GOAP's banner in 2019 developed by UNESCAP and UNSW in collaboration with GOAP members⁹. This has transitioned to the current version more clearly published under GOAP banner and authorship, with coordinating and lead authors recognised along with their institutions, along with

⁸ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/1.2.P.2_Ocean_Accounts_Intro_to_Technical_Guidance_GOAP_12-15Nov2019.pdf

⁹ Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, 2019, Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 1st edition). [Available online](#).



other contributors and participants at the Bangkok workshop in 2018 and First Global Dialogue in 2019. As this is acknowledged as a living document, this remains an ongoing endeavour, to ensure the guidance remains relevant and continues to build on expert knowledge as the field of ocean accounting itself continues to grow and develop. As reference to the initial technical guidance was high, communications around the recent re-launch with updated content and web-based format may need to continue as a few key stakeholders were unaware of an update from the 2019 version. While GOAP has produced technical guidance to create standardised methods for ocean accounting, this has not yet worked its way through international statistical processes to become official UN guidance.

While this objective continues to be relevant and a core part of GOAP the wording needs revision given 2023 has now passed.

Knowledge production


GOAP's knowledge production needs statement was updated in July 2024 following the 5th Global Dialogue. The Global Dialogue highlighted several key areas where further research and knowledge production were needed to advance the development and global uptake of ocean accounting. This research agenda aims to address these knowledge gaps and provide guidance on complex ocean accounting technical, operational, and methodological issues. The Statement identifies the GOAP and Global expert panel will jointly publish knowledge products and leverage partnerships with key regional seas conventions and other relevant institutions, including those listed in the original knowledge production needs statement.

GOAP, primarily through the secretariat and partners, have produced a significant collection of knowledge products beyond the technical guidance. These include policy briefs, scientific and academic research, subject briefs, and technical guidance relating to ocean accounting, ocean governance and ocean sustainable development. See Annex 6 for a list of selected knowledge and information outputs. Knowledge products are available via the GOAP website, although as previously noted, a key suggestion arising from stakeholders was the need for a more comprehensive knowledge platform to bring together all available resources so they are more easily accessible and searchable.

Expert panel

As noted in section 5.1.1 GOAP's expert panel comprises of 21 experts in various aspects of ocean accounting, with their purpose being to identify and assess new challenges in ocean accounting that will affect many countries and provide advisory assistance to countries undertaking ocean accounts on technical economic or scientific issues.

Stakeholder feedback identified key strengths in how the expert panel was working to support this second objective. The panel was seen to provide access to a diverse range of experts (as intended), facilitating knowledge sharing and collaboration between them. The panel was also seen to foster valuable connections between experts, potentially leading to future collaborations and partnerships. The panel's flexible structure and lack of bureaucratic process allowed for flexible response and adaptation to changing needs or priorities, for example following expert panel representatives meeting during the 5th Global Dialogue, it was agreed to shift their approach so that working group products and outcomes be integrated in the technical guidance, rather than standalone outputs.



Having established these foundations for the expert panel, opportunities to further maximise the Panel's potential were identified by stakeholders. Given members of the expert panel were balancing multiple commitments, and some were volunteering their time, this was seen to lead to some inconsistent participation and longer timeframes to progress tasks. It was noted by a few panel members that there had been a long period of no communication (4-5 months), with limited progress on technical work during that period. It was suggested that to keep progressing work the secretariat could play a more active role in tracking progress on tasks the expert panel had committed to, and following up on activities for a higher level of accountability. An alternative suggestion was that the panel have clear leadership in the Panel to provide clear direction and accountability, and more defined roles and expectations for panel members.

5.3.3 Objective 3: Support countries to build national ocean accounts

GOAP objective 3: Support at least 30 countries by 2030 to build complete sequences of national ocean accounts.

Alignment with UK OCPP funding Phase 2, Outcome 1


Key results have been realised to date in relation to countries building national ocean accounts. At the national level GOAP has worked across 15 ODA-eligible countries, including supporting pilot ocean accounts projects, the development of national roadmaps for ocean accounting, the integration of ocean accounting in national policies, as well as capacity building and knowledge sharing. The level of results achieved across the countries is varied, reflective of the length of time countries have been engaging with ocean accounts, their priorities, the complexity of working across a diverse range of national contexts and the level of enabling factors to facilitate change (explored further in section 5.3.5). The longer-term support provided to Indonesia, and subsequent outcomes realised in relation to the integration of ocean accounting into national systems and policies, has established Indonesia as a global exemplar country and fostered south-to-south learning and peer exchange between countries and member institutions.

Thirty countries having complete sequences of national ocean accounts (i.e. collection of connected accounts) by 2030 is a highly ambitious objective and may not reflect the aims and priorities of countries themselves. It was noted that not all types of ocean accounts are relevant for all countries and targeted accounts are preferred by some countries for specific objectives, whereas others such as Costa Rica and Indonesia are working towards a complete sequence of national ocean accounts. Given this, and reflective of the demand-led approach of GOAP, it is suggested that the objective be revised to reflect the diversity of country priorities for ocean accounts. Going forward, stakeholders also noted the importance of moving beyond pilot and proof-of-concept approaches to ensuring the ongoing production of ocean accounts for them to remain useful.

Continuing pilots

Phases 2 and 3 of UK government funding identified support being provided to six continuing pilots, and an additional 6 pilots during the funding period. These targets have been exceeded, with pilots in 10 countries being expanded upon as outlined below:

- **Fiji – Building on pilot accounts to establish national ocean accounts by 2025:** Building on existing initiatives in Fiji, including foundational ocean account pilot studies (mangrove and



catchment-scale ocean accounts), the country is on track to develop national ocean accounts by 2025. Kami Pasifiki has supported the development of ocean accounts in Fiji, taking a lead role in capacity building and stakeholder engagement. A national workshop was hosted (September 5-6, 2024) to identify critical social, economic, and environmental data requirements for sustainable ocean development (28 participants from 17 organisations). A draft roadmap has been co-developed with key Fijian stakeholders.


- **Ghana – Expanded geographic area covered by ecosystem extent and condition accounting:** The Ghana project focuses on the ecosystem extent and condition accounting of the Songor Lagoon and the Keta Lagoon areas, both located in the Volta Delta region. The project aims to assess the extent and condition of these ecosystems, and their role in providing critical ecosystem services to local communities. The project is being executed in collaboration with the University of Ghana and the Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority. In addition, the Ghana Statistical Services is involved in developing Ocean Economic Satellite Accounts.
- **Indonesia** (see section 5.3.5 below)
- **Kenya – Connecting ecosystem extent accounts with national ocean accounts:** The Kenya Ocean Accounting initiative is centred around the coastal ecosystems of Kilifi County, with a particular focus on mangroves, seagrass beds, and coral reef ecosystems. This effort is driven in collaboration with Pwani University and Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI). The project began in August 2023. The goal is to establish ecosystem extent and condition accounts, particularly for critical ecosystems along the Kenyan coast, and to connect these with broader national ocean accounts. Pwani University initiated a comprehensive pilot study on ocean accounting, focusing on mangroves, seagrass, and coral reefs. A research fellowship has been established and training and capacity-building workshops conducted at Pwani University. Two draft governance accounts have been produced in collaboration with one of the fellows.
- **Madagascar - Expanded geographic area covered by coral ecosystem accounts:** The project now expands coral accounting efforts to the Gran Recife region, building on prior work on the development of remote-sensed ecosystem accounts for the Nosy Bey/Nosy Mitsio region and Toliara. This focuses on the Grand Récif barrier reef system, approximately 19km in length, with a history of both ecological research and recent degradation due to human pressures. The University of Toliara's Institute of Marine Sciences continues to lead the integration of coral ecosystem science into national ocean ecosystem accounts. The area covers four Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Locally Marine Managed Areas (LMMAs). Two fellowships support the project.
- **Maldives – Further expansion of ocean accounts and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan:** The Maldives has continued to increase its ambition with Ocean Accounts, embedding the project in further grant applications and funding with World Bank and Asia Development Bank Initiatives. The Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy (MCCEE) has requested GOAP co-chair, MMAF to further south-south collaboration. The Maldives has also been supported by GOAP through their process in developing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan targets. The GOAP continues to provide drafting support. Two GOAP fellows have been selected.

- **Mozambique – Expanded geographic area covered by mangrove ecosystem accounts:** The project focuses on social and community ecosystem accounting in the Inhambane province, specifically addressing the mangrove ecosystems. The Bazaruto Pilot Study region's expansion across Inhambane Province was a key achievement, with detailed extent accounts analysed for Inhambane Bay. The partnership includes Ocean Revolution Mozambique (ORM) and the World Resources Institute (WRI). The project aims to produce ecosystem extent accounts and explore the social dependencies on these ecosystems, particularly for mangrove areas in the Morrumbene region. A two-year master's level fellowship project has been tentatively established with ORM.
- **Samoa – Capacity developing and exploring links between ocean accounting and national policy:** GOAP facilitated a series of full-day workshops hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Government of Samoa and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for 12, 13 and 14 March 2024. The participants were trained in GIS techniques, through the open-source QGIS software, introduced to ocean accounting concepts and explored links with Samoa's national policy, the Samoa Ocean Strategy. Ongoing conversations with Samoan Government officials have included plans to establish a country roadmap, which is planned to be developed through an in-country workshop.
- **Vanuatu – Ocean accounts included in national ocean policy:** Following on from the engagement in the Vanuatu National Ocean Policy workshop and the subsequent inclusion of ocean accounts in the policy; further engagement is needed, including a national workshop and development of an in-country roadmap for progressing ocean account development beyond the draft national accounts, which are being finalised with publication expected soon. Efforts to establish a fellow in Vanuatu have re-emerged after previous placement options fell through.
- **Vietnam – Solid waste account established:** The solid waste account for Quang Ninh was established after consultation and discussion with Quang Ninh DONRE and local relevant stakeholders. This pilot aims to establish a comprehensive solid waste account for Quang Ninh province by determining the volume and flow of all types of solid waste from their generation sources to final disposal points. As a clear output from this pilot, a scientific paper was published in June 2024. The Ocean Accounts work Viet Nam has come to a natural inflection point, and the focus is now on turning the successful pilots into tangible policy action and embedding in government. In collaboration with ISPONRE and the GOAP secretariat, a plan has been drafted to map work aimed at policy integration over the coming years.

New pilots

An additional five countries have been added for pilots, at varying stages of implementation:

- **Belize:** A preliminary ecosystem extent account for the Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary was created, focusing on mangroves and coral reefs, and reflecting changes in coverage of ecosystems between 2015 and 2017 (including open seas, coral reefs, seagrass, mangroves, dry forest, and wetlands). In August 2024, Belize officially launched its pilot ocean accounts project with the first Project Steering Committee meeting, led by the Ministry of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management. Supported by GOAP, the project aims to develop ecosystem accounts for the Ambergris Caye Reef and establish a national Ocean Tourism Satellite Account.



The first Project Steering Committee meeting has also been convened. A detailed Ecosystem Extent and Condition Accounts Data Guide has been prepared. This guide will help partners understand the data needed to compile these accounts and the type of capacity required.

- **Costa Rica:** The GOAP is providing technical support for Costa Rica to develop capacities to build a preliminary mangrove account in Guanacaste. In August 2024, GOAP visited Costa Rica to host a 4-days capacity building workshop with country technical and strategic participants (over 40 persons attended). Workshop outputs included a stakeholder map, an ocean accounting matrix and multiple other data gathered and processed. This information will be the basis for a meeting in January 2025 with global ocean accounts practitioners and regional leaders, aiming to develop a pathway towards a comprehensive ocean account for Costa Rica by 2030, and a commitment at UNOC 2025.
- **Ecuador:** This project, led by the Charles Darwin Foundation, current GOAP co-chair, developed ecosystem accounts for Ecuador's insular Exclusive Economic Zone, including the Galapagos and Hermandad marine reserves. GOAP secretariat was part of the advisory committee during this project.
- **Sri Lanka:** The GOAP continues to catalyse actions towards the start of the GEF 7 project on Natural Capital Accounting and Assessment. A delivery plan, co-developed with the Ministry of Environment, Department of Census and Statistics and the International Union Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Sri Lanka, was formulated at the Global Dialogue.
- **Tonga:** A roadmap for implementing ocean accounting in Tonga was developed as part of the "Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Ocean Development: Implementation Roadmap for the Kingdom of Tonga (2024-2028)".

5.3.4 Objective 4: Facilitate the global uptake of ocean accounts

GOAP objective 4: Facilitate the global uptake of ocean accounts in decision-making, development planning, policies, laws, and other ocean governance processes.

Alignment with UK OCPP funding Phase 2, Outcome 4

Global mainstreaming of ocean accounting

At the global level, GOAP's strategic engagement has led to key achievements formally embedding or recognising ocean accounts in global decision-making and governance spaces. To this end, a key result has been in the Nairobi Convention, where ocean accounts have been formally integrated into the Nairobi Convention's framework, highlighting the influence of GOAP to affect regional policies.

At the international level, the GOAP secretariat provides in-kind technical support (e.g. specialist advice commissioned from IDEEA Group) on ocean accounts to the SEEA Oceans Working Group. This collaboration contributes to advancing the field of ocean accounting in the broader System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) framework. The secretariat also partnered with UN Global Pulse and UNSW Institute for Global Development at the recent Summit of the Future side event as a precursor to the UNGA. The discussion gathered perspectives from both the Fijian and Indonesian governments to explore innovative, community-based, and data-driven solutions for addressing sea level rise challenges in the Asia Pacific region.



GOAP's positioning in the broader BPF, and OCPP in particular, supports the mainstreaming of ocean accounts in this programme. The OCPP collaboration plan was co-developed between the GOAP secretariat and the OCPP delivery partners (JNCC, Cefas, MMO). The general features of collaboration feature both upstream collaboration with OCPP delivery partners concerning "account ready" data collection, and downstream support to compile collected data into accounts, as appropriate.

GOAP's contributions in these spaces have also been recognised. The second progress report from the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, Ocean Panel Progress Report 2024, emphasised the crucial role GOAP has provided in integrating ocean accounts into sustainable ocean planning. Through having presence and influence in these international and regional strategic fora and processes, GOAP has been able to influence and facilitate the uptake of ocean accounts. The following case study explores an example of this working in practice through GOAP's participation at the Our Ocean Conference in 2023.

Ocean accounts are now formally embedded in numerous country development plans and national policies globally. See for example Indonesia, Maldives and the Nairobi Convention. – Survey respondent

[GOAP] made ocean accounting an important work area. – Survey respondent

Case study: Embedding ocean accounts through international influence

Context

A key part of GOAP's approach to embedding ocean accounts globally is participating in significant global ocean events. GOAP has co-hosted side events alongside partners and countries across many of these events such as at the [UN Ocean Conference](#) in Portugal in 2022, the Our Ocean Conference in Panama in 2023, and a satellite event at the UN Ocean Decade Conference in 2024.

Change process

GOAP collaborates with partners and countries to raise awareness and share knowledge and best practices relating to ocean accounts at key ocean events globally. Through hosting side events and being visible at these events GOAP has influence to ensure that the utility of ocean accounts is represented in high-level discussions, statements, decisions and agreements resulting from these international processes. However, the change process is also dependent on GOAP influencing discussions behind the scenes that may then be fed into policy or highlighted in non-GOAP related sessions. For example, following the ocean accounting side event at the Ocean Decade Conference in 2024, ocean accounts were discussed in the final [conference session](#), where Sylvia Michele Diez (Program Manager for PROBLUE, World Bank Group) discusses the need for data in the transition to a sustainable ocean economy and used ocean accounts as an example of a framework to compile such data , highlighting that “ocean accounts are needed for people and for the planet”.

In the case of the Our Ocean Conference in 2023 GOAP hosted a side event on *Ocean Accounts: Setting the Foundation for Sustainable Blue Economies*. At the event members of GOAP and the Ocean Panel unpacked how the development and use of ocean accounts can provide the foundation for the transformation to sustainable ocean economies and support the delivery of Sustainable Ocean Plans, the SDGs and new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Through this engagement further connections and relationships were developed at the international level, including with the UNESCO Ocean Decade team.



Outcomes

As a result of GOAP's participation and networking at the 2023 Our Ocean Conference, GOAP (via the CSDR) were engaged through an open tender process to deliver two key documents for UNESCO's Ocean Decade programme of work. GOAP developed the [Ocean Decade Programme Framework for Sustainable Ocean Planning](#) and supported the Ocean Decade Working Group 4 to deliver the [Ocean Decade Vision 2030 White Papers: Develop a sustainable and equitable ocean economy](#). Both guiding documents reference ocean accounts as an activity to achieve change and a sustainable blue economy through the integration of ocean accounts into approaches to sustainable ocean planning and management.



Creating an enabling environment for ocean accounting (Q7e, Q7f)

GOAP's partnership-based approach and results achieved to date have collectively contributed to creating an enabling environment for ocean accounting at national and global levels. Through the focus on capacity development in countries, GOAP has demonstrated its commitment to strengthening the knowledge and skills of relevant stakeholders. Similarly, through locally based coordination, rather than centralising everything through the secretariat, implementation involves a mix of bilateral support and partnerships with other organisations. Intentionality towards a localised approach extends to project design, where projects are prioritised that are initiated and led at the local level, ensuring initiatives are relevant and responsive. GOAP also focusses on supporting members and partners to take ownership of their projects and lead decisions about their implementation.


In parallel to this focus on country-led initiatives GOAP also includes broader multi-level engagement through international partnerships and multilateral influence. GOAP works closely with various international development agencies to support initiatives related to ocean accounts, as well as operating at the multilateral level, including engaging with UN agencies, raising awareness and promoting the topic on a global scale. GOAP's work also includes building awareness and knowledge about ocean accounts beyond the ocean accounting community, reaching statisticians, economists, policymakers, and wider disciplines.

GOAP as a partnership has consistently focused on a long-term view of the creation and continuation of ocean accounts. All stakeholders consulted articulated a long-term vision for ocean accounting and GOAP that went well beyond current contractual or funding periods. GOAP secretariat staff, member countries and several partners consulted also spoke about actively seeking funding to support continued momentum and future initiatives related to ocean accounting (see section on sustainability and funding).

Using accounts to strengthen the global agreement to end plastic pollution

The third phase of UK funding is to support the use of accounts to strengthen the transparency and integrity of the global agreement to end plastic pollution, establishing a global exemplar issue where ocean accounting can underpin data-driven national and international action planning (Pillar 2). To this end, a plastics data checklist and accompanying user guide have been developed and launched. This toolkit aims to help countries assess their data readiness for participating in and implementing the global plastics treaty. Two webinars were hosted to launch the plastics data checklist, one for Asia and Pacific regions (74 attendees) and another for Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, North America, and Europe (39 attendees). A range of capacity development on plastics data and accounts has been undertaken, as well as knowledge products and scientific papers.

The GOAP secretariat has also been engaging with the Global Plastic Treaty process. Secretariat staff will be attending the Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) on the Global Plastics Treaty in South Korea, with one staff supporting AOSIS and another as part of the Sri Lankan delegation. An annotated version of the "Compilation of draft text of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment" has been prepared to provide input on the data elements of the negotiations and circulated to Australia, Canada, AOSIS, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Fiji government negotiating teams. GOAP has also engaged with the Scientists' Coalition for an Effective Plastics Treaty, an international network of scientific and technical experts on



plastics who contribute to discussions and policy briefs on plastics waste management, as well as the Plastics Coalition, an international network of civil society and input into their call to action, to ensure data was included.

5.3.5 Higher level outcomes and impact (Q7a, b, c)

As previously noted, higher level outcomes and impact are not yet clearly articulated in GOAP's design, with the expectation these will be added once the development of the 'pathway to change' is complete. In the interim GOAP connects to OCPP's intermediate outcome level, where OCPP will result in "improved policies and regulation with enhanced capabilities and inclusive governance in place to implement and enforce these", and overall outcome of "partner country stakeholders take enhanced collaborative action to effectively and sustainably manage and protect their marine environments"¹⁰. At the impact level, GOAP contributes to the BPF impact statement of "placing the ocean on a path of recovery that enables local communities and nature to thrive", with the BPF designed specifically to protect the ocean from biodiversity loss, overfishing and marine pollution while alleviating poverty.

This section outlines GOAP's contributions at the mid-term against each of these outcome elements and considers likely contributions into the future based on evidence to date.

Improved policies and regulation and collaborative action to manage marine environments (OCPP outcome)

National policy-level change is a long-term endeavour, particularly through a programme such as GOAP, and OCPP more broadly, which seek to facilitate sustainable change underpinned by localised capacity and capabilities. A key focus in discussion of GOAP's higher-level contributions, both in documentation and discussion with stakeholders, is the integration of ocean accounts in national accounts, and their use in decision-making for more effective and sustainable ocean management.

I would hope that... ocean accounts were simply integrated into fiscal systems. Even in our biodiversity strategic plan, we tend to have this landscape management approach, but from terrestrial to marine they are integrated. So, in that ocean accounts can be integrated ..., and the end game is that it is actually used for decision and policy making. – Non-member (Government)

As this is a mid-term evaluation, with just three years of activity from initial UK government funding, the expectation is that evidence against these higher-level outcomes would be at the initial stage, with more complete evidence being available at the final evaluation stage. Despite this shorter period, some evidence is emerging of policy and regulatory change, as well as enhanced collaborative action to sustainably manage marine environments, from GOAP. Evidence against these outcomes have been presented as a series of three case studies below covering outcomes achieved in the Maldives, Indonesia and Viet Nam.

¹⁰ Niras, 2023, OCPP Theory of Change Narrative for Defra Bilateral Technical Assistance Programme of the Blue Planet Fund, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. 17 pp. (supplied)

Case study: Mainstreaming ocean accounts and improved ocean literacy in Maldives

Context

The Maldives' *Enhancing National Development through Environmentally Resilient Islands* project aims to strengthen the management of Maldives' coastal and marine ecosystems, build resilience to climate change, and promote sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities. This project is a joint initiative of the Maldivian government, UNDP, and the Global Environment Facility. A component of the project is to enhance capacity for natural capital accounting (utilising the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting: Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) methodology), through a case study of Laamu Atoll, an ecologically sensitive and economically important area in southern Maldives.¹¹ The GOAP secretariat has been supporting this initiative by piloting the use of the SEEA EA framework in Laamu Atoll, in collaboration with the Fisheries Resource Center of Indonesia (Rekam Nusantara Foundation) and Maldives National University, under the directive of the Maldivian Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology.

Change process

The project team has worked closely with stakeholders and local communities to ensure the accounting system is adapted to the specific needs and context of Laamu Atoll and institutional capacity and stakeholder coordination and collaboration are enhanced at each stage of the project to support future replication at national scale.¹² Activities have included meetings, site visits and surveying 22 sites and 15 ground truthing points, with a [preliminary report](#) published. A sustained series of trainings have also been undertaken (2023 to 2024). The work has been resourced with a mix of funding for local anchor institutions and champions (i.e. GOAP fellows and the national university), coupled with in-kind support from the global GOAP community to local institutions, including the relevant Government Ministries, the national university, and the secondary school system.



Photo 1: Field visits to Laamu Atoll

Outcomes

Building on lessons learned from the pilot project, ocean accounting is now mainstreamed into Maldives' national marine spatial planning framework. Ocean accounting has also been mainstreamed into the GEF funded work on sustainable ocean development. Changes have also been made to the national high school curriculum to embed ocean accounting concepts, including the ocean's role as an economic asset, the concept of ocean ecosystems, understanding goods and services provided by the ocean to people, and understanding connections between people and the ocean more generally. This has led to improved environmental education for over 46,000 high school students enrolled in represented schools across the Maldives.

¹¹ Gacutan J, 2023, Safeguarding Our Seas: The Role of Natural Capital Accounting in Securing the Future of Maldives' Marine Ecosystems and Blue Economy. GOAP secretariat. [Available online.](#)

¹² Further information on the pilot can be found here: <https://www.oceanaccounts.org/natural-capital-accounting-in-laamu-atoll/>

Case study: Establishing Indonesia as a global exemplar country

Context

Phase 3 of funding from the UK government included support to establish Indonesia as a global exemplar country integrating a comprehensive national ocean accounting system into national policy making and decision making, thereby creating a pathway for other countries to follow and providing enhanced opportunities for south-to-south learning and peer exchange (Pillar 1). Through this support from BPF investment in GOAP, Indonesia has continued to be a world leader in ambition and implementation of ocean accounts and its use for marine conservation and sustainable development. Over the five-year engagement between GOAP and Indonesia, collaborative efforts between GOAP partners have led to an increasing number of ocean accounting related activities.

Change process

Indonesian Coordinating Minister Luhut publicly launched Indonesia's ocean accounts initiative at the 5th Global Dialogue, showcasing commitment to leading in this field, backed by GOAP catalytic investment and significant leveraged investment from USAID, Government of Norway and the World Bank. GOAP members have been collaborating with Indonesian government ministries to further expand ocean accounts and pilots in Indonesia. Rekam Nusantara Foundation, in collaboration with the Indonesia Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), is updating the national coastal ecosystem extent accounting, supporting pilots and collaborating with the Indonesia Ocean Accounts Task Force, which includes representatives from various government agencies. WRI Indonesia has also supported data collection and analysis for ocean accounts pilots in two key MPAs and a comprehensive review of narrative reports from ocean accounts pilots produced between 2021-2023 covering several MPAs.

Results

Indonesia has produced accounts for 10 national MPAs, with a further 9.9 million hectares of ecosystems mapped across various years. The ocean accounts pilot report for Gili Matra MPA has been used as an exemplar case study in workshops delivered by USAID Kolektif in Jakarta and in a workshop with Statistics Norway in Oslo. The scale and number of ocean accounting pilots and national mapping of critical habitats continues to expand.

This work has also facilitated national transformation in the public availability of decision-relevant ocean environmental data in Indonesia, through national government standards developed and the national dashboard system. Nationally enforced standards for ocean accounting include the establishment of the National Standard (SNI) 9257:2024, focusing on geospatial information specifications for coastal and shallow water benthic habitat mapping and accounting. This standard, enacted by the National Standard Agency and developed by the Geospatial Information Agency, is a key component of Indonesia's ocean accounting guidelines. A national Ocean Accounting Dashboard was launched at the 5th Global Dialogue, providing open-access interactive dashboard of Indonesia's national ocean accounts, which is regularly updated through the use of the latest technologies and ground surveys (oceanaccounts.id). The dashboard has been updated with system dynamics analysis, using computer modelling to predict the impact of investments on the condition of coastal ecosystems and calculating how much ecosystem rehabilitation is needed to minimise these impacts.

Case study: Improved solid waste management in Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam

Context

This pilot was a continuation of previous ocean accounting work funded by UN ESCAP and delivered by early GOAP in 2019 and 2020 which focused on pilot testing the Ocean Accounts Framework. The main objectives of the 2021-2022 study were to: assess the contribution of the ocean to the provincial economy; assess the changes in ocean wealth and non-produced assets (e.g., mangroves, coral reefs); and identify land-based pollution sources (i.e., wastewater). The pilot focused on calculating the condition account in Quang Ninh province, which



Photo 2: Hạ Long Bay, Quang Ninh Province

includes UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hạ Long Bay¹³. The GOAP project partners are the Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE) and UNSW.

Change process

An ocean account was compiled for Quang Ninh province¹⁴ following consultation and discussion with local relevant stakeholders. This pilot established a comprehensive solid waste account for Quang Ninh province by determining the volume and flow of solid waste from their generation sources to final disposal points. The account can be disaggregated down to districts, thereby identifying waste generation “hotspots”. Capacity development featured through each stage of work. A scientific paper was also published in June 2024 to support knowledge sharing. Following these successes, ocean accounts efforts in Vietnam shifted focus to turning the successful pilots into tangible policy action. In collaboration with ISPONRE and the GOAP secretariat, a workplan was drafted aimed at policy integration over the coming years. The work has been supported by funding for the local anchor institution (ISPONRE), coupled with in-kind support from the global GOAP community for national and subnational policy processes by ISPONRE.

Outcomes

Ocean accounting has been mainstreamed into Vietnam’s national strategic framework for ocean development and wider socio-economic development planning informed by the pilot projects (particularly national mangrove accounts and solid waste accounts in Quang Ning Province). These accounts have led to better targeting of waste collection and treatment regulations and policies resulting in reduced pollution levels in coastal areas of Quang Ning province, supporting a cleaner, safer environment for residents and visitors. The work has also enabled Viet Nam to secure leveraged financing for ocean accounting from the Global Environment Facility to support longer-term ocean accounts implementation and use.

¹³ GOAP, 2022, Inception report – National pilot ocean accounts in Viet Nam. [Available online.](#)

¹⁴ ISPONRE, 2022, Vietnam Ocean account - Case study in Quang Ninh province. [Available online.](#)




Enabling factors for change

As work on ocean accounts continues to scale in 15 ODA eligible countries and likely more into the future, the case studies and results highlighted above provide evidence for common key enabling factors in the contexts where notable change has been achieved:

- **Long-term and consistent relationships:** The relationships between GOAP, implementing partners and government agencies were long-term and consistent across the three case studies. This has included the individuals and institutions involved as key points of contact, with very minimal change or staff turnover enabling consistent and committed relationships at both individual and institutional levels.
- **Local partners and champions:** Working closely with local partners and champions enables a highly tailored approach underpinned by local contextual knowledge and existing networks and relationships. In the case of Fiji being on track to develop ocean accounts by 2025 (see section 5.3.3) the local implementing partner, Kami Pasifiki, has played a long-term role in championing ocean accounts, taking the lead in capacity development and stakeholder engagement.
- **Multiple opportunities for exposure to ocean accounts:** A key component underpinning commitment to ocean accounts is having prior multiple opportunities for exposure. Across the case studies these included combinations of engaging with ocean accounts at global events, south-to-south sharing and interactions, in-country workshops, global ocean accounts dialogues and trainings. The topic arising through multiple points of exposure appears to support understanding and confidence in OA having globally recognised value.
- **Alignment with policy interests:** The application of ocean accounts across a range of policy interests provides tailored entry points for pilots and broader interventions to build on. This is evident in the cases of Maldives where this also extended into education policy, Vietnam with accounts informing mangrove and solid waste management, and the expansion of ecosystem accounts in Madagascar and Mozambique.
- **High-level political buy-in and commitment:** The momentum of ocean accounts and commitment at the national level is furthered through high-level political commitment. The 5th Global Dialogue was attended by ministers and ministerial representatives from Australia, Belize, Fiji, Indonesia, Maldives, Palau, Papua New Guinea and Samoa. Ministers spoke on the value of ocean accounts, both in their national contexts and globally, and outlined their commitments to building and utilising accounts in decision-making.
- **Institutional structure:** Appropriate and effective national institutional structures also provided an important institutional anchor for ocean accounting pilots. This provides a home for the ocean account initiative, creates stakeholder buy in and an environment which supports sustainability beyond the pilot account. These were either already in place (normally for terrestrial accounts) or built through the process of strengthening ocean accounts. Most commonly these were within government departments, such as national statistics offices, or ministries relating to the environment, oceans or climate change or a formalised joint ministry/department group. National universities or research institutes were most effective when closely connected to these governmental and institutional structures, again providing a policy anchor for the work.

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- **National frameworks:** Countries where commitment to ocean accounting has developed to the national level have frameworks, strategies or policies that support national ocean accounts. These are not a one-size-fits-all approach, reflecting national contexts and priorities. For example, in Vanuatu ocean accounts are included in the revised national oceans policy, Indonesia has national standards for ocean accounting and the national dashboard, Tonga has a national roadmap for implementing ocean accounting, and the Maldives are developing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan targets.
 - **Multiple capacity development and engagement events:** Throughout the engagement with countries capacity development and training has been a consistent and continuous feature, including among those who were more advanced in ocean accounts such as Indonesia and the Maldives. Multiple trainings and workshops are conducted to both build local skills and capacity, as well as engage additional stakeholders.
 - **Secretariat coordination and technical backstopping:** Throughout the process of achieving these results with countries, the GOAP secretariat has played a consistent role in supporting the planning and design of activities, coordination of partners, capacity development, leveraging knowledge sharing and linkages across the Partnership, strategic advice and technical backstopping where needed.
 - **Funding resources:** Dedicated funding resources for building ocean accounts and leveraging initial funds for larger scale programmes of work have supported initial successes to build into higher-level outcomes and results. This was common across the case studies above, as well as places where there has been geographic expansion of areas covered by ocean accounts such as Ghana, Madagascar and Mozambique (see section 5.3.3).

While all contexts are unique, complex and changing, the above elements have been common features underpinning key results achieved to date at the national level and may serve as a guide for learning across existing activities and as work continues to scale.



Placing the ocean on a path of recovery that enables local communities and nature to thrive (BPF impact statement)

Ocean recovery and sustainable ocean development

GOAP was seen to contribute to sustainable ocean development, including healthy ecosystems and enhanced biodiversity, by fostering a holistic approach to ocean management through changes evidenced above in policy, regulation and collaborative action. In recognising the interconnectedness of terrestrial, marine, and social-economic systems, ocean accounts enable a more comprehensive understanding of ocean ecosystems and their contribution to human well-being, leading to more effective conservation and management strategies when used in decision-making. Stakeholders interviewed highlighted that this data-driven approach, facilitated by GOAP through the development of tools, methodologies and technical assistance, was crucial for ensuring ocean management strategies were effective and sustainable. The international cooperation fostered through GOAP and the global community of practice (evidenced under objectives 2 and 4 above), was also seen to be essential for addressing global ocean challenges that transcend national boundaries.

We should be able to start appreciating the natural assets in coastal and marine environments in a better way through tangible numbers. We take things for granted, [but] it's time for us to do that. – GOAP non-member


Poverty alleviation

As with evidencing enhanced ocean management and protection, poverty alleviation will be a long-term endeavour for GOAP beyond the mid-term evaluation period. Despite this, responses from those consulted as part of this review, along with the areas already impacted through policy change, suggest GOAP's work will have a likely contribution to poverty reduction both directly and indirectly.

GOAP's focus on coastal and marine resources contributes to broader economic development and growth, which can have positive impacts on macro-level poverty reduction. By providing evidence-based information, GOAP can also inform policy changes that better address poverty and inequality for coastal communities. GOAP's focus on sustainability was also seen to ensure the benefits of coastal and marine resources are not compromised for future generations, helping to reduce poverty in the long-term.

We know that in [country] people in marine zones are more related with poverty and inequalities and the opportunities are different. We have disparities in these zones because we have a lot of tourism and opportunities, but also people who live in inequality. I think that's why to have more information to more inform decisions is important. – GOAP member

As a significant portion of the population relies on coastal and marine resources for their livelihoods, through prioritising the health and sustainability of these resources GOAP indirectly supports the livelihoods of those dependent on them. Through social accounting, the programme also aims to better understand how people in coastal zones use and depend on ecosystems for their livelihoods to inform policy and decision-making. This knowledge can inform policies that better support these communities. Similarly, GOAP raises awareness of the importance of coastal and marine resources and promotes a stronger narrative that emphasises the interconnectedness of environmental and social issues. This



can lead to more informed decision-making and policies that support poverty alleviation and more equitable access to economic, social and environment benefits.

Although we are a small country with a small population, we heavily depend on our coastal and marine resources. About 40% of our population rely on these resources. The reef and the ocean are very important to us, although we want to prioritise coastal and marine resources, we want to prioritise the livelihoods of the people who depend on these resources, so those are very important to us. – GOAP member

Currently, GOAP does not explicitly articulate its contribution to poverty alleviation as part of its objectives or documented design and strategic documents. Interestingly, while stakeholders were able to articulate these contributions when asked, discussion of poverty was not raised unprompted by those interviewed. Given the complexity of measuring poverty alleviation, along with evidencing contribution at this level of impact, going forward GOAP should improve intentional evidence gathering of contributions to change at this level, along with the inclusion of poverty alleviation in GOAP's overall pathway to change.

Proving poverty alleviation links is difficult... The story and narrative around it needs to be improved... If the policy change causal pathway works effectively to take into account ocean accounting areas, then you should be designing better policy for improved or at least not degraded outcomes.... We feed the evidence into better decision making which then has impacts on people's lives. – GOAP secretariat staff

5.4 Sustainability and funding

5.4.1 Continuity over time

Key evaluation question: To what extent will the programme's contributions continue over time? (EQ9a)

As highlighted in the findings above, GOAP's design and implementation has been intentional about supporting sustained and lasting change. The partnership-based approach, demand-led model, development of embedded capacity and local expertise, and south-south exchange and collaboration, are all examples of a programme developed to ensure contributions continue over time. With this continuity further strengthened by the substantial results already achieved to date at national and global levels.

Funding support (Q9a, Q9b)

In relation to funding sources and arrangements that support the sustainability and continuity of GOAP's work going forward, GOAP does face significant challenges in resourcing. While GOAP has been successful in leveraging substantial funds for ocean accounting, particularly for national level work, this has not yet been realised for the global Partnership itself, including ongoing secretariat resources. As noted under governance and operations, GOAP's heavy reliance on BPF funding does pose a risk without longer-term funding secured beyond 2026. Maintaining the UK as a keystone donor will be important to the long-term success of the Partnership, particularly given the flexibility and support the UK has provided to date, and the strategic alignment with GOAP. Given the short-term nature of the remaining funding, exploring the ongoing funding partnership with the UK should be a priority. In parallel, exploring continued diversified funding to continue to fund work with the breadth of GOAP's membership, should also be a priority, including the potential for new donor partnerships. Exploring alternative funding streams such as partnerships with other development partners, private sector entities and philanthropic foundations, should be a priority. Developing a sustainable revenue model could also be explored, such as membership fees, licensing agreements or consulting services, however these should be investigated with a high degree of caution to ensure the strengths of GOAP are not undermined through recurring revenue models.


Given the urgency and specialised nature of skills required, GOAP could explore adding expertise in the secretariat focused on relationship and partnership development. Developing a comprehensive strategic plan that outlines GOAP's long-term goals, identifies potential risks and opportunities, and outlines a clear path forward can also support building a more sustainable and resilient future.

5.4.2 Mobilising funds for ocean accounting

Key evaluation question: What has GOAP's influence been on mobilising funds for ocean accounting? (Q10)

UK (Defra) investment (Q10a)

The UK Government's investment into GOAP has clearly been catalytic to GOAP's operations and impact, essential for GOAP's growth and development. This support has also attracted interest from other funders, including governments and development banks, leading to a multiplier effect increasing



GOAP's overall funding and impact. BPF backing was also seen to enhance GOAP's credibility and visibility globally. While the overall donor-GOAP relationship has been positive and supportive, changing expectations in relation to reporting requirements has caused some disruption among GOAP secretariat and partners.

Impacts on national-level funding mobilisation (Q10b)

GOAP has played a significant role in mobilising funds for ocean accounting initiatives. Examples were provided by stakeholders on how GOAP had helped to secure additional funds, or supported proposals submitted still waiting decision, including to GEF. The broader OCPP evaluation calculated GOAP had leveraged more than £5.8m, noting this as a significant achievement given GOAP spend to date was approximately £5.5m. Since the OCPP evaluation, this figure has grown exponentially due to the confirmation of Global Environment Facility funding for ocean accounting projects in Vietnam and Maldives, raising this figure to approximately **£33m**:

- GOAP technical advice and direct investment into local institutions in Vietnam directly contributed directly to securing medium-term Global Environment Facility financing (approved April 2024) for “Mainstreaming Marine and Coastal Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting into Vietnam’s Development Planning for Blue Economic Growth of Key Sectors” with a total co-financing of USD 12.6 million (£9.9m).
- GOAP technical advice and investment into local institutions in the Maldives directly contributed to the securing of, and downstream implementation design of, the “Enhancing National Development through Environmentally Resilient Islands project focusing on “reef ecosystem integrity and resilience through sustainable management, reducing development impacts and integrating natural capital accounting into development planning”. The total co-financing of this GEF investment is USD 22.9 million (£17.8m).

In addition to these direct contributions, GOAP engagements and local investments in Indonesia (Phase 1 and 2 investments) has been a major influence in the design of the World Bank funded Oceans for Prosperity Project (LAUTRA), a USD \$210 million (£163.4m) investment to support the Government of Indonesia to enhance the management of natural marine resources and improve the livelihoods of coastal communities. Ocean accounting is being mainstreamed into this investment as the foundation for all data organisation and reporting systems as a template for other significant multilateral investments being planned in Indonesia. Including this project brings the total of leveraged funds for initiatives featuring ocean accounting to **£197m**, a leverage ratio of approximately 1:28.

These successes support pillar 3 of the current phase of UK funding, which seeks to secure the global architecture to ensure the long-term viability of ocean accounting and an eventual phase-out of reliance on donor support, through investment in building coordination structures, technical capacity and finance collaboration in ODA-eligible countries.

The mechanisms through which GOAP supported funding mobilisation were noted by stakeholders consulted. GOAP was seen to be instrumental in developing and supporting project concepts that aligned with funding priorities of donors, including governments, development banks and international organisations, even when funding would not necessarily go to GOAP as an organisation / secretariat. GOAP provided capacity building support to counterparts in partnering countries on developing effective funding proposals. GOAP has also leveraged its relationships with governments, institutions



and funding agencies to secure funding for its country-level projects. While harder to quantify, GOAP's successful promotion of ocean accounts and partnership building was also seen to help to raise awareness of ocean accounts as an area for ODA investment and attract funding.

In Indonesia's case, the GOAP secretariat facilitated funding mobilisation to advance ocean accounting research, leading to significant developments. The government of Indonesia co-chaired the 5th Global Dialogue in July, reflecting their active participation and leadership in global discussions on sustainable ocean management, and fostering more agreements to build a stronger network for the benefit of nature. – Survey respondent



VI. Lessons learned and recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Results from this mid-term evaluation demonstrate GOAP has been successful in building an effective global partnership and network, and achieving the initial results it has set out to, including those achieved across 15 ODA eligible countries. GOAP has remained aligned with its overarching objectives, implementing an effective demand-led model including awareness raising alongside the active promotion of ocean accounts and the Partnership.

The Partnership's structure was seen to be fit-for-purpose and intentionally designed to reflect the systemic change GOAP aims to address. GOAP was seen to be managed effectively and efficiently, with a high level of stakeholder satisfaction and confidence in the Partnership and its leadership. As with all partnership-based approaches, opportunities were identified for further strengthening, including in areas of communication, engagement with partners and risk management. Year-on-year scaling has been successful but comes with challenges of maintaining pace with growing demand and momentum. The evaluation also noted GOAP had not yet fully integrated gender equity and social inclusion into its work, with this being a critical gap, but there is growing recognition of the importance of these issues and efforts underway to address them.

The review identified strong alignment between GOAP's work and member and country development priorities for ocean accounting and sustainable use of the ocean more generally. Internationally GOAP has played a key role in shaping and influencing the global discourse on ocean accounts, contributing to the embedding ocean accounts in international frameworks and the development of international approaches and guidelines. The ability of GOAP to work successfully across all levels further amplifies its impact and relevance at national, regional and international levels.

As the programme is at the mid-term, with just five years into the Partnership, evidence on higher-level outcomes and impact are still emergent. Despite this, GOAP was seen to contribute to national level ocean policies and strategies, including the use and integration of ocean accounts, including case studies on mainstreaming ocean accounts and improving ocean literacy in Maldives, establishing Indonesia as a global exemplar country and improving solid waste management in Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam. In relation to higher-level ODA development impact, GOAP was seen to support sustainable ocean development, including healthy ecosystems and enhanced biodiversity, by fostering a holistic approach to ocean management. Members also identified GOAP's connection to broader economic development and growth, which was also seen to have positive impacts on macro-level poverty reduction, as well as informing policy that better address poverty and inequality for coastal communities. The current development of GOAP's pathway to change and strengthening MEL systems should include focus on evidencing change at outcome and impact levels.

GOAP's design and implementation has been intentional about supporting sustained and lasting change. Securing long-term strategic funding beyond 2026, along with continued diversified funding sources, should be a priority to continue momentum and successes to date. GOAP has played a significant role in embedding ocean accounts at national and international levels and leveraging funds for ocean accounting.

6.2 Lessons learned

A key element of this mid-term review is to explore learning to strengthen the GOAP programme. The partnership approach and strengths evidence to date also provide broader lessons relevant to other programmes.

Number	Key lessons	Domains
01.	The perception and position of policy neutrality supports widespread uptake of technical approaches and partnership building. The hosting of the secretariat in a respected university brought perceived policy neutrality and trust among members and partners, particularly given the diverse range of national contexts globally. A shared focus on the value and availability of ocean accounts to inform decision-making, without pushing specific policy positions or advocacy agendas, provided a cohesive and singular purpose among GOAP.	Effectiveness
02.	Partnerships should be intentionally structured to reflect the systemic change they wish to address. The Partnership structure of GOAP includes a university-based secretariat, co-chairs, members, partners, a panel of technical experts, regional CoPs, fellows and a broader network of non-members. Each have intentional roles that speak to the national, regional and global levels of change that the GOAP aims to deliver, as well as the primary pathways to creating this change. The existing partnership structure supports the creation and coordination of a global network of members and experts, alongside a decentralised model to support implementing activities at regional and national levels.	Impact
03.	Strong partnerships deliver sustainable change and efficient results, while requiring ongoing investment and resources. GOAP scored highly in the partnership assessment tool, signalling <i>“a partnership based on genuine collaboration has been established”</i> . Members and partners saw clear benefits to being part of the Partnership, complementarity among the institutions involved and strong commitment to continuing collaboration. While this leads to sustainable change, resources are required to continue to invest in the Partnership. GOAP's network plays a crucial role in creating systems change, providing a platform for collaboration, shared learning and collectively promoting the importance of ocean accounting. All of which requires resources for coordination, connection, shared approaches and capacities, and network building.	Sustainability and efficiency
04.	Tailored and flexible approaches support alignment with diverse member priorities, requiring trusted relationships, clear communication and supportive systems to be effective and sustainable. GOAP was seen to successfully tailor approaches and support and adapt to changing circumstances and needs of countries. This was enabled by building and maintaining trust between the secretariat, partners and national-level counterparts, along with having supportive systems and tools, such as technical guidance and standardised methods to adapt and tailor. Further investing in partner engagement and ensuring clarity relating to lines of communication, decision-making, and expectations of partners, ensures partners are not left behind as implementation momentum builds.	Relevance and coherence
05.	Broader situational awareness enables external factors to be strategically leveraged when creating change. As catalysts for growth exist within and beyond a programme's sphere of control, GOAP has been able to leverage and influence both. Increased global interest in the ocean economy or “blue economy” created a favourable environment for GOAP's growth. This was seen to be influenced external to GOAP, as well as contributed to by GOAP itself. GOAP was also seen to successfully build international awareness and commitment to ocean accounts. Simultaneous to this rising interest was the funding received from the UK	Relevance and effectiveness

	Government which provided necessary resources to meet growing demand and position it well to capitalise on momentum and opportunities.	
06.	An effective demand-led model is not wholly passive in its design and delivery. For GOAP's demand-led model to be effective, the Partnership also incorporates promotion and awareness-raising. GOAP actively raises awareness of the utility of ocean accounting and works to build coalitions of countries, communities of practice and research networks that are committed to this approach. The demand-led model ensures GOAP's efforts are aligned with the needs of members and countries it supports, with it being important to complement this approach with strategic promotion to ensure long-term success.	Relevance and effectiveness
07.	Achieving shared ownership and collaborative investment leads to long-term commitment to the vision, beyond current funding cycles. GOAP as a partnership has consistently focused on a long-term view of the creation and continuation of ocean accounts. All stakeholders articulated a long-term vision for ocean accounting and the GOAP that went well beyond current contractual or funding periods. Many were invested in actively seeking funding to support continued momentum and future initiatives related to ocean accounting by the Partnership. This long-term commitment also presents challenges and pressures relating to expectations of future resources not currently secured for the Partnership.	Sustainability
09.	As momentum builds for an initiative and decentralised implementation grows, the positioning of an effective Partnership needs to be continuously negotiated and agreed. As the GOAP and enabling environment created for ocean accounts matures, there are some complexities emerging relating to which partners play a key role in coordinating ocean accounting activities. There are a few examples where GOAP members or partners had gone on to develop ocean accounting projects with countries outside of secretariat involvement or partnership. While this is positive and reflects the success of GOAP in building networks, momentum and the environment for ocean accounting, it could lead to some risk in the future health of the Partnership, and sustainability of supporting mechanisms such as the secretariat, should fragmentation occur rather than an environment of collaboration, strong communication, engagement and coordination.	Effectiveness

6.3 Recommendations

The evaluation identified the following recommendations for GOAP (both the Partnership and the secretariat), to build on the successes and strengths to date, and continue to improve.

6.3.1 Governance and operations

Number	Recommendations	Domains
01.	Strengthen operational capacity: Enhance internal processes and systems in the secretariat and CSDR/UNSW host to support efficient and effective operations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued cooperation and coordination with broader university administrative processes to overcome administrative barriers contributing to contracting, payment and procurement issues. Further streamline processes to better support the more dynamic and adaptive development cooperation approach of GOAP. Consider additional staff resources in the secretariat to support operations, particularly in specialised areas such as partnership 	Efficiency

	development and coordination, knowledge management and communications.	
02.	Better leverage the strengths of being positioned in the university: including identifying and utilising the breadth of cross-disciplinary expertise in the University, along with the University's broad network connections.	Effectiveness
03.	Further formalise GOAP's governance structure: including clear documentation of roles and responsibilities in the structure, as not all roles are included in the current Partnership ToRs.	Effectiveness
04.	Improve consistency of, and opportunity for, internal communication and information sharing among members, partners, fellows, experts and stakeholders: This could include more regular meetings and information sharing among key groups. Information sharing on progress, achievements and collective contributions to shared goals, will continue to build on existing commitment. Improved internal communication with members and partners on internal lines of communication and decision-making, particularly as the Partnership continues to grow, would also support coordination. Broader engagement from the wider network could include regular surveys to gather feedback and virtual options for wider participation like webinars, social media and online forums.	Efficiency and coherence
05.	Introduce a more formalised and tailored approach to risk management for GOAP: As the scope and size of the Partnership has grown, risk management for GOAP now requires a more dedicated approach beyond the overall risk management of the CSDR in which it is hosted.	Efficiency and effectiveness

6.3.2 Delivery

Number	Recommendations	Domains
06.	Develop a clear long-term strategy to support a shared understanding among delivery partners: Develop a clear vision and strategy, such as a strategic plan, outlining the GOAP's vision, goals, objectives and expected outcomes.	Coherence
07.	Provide clear guidance on how to engage with GOAP and access its services and support: Offer guidance and resources to members and the GOAP network on the services GOAP provides and how to access its services and support.	Coherence and effectiveness
08.	Further strengthen, build and diversify the membership: Build on support provided to new members to ensure their successful orientation and active engagement, continue to grow membership and consider creating different membership tiers or categories to accommodate diverse needs and interests as membership grows.	Coherence and effectiveness
09.	Continue to invest in and engage expert talent: Continue to attract and retain expert talent in the secretariat and among partners, expert panel and fellows. Implement a more structured approach to the fellows programme and research management.	Effectiveness
10.	Further explore regionalised approaches: Explore opportunities for building on current regional implementation to meet the needs of countries particularly as work continues to scale. Ensure funding allocation supports equitable distribution across regions.	Relevance and effectiveness

6.3.3 Objectives and impact

Number	Recommendations	Domains
11.	Enhance external communication and explore new ways to disseminate knowledge, including a more accessible website. Ensure knowledge products are easily available, such as an easily accessible information hub or platform that consolidates all available resources, making it easier to find relevant information.	Effectiveness and impact
12.	Mainstream GESI considerations in both GOAP's implementation and technical work on ocean accounts: Actions could include developing a GESI action plan for GOAP, the collection of GESI specific MEL data and supporting inclusive representation in decision-making roles. At the technical level, continue efforts and focus relating to social accounts development and GESI policy relevance and inclusion in decision-making.	Relevance, effectiveness and impact
13.	Revise the wording of the current GOAP objectives and improve the articulation of higher-level ODA impacts, including poverty alleviation: This could be done as part of an overall theory of change or strategy. The wording of objective 2 needs updating given the timing has now passed (2023), and the wording of objective 3 should be updated to reflect the range of country priorities in relation to ocean accounts (i.e. reflecting those wanting targeted accounts for specific objectives as well as those building complete sequences of ocean accounts).	Impact
14.	Monitor and evaluate impact: The current development of GOAP's pathway to change and strengthening MEL systems should include focus on evidence gathering of contributions to change at the outcome and impact level, the inclusion of poverty alleviation in GOAP's overall pathway to change and sharing learnings.	Relevance, effectiveness and impact

6.3.4 Sustainability and funding

Number	Recommendations	Domains
15.	Prioritise securing long-term strategic funding with ongoing diversified funding for GOAP beyond 2026: Despite success in leveraging substantial funds for ocean accounts at national level, this has not occurred for the Partnership itself, including long-term resources for the secretariat. Secretariat and members should continue to explore sustainable long-term funding options, particularly through the current UK Government partnership. Continue ongoing diversified, alongside exploring new funding partnerships, ensuring funding remains aligned with strategic priorities. Consider the addition of specialised partnership development expertise in the secretariat given the urgency of securing a long-term future for GOAP to continue to build on the successes and momentum achieved to date.	Efficiency and sustainability


Annex 1. Data analysis framework

Table 4: Data analysis framework

Evaluation question	DAC criteria	Source: Document review	Source: Partnership tool	Source: Survey	Source: In-depth interviews
Governance and operations					
1. To what extent is GOAP's structure fit for purpose?	Efficiency				Y
a. How does the GOAP's structure (both of the Partnership and secretariat) help or hinder the delivery of the objectives?	Efficiency		Y		Y
b. What is the funding structure of the GOAP and what are the implications of this in relation to key areas of investment?	Efficiency	Y			Y
2. Is GOAP managed effectively?	Efficiency			Y	Y
a. Is GOAP well managed? What could be done to improve the management of the secretariat and GOAP more broadly?	Efficiency	Y	Y		Y
b. How satisfied are GOAP members and country partners with the secretariat's performance and support?	Efficiency		Y	Y	Y
c. Are current risk management approaches adequate?	Efficiency	Y	Y		Y
d. What are the gaps in the Partnership both operationally and in delivery?	Efficiency		Y	Y	Y
Delivery					
3. To what extent is GOAP being implemented as intended?	Efficiency / effectiveness				
a. Is there a shared understanding of the purpose and value of GOAP among partners?	Coherence		Y		
b. Are the stakeholders reached as intended?	Effectiveness	Y			Y
c. Are activities delivered efficiently?	Efficiency	Y			Y
d. How does GOAPs global work embed OA approaches across organisations and country level?	Effectiveness	Y			Y
e. What has been the impact of year-on-year scaling on effectiveness and delivery of the organisation?	Effectiveness / impact	Y			Y



4. Is the overall model and approach of GOAP appropriate?	Relevance / coherence				
a. Is the balance between GOAP's global work and country-based implementation appropriate?	Coherence				Y
b. What is GOAP's route to impact nationally, regionally and internationally and what are the positives associated with this. Are there alternative routes to impact?	Relevance	Y			Y
c. Is GOAP innovative in its delivery of work and the objectives?	Relevance	Y			Y
d. The model is demand led, GOAP does not 'push' onto countries ideas and approached. Is this an effective delivery model? Does GOAP have the capacity to tailor approaches and pace as required?	Relevance / coherence				Y
5. How aligned is GOAP's work with member and country objectives, both for ocean accounting and the sustainable use of the ocean in general?	Coherence		Y	Y	Y
a. How does GOAP identify priorities at the national level?	Coherence	Y			Y
b. Is GOAP fulfilling member's expectations and how are these expectations balanced and delivered on?	Relevance		Y		Y
6. How does the programme account for and support gender equity and social inclusion in both design and implementation as well as outcomes?	Relevance	Y	Y		Y
Objectives and impact					
7. Is the programme contributing to the intended outcomes and impact?	Impact		Y	Y	Y
a. To what extent does the programme address the identified need?	Relevance			Y	Y
b. What are the most significant outcomes or impacts achieved to date?	Impact			Y	Y
c. How does the programme contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable ocean development and other identified needs in countries it operates?	Impact	Y			Y
d. How effective is the GOAP fellows programme, what are the benefits and costs of the approach to the programme and how likely are the objectives to be met?	Effectiveness	Y			Y
e. What is the impact of GOAP's on the ground work to create an enabling environment for ocean accounting work to exist?	Impact	Y			Y
f. What has the impact been of GOAP on the international accounting agenda and sustainable ocean planning, how linked into international processes is GOAP?	Impact		Y		Y
8. What features of the programme were most effective at creating change?	Impact				
a. How does GOAP engineer systems change within the areas it works?	Impact	Y			Y



b. How does GOAP and GOAP's impact compare to others working in the ocean accounts space?	Impact				Y
Sustainability and funding					
9. To what extent will the programme's contributions continue over time?	Sustainability		Y	Y	Y
a. Do GOAP's funding sources / arrangements support sustainability and continuity of the work going forward?	Sustainability	Y			Y
b. Is the diversity of funding adequate going forward? Are there funding gaps or restrictions in areas warranting further investment?	Sustainability	Y			Y
10. What has GOAP's influence been on mobilising funds for ocean accounting?	Sustainability / effectiveness			Y	Y
a. To what extent has the UK (Defra) investment been catalytic to GOAP operations and impact? Has there been impacts on other country funding mobilisation?	Sustainability / effectiveness			Y	Y

Annex 2. Evaluation timeline

The chart below outlines timeline for this evaluation.

Table 5: Evaluation timeline by week

	27 May	3 Jun	10 Jun	17 Jun	24 Jun	1 Jul	8 Jul	15 Jul	22 Jul	29 Jul	5 Aug	12 Aug	19 Aug	26 Aug	2 Sep	9 Sep	16 Sep	23 Sep	30 Sep	7 Oct	14 Oct	21 Oct	28 Oct	4 Nov	11 Nov	18 Nov
Inception report			Draft					Due																		
Document review																										
Development of data collection tools																										
Global Dialogue																										
Remote data collection (interviews, surveys)																										
Analysis																										
Draft report																										
Online validation workshop																										
Final evaluation report and summary																										
In-person workshop UNSW (2 days)																										


Annex 3. Programme documents reviewed

Number	Document name	Extension	Document type
1	Milestone 1. GOAP update on Defra investment April to May 2022	.pdf	Progress report
2	Milestone 2. Formal Progress update_221130	.pptx	Progress report
3	Milestone 2. Defra Progress Report-GOAP Phase 2 November 2022	.pdf	Progress report
4	Milestone 3. 230217_GOAP update on BPF_Downloadable	.docx	Progress report
5	Milestone 3. 230217_GOAP_Defra-Update	.pdf	Progress report
6	Milestone 4. end Q4 March 2023 Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phase 2	.pdf	Progress report
7	Milestone 5. end Q1 June 2023 Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phase 2	.pdf	Progress report
8	Milestone 6. end Q2 September 2023 Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phase 2	.pdf	Progress report
9	Milestone 7 end Q3 December 2023 Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phase 2	.pdf	Progress report
10	Milestone 8 end Q4 March 2024 Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phase 2	.pdf	Progress report
11	Milestone 9: end Q1 (June) 2024; Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phases 2 & 3	https	Progress report
12	Milestone 10: end Q2 (September) 2024; Defra BPF Investment into the GOAP Phases 2 & 3	https	Progress report
13	GOAP_Membership Status	.xlsx	Partnership document
14	231206 GOAP Members Meeting Report V2	.docx	Partnership document
15	GOAP Phase2 Ext	.docx	Design document
16	BPF Alternative options	.docx	Design document
17	OCPPI Interim Evaluation - V2 - 31 July 2024	.docx	Evaluation
18	241201-GOAP-Terms-of-Reference-V2	.pdf	Partnership document
19	OCPPI_Programme_level_TOC_Narrative_2023_Final	.pdf	Design document
20	211018 DAWG GOAP Blue Carbon EEA proposal_Final	.pdf	Design document
21	GOAP - DAWG Grant Agreement Executed 280322	.pdf	Design document
22	Updated Project Plan- Project-level environmental economic accounting (EEA) for international blue carbon restoration projects	.pdf	Design document
23	Global Dialogue Funder Report	.pdf	Activity report
24	GD workshop data	.xlsx	Activity data

Annex 4. Stakeholders interviewed

Table 6: List of stakeholders interviewed (deidentified)

Number	Stakeholder group	Region	Interview type
1	Donor	Europe	Zoom
2	Donor	Europe	Zoom
3	Expert panel	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
4	Fellow	Africa	In person
5	Fellow	Oceania / Pacific	In person
6	Fellow	Africa	In person
7	Fellow	Oceania / Pacific	In person
8	Fellow	Oceania / Pacific	In person
9	Fellow	Africa	In person
10	Fellow	Africa	Zoom
11	Member - Government	Central America	Zoom
12	Member - Government	Asia	In person
13	Member - Government	Africa	Zoom
14	Member - Government	North America	Zoom
15	Member - International	Europe	In person
16	Member - NGO	Asia	In person
17	Member - NGO	Asia	In person
18	Member - NGO	Asia	In person
19	Member - Research institute	Africa	In person
20	Member - Research institute	South America	In person
21	Member - Research institute	Africa	In person
22	Member - Research institute / expert panel	North America	In person
23	Member - Research institute / fellow	Africa	Zoom
24	Non-member - Government	Central America	Zoom
25	Non-member - International	Asia	In person
26	Non-member - CSO	Central America	Zoom
27	Non-member - Government	Asia	In person
28	Non-member - Government	Europe	Zoom
29	Non-member - Government	Asia	In person



30	Non-member - Government	Central America	Zoom
31	Non-member - Government	Europe	Zoom
32	Non-member - Government	Asia	In person
33	Partner	Oceania / Pacific	In person
34	Partner	Africa	In person
35	Partner	Oceania / Pacific	In person
36	Partner / expert panel	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
37	Partner / expert panel	Africa	In person
38	Partner / expert panel	Oceania / Pacific	In person
39	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
40	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
41	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
42	Secretariat	Asia	Zoom
43	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
44	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
45	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
46	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
47	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
48	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
49	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
50	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
51	Secretariat	Oceania / Pacific	Zoom
52	Secretariat	Europe	Zoom
53	Secretariat	Asia	Zoom

Annex 5. Survey data tables

Q1. Which of the following best describes your organisation?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Government	33.83%	45
University, research or other academic institution	33.83%	45
Intergovernmental organisation (UN, World Bank, IUCN, etc)	6.77%	9
Non-government or civil society organisation	12.78%	17
Financial institution	0.75%	1
Network or association	0.75%	1
Private sector	3.01%	4
Individual representative	3.01%	4
Other (please specify)	5.26%	7
	Answered	133
	Skipped	0

Q2. Is your organisation a member of GOAP?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Member	45.11%	60
Non-member	41.35%	55
Unsure	13.53%	18
	Answered	133
	Skipped	0

Q3. Does your organisation collaborate or partner with GOAP in any way?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	61.65%	82
No	19.55%	26
Unsure	18.80%	25
	Answered	133
	Skipped	0

Q4. What is your region?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Africa	22.31%	29
Asia	37.69%	49
The Caribbean	0.00%	0
Central America	1.54%	2
Europe	14.62%	19
North America	6.15%	8
Oceania / Pacific	13.85%	18
South America	3.85%	5
	Answered	130
	Skipped	3

Q5. How would you describe the overall purpose of GOAP?		
Answered	59	
Skipped	74	

Q6. What value does GOAP add to the area of ocean accounts?		
Answered	56	
Skipped	77	

Q7. Need and purpose of the Partnership													
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Don't know		Total
There is a perceived need for the Partnership in terms of areas of common interest and complementary capacity	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6.56%	4	32.79%	20	60.66%	37	0.00%	0	61
There is a clear goal for the Partnership	0.00%	0	3.28%	2	6.56%	4	42.62%	26	45.90%	28	1.64%	1	61
There is a shared understanding of, and commitment to, this goal among all potential partners	0.00%	0	1.64%	1	16.39%	10	44.26%	27	34.43%	21	3.28%	2	61
The partners are willing to share their ideas, resources, influence and power to fulfil the goal	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	11.48%	7	39.34%	24	44.26%	27	4.92%	3	61
The perceived benefits of the Partnership outweigh the perceived costs	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	11.48%	7	26.23%	16	54.10%	33	8.20%	5	61
Comments													13

Q8. Members of the Partnership													
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Don't know		Total
Partners share common ideologies, interests and approaches	1.69%	1	3.39%	2	6.78%	4	52.54%	31	28.81%	17	6.78%	4	59
Partners see areas of connection between their core businesses	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	8.47%	5	57.63%	34	27.12%	16	6.78%	4	59
There is a history of good relations between the partners	0.00%	0	1.69%	1	10.17%	6	38.98%	23	37.29%	22	11.86%	7	59
The Partnership brings added prestige value to partners individually as well as collectively	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	15.25%	9	32.20%	19	45.76%	27	6.78%	4	59
There is enough variety among partners to have a comprehensive understanding of the issues being addressed	0.00%	0	1.69%	1	10.17%	6	40.68%	24	38.98%	23	8.47%	5	59
Comments													12

Q9. Making sure partnerships work													
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Don't know		Total
The managers in each organisation support the Partnership	0.00%	0	1.69%	1	13.56%	8	37.29%	22	25.42%	15	22.03%	13	59
Partners have the necessary skills for collaborative action	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	10.17%	6	54.24%	32	25.42%	15	10.17%	6	59
There are strategies to enhance the skills of the Partnership (e.g. through training or increasing the membership)	0.00%	0	1.69%	1	3.39%	2	42.37%	25	45.76%	27	6.78%	4	59
The roles, responsibilities and expectations of partners are clearly defined and understood by all other partners	0.00%	0	8.47%	5	13.56%	8	35.59%	21	28.81%	17	13.56%	8	59
The administrative, communication and decision-making structure of the Partnership is clear and transparent	0.00%	0	6.78%	4	16.95%	10	44.07%	26	22.03%	13	10.17%	6	59
Comments													12

Q10. Planning collaborative action													
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Don't know		Total
All partners are involved in planning and setting priorities for collaborative action	0.00%	0	5.08%	3	15.25%	9	37.29%	22	25.42%	15	16.95%	10	59
Partners have the task of communicating and promoting the Partnership in their own organisations	0.00%	0	1.69%	1	8.47%	5	38.98%	23	35.59%	21	15.25%	9	59
Some staff within partner organisations have roles that cross the traditional boundaries that exist between agencies in the Partnership	0.00%	0	1.69%	1	8.47%	5	37.29%	22	28.81%	17	23.73%	14	59
The lines of communication, roles and expectations of partners are clear	0.00%	0	5.08%	3	18.64%	11	35.59%	21	22.03%	13	18.64%	11	59
There is a participatory decision-making system that is accountable, responsive and inclusive	0.00%	0	3.39%	2	10.17%	6	32.20%	19	33.90%	20	20.34%	12	59
Comments													14

Q11. Minimising the barriers to partnership													
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Don't know		Total
Differences in organisational priorities, goals and tasks have been addressed	0.00%	0	5.17%	3	18.97%	11	31.03%	18	18.97%	11	25.86%	15	58
There has been a core group of skilled and committed staff (in terms of the partnership) over the life of the Partnership	0.00%	0	1.72%	1	5.17%	3	37.93%	22	44.83%	26	10.34%	6	58
There are formal structures for sharing information and resolving disputes	0.00%	0	5.08%	3	15.25%	9	30.51%	18	32.20%	19	16.95%	10	59
There are informal ways of sharing information and resolving disputes	0.00%	0	1.72%	1	10.34%	6	48.28%	28	24.14%	14	15.52%	9	58
There are strategies to ensure alternative views are expressed within the Partnership	0.00%	0	3.39%	2	10.17%	6	35.59%	21	25.42%	15	25.42%	15	59
Comments													8

Q12. Reflecting on and continuing the Partnership													
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Don't know		Total
There are processes for recognising and celebrating collective achievements and/or individual contributions	0.00%	0	3.51%	2	7.02%	4	49.12%	28	31.58%	18	8.77%	5	57
The Partnership can demonstrate or document the outcomes of its collective work	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.02%	4	43.86%	25	43.86%	25	5.26%	3	57
There is a clear need for and commitment to continuing the collaboration in the medium term	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.02%	4	36.84%	21	52.63%	30	3.51%	2	57
There are resources available from either internal or external sources to continue the Partnership	0.00%	0	1.72%	1	18.97%	11	24.14%	14	29.31%	17	25.86%	15	58
There is a way of reviewing the range of partners and bringing in new members or members exiting	0.00%	0	1.79%	1	3.57%	2	44.64%	25	33.93%	19	16.07%	9	56
Comments													10

Q13. Partnership experience: Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following:													
	Very unsatisfied		Unsatisfied		Neutral		Satisfied		Highly satisfied		Don't know		Total
Fairness in financial resource sharing	0.00%	0	3.51%	2	15.79%	9	26.32%	15	35.09%	20	19.30%	11	57
Fairness in allocation of roles and responsibilities	0.00%	0	3.51%	2	19.30%	11	36.84%	21	28.07%	16	12.28%	7	57
Fairness in performance of roles and responsibilities	0.00%	0	5.26%	3	12.28%	7	35.09%	20	31.58%	18	15.79%	9	57
Fairness in providing capacity building opportunities	0.00%	0	1.75%	1	15.79%	9	24.56%	14	42.11%	24	15.79%	9	57
Fairness in providing authorship opportunities	1.79%	1	0.00%	0	17.86%	10	28.57%	16	32.14%	18	19.64%	11	56
Effective communication	1.72%	1	5.17%	3	10.34%	6	43.10%	25	34.48%	20	5.17%	3	58
Effective conflict management	1.75%	1	0.00%	0	19.30%	11	21.05%	12	26.32%	15	31.58%	18	57
Respectful and ethical conduct	1.75%	1	1.75%	1	3.51%	2	31.58%	18	50.88%	29	10.53%	6	57
Comments													9

Q31. Thinking about the administrative and management activities in GOAP, please rate the effectiveness of GOAP in carrying out each of the following activities:													
	Poor		Fair		Good		Very good		Excellent		Don't know		Total
Coordinating communication among partners and organisations involved in GOAP	3.08%	2	3.08%	2	24.62%	16	38.46%	25	18.46%	12	12.31%	8	65
Organising partnership activities, including meetings and projects	4.62%	3	9.23%	6	10.77%	7	38.46%	25	30.77%	20	6.15%	4	65
Applying for and managing grants and funds	7.69%	5	9.23%	6	20.00%	13	18.46%	12	18.46%	12	26.15%	17	65
Preparing materials and knowledge products	4.62%	3	3.08%	2	21.54%	14	29.23%	19	33.85%	22	7.69%	5	65
Evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership	7.69%	5	4.62%	3	24.62%	16	21.54%	14	15.38%	10	26.15%	17	65
Comments													9

Q32. Thinking about all of the people who provide either formal or informal leadership in GOAP, please rate the leadership's effectiveness in the following:													
	Poor		Fair		Good		Very good		Excellent		Don't know		Total
Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness and openness in the partnership	1.49%	1	5.97%	4	16.42%	11	26.87%	18	40.30%	27	8.96%	6	67
Creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced	1.49%	1	2.99%	2	14.93%	10	26.87%	18	41.79%	28	11.94%	8	67
Combining the perspectives, resources and skills of partners	1.49%	1	2.99%	2	20.90%	14	32.84%	22	31.34%	21	10.45%	7	67
Helping the partnership be creative and look at things differently	1.49%	1	4.48%	3	11.94%	8	34.33%	23	32.84%	22	14.93%	10	67
Recruiting diverse people and organisations into the partnership	2.99%	2	2.99%	2	26.87%	18	23.88%	16	32.84%	22	10.45%	7	67
Comments													7

Q33. What are the most significant outcomes or impacts GOAP has achieved to date?	
Answered	35
Skipped	98

Q34. Please provide any available supporting evidence for the examples provided in question 33	
Answered	6
Skipped	127

Q35. Can you think of an example of how GOAP has helped to implement ocean accounting approaches? Please describe.	
Answered	29
Skipped	104

Q36. Please provide any available supporting evidence for the examples provided in question 35	
Answered	3
Skipped	130

Q37. Can you think of an example of how GOAP has assisted or influenced the mobilisation of funding for ocean accounting? Please describe, including the amount of funding if possible.	
Answered	26
Skipped	107

Q38. Do you have any other thoughts or comments you would like to add?	
Answered	18
Skipped	115

Q39. Finally, below are some questions to help us understand a bit more about you. All responses will be treated confidentially, this additional information just helps us understand the sample who responded to the survey:		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Country	98.11%	52
Gender	96.23%	51
Preferred language	96.23%	51
Organisation	88.68%	47

Annex 6: Key partnership and training events

The tables below provide further detail of GOAP's key activities and outputs in relation to partnership and training. The data source is primarily the ten milestone reports provided to Defra Blue Planet Fund (BPF), from 2022 up to September 2024.

Key partnership meetings and events (2022-2024)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting on System Dynamics for Marine Protected Areas, location: Indonesia, September 23, 2024 • Focus Group Discussion on conservation law amendment, location: Indonesia, September 17, 2024 • Short-term mission to Statistics Norway, location: Oslo, Norway, September 2024 • Fiji National Ocean Account Workshop, location: Fiji, September 5-6, 2024. 28 participants from 17 organisations (day 1) and 12 organisations (day 2) • Annual Meeting with Ocean Account Indonesia Task Force, location: Indonesia, August 16, 2024 • Workshop on data analysis for ocean accounts pilots, location: Indonesia, August 2024 • Towards International Panel for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) Ocean Dialogue Online Event, location: virtual, August 2024 • Big Thinkers Ocean Talanoa Event, location: Fiji, July 24, 2024, approximately 30 attendees • Meeting with Geospatial Information Agency, Indonesia, Location: Indonesia, July 25, 2024 • The Ocean Accounts side event at the 19th International Islands of The World Conference, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia, June 27, 2024 • High-Level Event on Ocean Action "Immersed in Change", location: Costa Rica, 7-8 June 2024 • Workshop: Ocean Accounts in the Pacific, locations: Fiji and Tonga, May 2024 • Space for Island Nations Conference (SINC), location: Crossroads, Maldives, 23-25 April 2024 • First Meeting of the European Community of Practice for Ocean Accounting, Online, 16 April • Training Students in Ocean Accounting in Maldives, Location: Laamu Atoll, Maldives, 14-19 April 2024 • Connecting science and policy: The case accounting for the ocean, Pacific Ocean Room (Area 08), Ocean Decade Conference, location: Barcelona, Spain, 11 April 2024 • 2024 Ocean Decade Conference, location: Barcelona, Spain, 10-12 April 2024 • Meeting: Global expert panel, location: online, 1 and 2 February 2024 • Meeting: Global Dialogue Communications Toolkit for GOAP Members, Online, 2 February 2024 • Meeting: Global expert panel, online, 1 and 2 February 2024 • Webinar Episode 1: Advancing Sustainable Ocean Governance: Updates from 2023 and Directions for 2024, Online, 30 Jan 2024 • Mangrove Symphony: Harmonizing Blue Carbon, Climate Resilience & Sustainable Finance in the Indo-Pacific, Kolkata, India and online, 29 Nov 2023 • Marine Regions Forum 2023, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 7-9 Nov 2023 • 4th International ESP Latin America and Caribbean Conference, La Serena, Chile, 6-10 Nov 2023 • UN-ESCAP Sixth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean, Bangkok, Thailand and online, 30 October 2023 • Interactive Seminar: Introduction to Ocean Accounting (OA) for Sri Lanka, in-person and online, 24 October 2023 • Workshop on Ocean Accounts and Governance of Blue Carbon Ecosystems, Bogor, Indonesia and virtual, 17-18 October 2023 • 1st Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management, Nadi Fiji, 11-15 September 2023

- Workshop on Accounting for Blue Carbon, virtual, 26 July, 2023
- 4th Global Dialogue on Ocean Accounting, virtual, 13 June, 2023
- Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership (AIPOIP) interactive dialogue on Ocean Accounting: Synthesizing Lessons and Understanding Challenges, virtual, 16 May, 2023
- World Data Forum, Hangzhou, China & Virtual, 26 April 2023
- Our Ocean Conference, Panama City, Panama, 2-3 March 2023
- Ocean Business Leaders' Summit (OBLs), Sydney, Australia, 1-2 March 2023
- 2022 Workshop on Earth Observation for Ecosystem Accounting (EO4EA 2022), virtual, 28 November - 1 December 2022
- UN ESCAP's 5th Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean, Bangkok Thailand, 30 November 2022
- Asia-Pacific Ocean Accounting Collaborators' Workshop, 29 November 2022
- 2nd Natural Capital Accounts Forum, October 18-19 2022
- WIMOSA Scientific Symposium Side Event, October 14 2022
- 28th Meeting of the London Group on Environmental Accounting, September 26-29 2022
- WIOGEN Virtual Micro-workshop: Ocean Accounting, September 27 2022
- Indonesia's Marine Spatial Planning and Services Expo 2022, September 13-15 2022
- ECSA 59: Using the best scientific knowledge for the sustainable management of estuaries and coastal seas, September 5-8 2022
- GOAP collaborated with ESCAP to host a UN Ocean Conference Side Event - Beyond GDP for Sustainable Ocean Development, Lisboa, Portugal, June 30 2022

Notable training events (2022-2024)

- Workshop on data analysis for ocean accounts pilots in the working area of USAID Kolektif, Jakarta, Indonesia, August 2024.
- Integrating Ocean Account for Local Policy, Indonesia, 2 July 2024. Organised by WRI Indonesia.
- Trainings delivered at the 5th Global Dialogue:
 - Marine Spatial Planning Challenge
 - Introduction to the Capabilities of Cloud-based Spatial Frameworks
 - Ocean Development Indicators in the R Programming Language
 - Introduction to Ocean Accounts, Principles, and Tools
 - Introduction to Sustainable Ocean Finance
 - Developing Plastics Accounts to Deliver the Global Plastic Treaty
 - Harnessing Blue Carbon Ecosystems for Sustainable Ocean Development through Environmental-Economic Accounting
 - Developing Ocean Economy Satellite Accounts
 - Unlocking the Power of Ocean-based Frameworks: How to Integrate Ocean Accounts into Sustainable Ocean Plans
 - Legal and Policy Design Options for the Ocean Economy
 - Policy Analysis with Ocean Accounts
 - Demystifying International Agreements
 - Monetary Valuation of Ecosystem Services
 - Accounting for Fisheries

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- Incorporating Climate Change into Ocean Accounting
 - Bridging the Gap: Technical Links between Ocean Accounting and Spatial Planning
 - Experimental Spatial Approaches to Ocean Ecosystem Accounting.
 - Workshop on Solid Waste Management towards a Circular Economy in Vietnam: Policies and Enforcement, July 12, 2024.
 - Training Workshop on Ocean Accounts in Viet Nam, Ha Long, Viet Nam, 11 July 2024. Organised by the Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE).
 - Blue Carbon in the Maldives, Male, Maldives, 18 April 2024. Delivered by the GOAP and the Ministry of Climate Change, Energy, and Environment (MCCEE), with support from the Maldives Bureau of Statistics and UNESCAP.
 - GIS and Ocean Accounts: practical training for the Maldives, 18 April 2024, delivered by GOAP alongside MCCEE.
 - Training on economic valuation for marine resources, Jakarta, Indonesia, April 2024. The training, was delivered by Rekam Nusantara Foundation.
 - Training: Ocean Accounting in Samoa, Apia, Samoa, 12-14 March 2024
 - Workshop: Vanuatu's National Ocean Policy and MSP Review for Ocean Stakeholders, Port Vila, Vanuatu, 11-13 March 2024
 - Seminar and Panel: Accounting for the Costa Rican Oceans Part 1: Introduction to Ocean Accounts, online, 18 March 2024
 - Ocean Accounts for the management of Blue Carbon ecosystems, 17-18 October 2023 in Bogor, Indonesia
 - ISPONRE's Awareness Training Workshop on Ocean Accounting, virtual, 26 September 2023
 - Awareness raising workshop on the sustainable blue Economy, October 20, 2022
 - India ocean accounting workshop & India-Australia ocean accounts dialogue, November 2022
 - 2nd Training Workshop Sustainable Blue Economy in Viet Nam, 24 November 2022