THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE ARAFURA AND TIMOR SEAS STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP) 2024-2033

This report was prepared by Michael Mikov for The Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action Phase II (ATSEA-2) Project
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Cover Image: Fishers in Aru Archipelago District, Indonesia, pull in their nets at sunset, wrapping up a day's work at sea

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ATSEA-2 is the 2nd phase of the GEF-financed, UNDP-supported ATSEA programme. The programme was designed to enhance regional collaboration and coordination for the implementation of integrated approaches to marine and coastal management and biodiversity conservation in the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS) region. The region is composed of Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea (PNG), and Timor-Leste.

ATSEA-2 has supported the implementation of the first 10-year (2014-2024) Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the ATS, the updating of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA, 2023) and SAP for the next phase of the Programme in 2024-2033, and the development of a long-term regional governance mechanism (RGM) to support SAP implementation among the four ATS countries.

To guide the implementation of the updated SAP, the 5th Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meeting in November 2023 recommended the development of a high-level Theory of Change (ToC) and detailed logic/results chains for the new SAP. These models and accompanying narratives aim to clarify the linkages between the priority actions/activities, intermediate outcomes, and end targets for each operational objectives in the SAP, and help guide coordinated planning and implementation of the SAP and National Action Plans (NAPs) at the regional and national levels. The TOC will also serve to guide the development of the SAP Implementation Plan.

The ATS SAP ToC is envisioned to serve as a living document, and will be updated periodically during strategic reviews to assess progress on implementation. In particular, the ToC will serve as a monitoring framework and a key reference for adaptive management in support of the SAP implementation and ATSEA governance mechanism. Tracking progress using the ToC will help determine if the assumptions made leading to the achievement of intermediate results continue to remain valid, and relevant to achieve the SAP longer-term objectives.

The process for developing the ToC was undertaken virtually - through a series of presentations, email exchanges, and consultation workshops to seek the views and recommendations from ATSEA-2 Regional and Country representatives.

Key documents consulted included the: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA, 2023), ATS Strategic Action Programme 2024-2033 (2023), Draft SAP Monitoring System Framework (2023), and Draft SAP Financial Plan 2024-2033.

The visual representations were developed using the Miradi conservation planning tool (miradi.org) and based on the principles and practices of the Open Standards for Conservation Ver.4.0. (conservationstandards.org).

The diagrams developed to describe the high-level ToC results and more specific Operational Objectives results are accompanied by brief explanatory narratives. Together, the visual and narrative descriptions guide audiences through the causal relationships and pathway to results

and help communicate 'how and why' the SAP priority actions/activities are expected to lead to the programme outcomes.

Collectively there are seven (7) diagrams that represent:

1. the high-level ToC for the ATS Strategic Action Programme - presents a summary of the ATS strategy and expected results to be achieved. The high-level ToC helps to summarise and communicate how selected strategies and priority actions will lead to outcomes such as improving the status of selected ATS conservation priorities, ensuring the sustainability of associated ecosystem services and, ultimately provide benefits to communities across the region;

2. separate results chains for each of the 4 thematic component strategies and related Operational Objectives - Reducing marine and coastal plastic pollution (including discarded fishing gear or ALDFG); Preventing and responding to oil spills; Reducing the incidence of small-scale IUU fishing in transboundary areas; and Increasing the resilience of regional populations of endangered, threatened and protected species and their related critical habitats;

3. a results chain to summarise and describe the cross-cutting objectives of the SAP - to mainstream climate change and gender equity & social inclusion considerations into SAP implementation; and

4. a results chain to describe the development of appropriate governance and institutional arrangements to ensure effective coordination and resource mobilisation in support of effective SAP implementation.

See ANNEX 1. SAP STRUCTURE for a summary of the overall SAP components and related elements.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALDFG	Abandoned, Lost and otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear
ATS	Arafura and Timor Seas
ATSEA	Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CC	Climate Change
CCVA	Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CTI	Coral Triangle Initiative
EAFM	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management
ETP	Endangered, Threatened & Protected Species
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GESI	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NAP	National Action Programme
NCC	National Coordination Committee
NSWG	National Stakeholder Working Group
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OECM	Other Effective Conservation Measures
PEMSEA	Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia
RAP	Regional Action Plan
RBM	Rights-Based (Fisheries) Management
RC	Results Chain
RCC	Regional Coordination Committee
RGM	Regional Governance Mechanism
RPOA-IUU	Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing in the Region
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RSWG	Regional Stakeholder Working Group
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SSF	Small-scale Fisheries
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TOC	Theory of Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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INTRODUCTION

ATSEA-2 is the 2nd phase of the GEF-financed, UNDP-supported ATSEA programme. The programme was designed to enhance regional collaboration and coordination for the implementation of integrated approaches to marine and coastal management and biodiversity conservation in the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS) region. The region is composed of Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea (PNG), and Timor-Leste.

Building on the foundational results from the first ATSEA project, ATSEA-2 has supported the implementation of the first 10-year Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the ATS, updating of the SAP for 2024-2033, and development of a long-term regional governance mechanism (RGM) to support SAP implementation among the four ATS countries with mechanisms for broader stakeholder participation.

The SAP's primary purpose is to provide a clear and agreed framework from which the four ATS littoral countries may collaborate on the management of the ATS large marine ecosystem, in support of the sustainable development of the region.

As an overarching regional framework for adaptive management of the ATS large marine ecosystem, the SAP outlines regional-level collaborative action, and serves to guide ATS countries in the development of counterpart National Action Programmes (NAPs) and highlight key linkages between regional and national level interventions.

The ATS SAP (2024-2033) sets out the strategic direction and priority actions that will be required over the next decade to address four priority transboundary issues of concern - marine plastic pollution (land-based sources and abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gears - ALDFG), oil spills, small-scale Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fisheries, and declines of populations of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species and their critical habitats. Goals and objectives of the SAP have been structured around four "thematic component" strategies and six operational objectives. See ANNEX 1. SAP STRUCTURE for a summary of the overall SAP components and related elements.

PURPOSE OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE

To guide implementation of the SAP - the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) recommended the development of a high-level theory of change (ToC), with accompanying results-chains or visual descriptions to:

- Clarify the linkages, assumptions, logic among the various programme actions, results and outcomes in the SAP.
- Guide coordinated planning and implementation of the SAP and National Action Programmes (NAPs) - including identification of potential roles and responsibilities of all partners and stakeholders
- Effectively communicate the programme's proposed actions and expected results and,
- Provide a framework to monitor and evaluate progress and guide adaptive management decisions.

The ATS SAP ToC is envisioned to serve as a living document or platform that will be updated periodically to guide and support adaptive management of SAP implementation. Regular strategic reviews will assess progress on implementation and test the assumptions made within the ToC regarding how expected results will be achieved. Opportunities to improve delivery may require updating of strategies and related assumptions.

THEORY OF CHANGE (ToC)

ToC Definition: "*the process and product of developing an explicit account of how and why an intervention is expected to achieve its intended outcomes and impact goal, based on outlining a set of key causal pathways arising from the activities and outputs of the intervention (whether at program or project level) and the assumptions underlying these causal connections." (GEF Theory of Change Primer, 2019 http://stapgef.org/theory-change-primer). Note: Theories of change are 'living documents' and will be regularly reviewed and drive continuous improvement or adaptive management processes. As the internal and external contexts evolve and progress on implementation assessed, initial assumptions on how results will be achieved may also need to change.*

The following diagrams and accompanying narratives provide a summary of the proposed actions to be implemented to achieve the SAP operational, cross-cutting and governance objectives.

ATS STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP) THEORY OF CHANGE

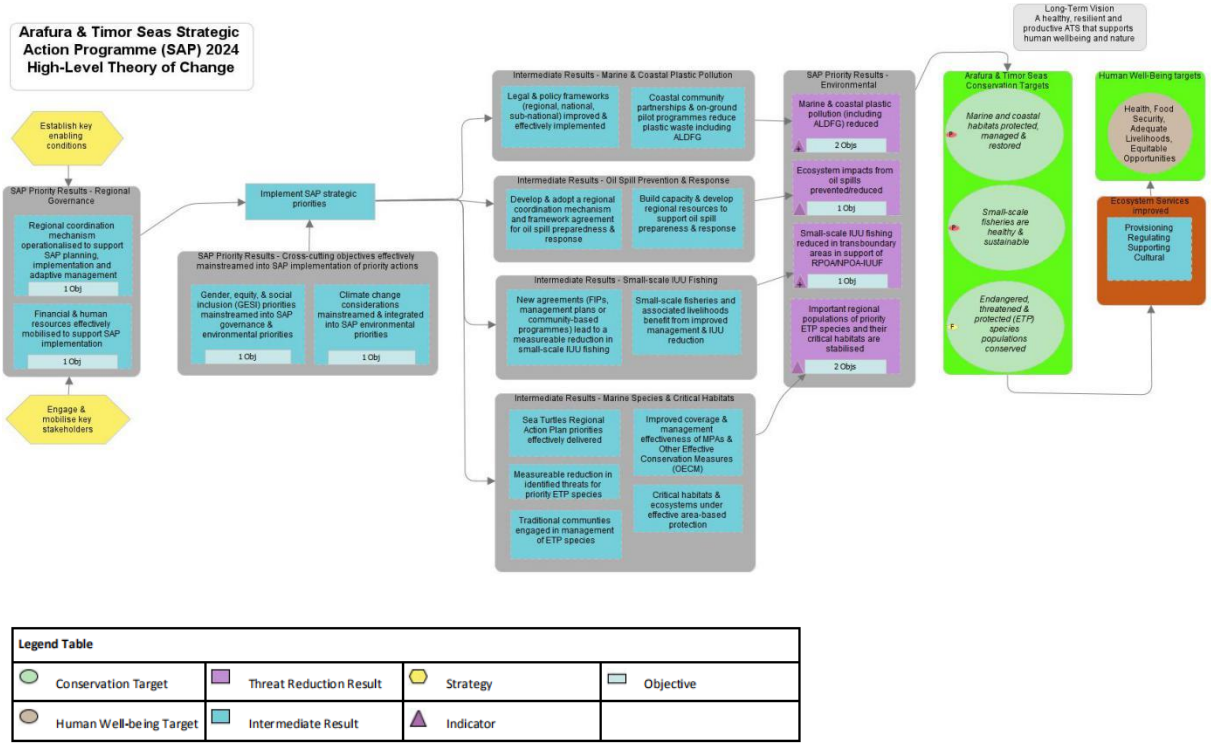

Figure 1 – ATS SAP High-Level Theory of Change

As mentioned, the SAP is structured around four thematic programme components, each with its own goal and related operational objectives (see ANNEX 1. SAP STRUCTURE). Each operational

objective includes a series of priority actions and supporting activities to help guide regional and national level implementation. Detailed implementation plans will be developed to support delivery of SAP priority actions at both regional and national levels, and to delineate roles and responsibilities among ATSEA members.

Figure 1 provides a high-level overview of the main SAP elements and causal pathway to achieve results - the programme theory of change. Objectives have been established to reduce the priority threats to the region - identified through the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA, 2023), and include establishing the necessary enabling conditions (governance and coordination mechanisms) to effectively implement actions.

High-level ToC Narrative

In order to secure the long-term shared vision of the SAP - *A healthy, resilient and productive ATS that supports human well-being and nature* - the condition and status of selected conservation targets (marine & coastal habitats, small-scale fisheries and threatened species) will be improved. The priority conservation targets ensure that the necessary ecosystem services are maintained, and continue to provide benefits to communities across the region (e.g., food, livelihoods, security) as well as ensure equitable access to resources and economic opportunities.

In response to the priority transboundary environmental issues identified by the TDA, four issues of concern were prioritised for action - marine plastic pollution, oil spills, small scale Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fisheries, and declining populations of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species. Priority actions are focused on addressing issues across transboundary areas.

Impacts from marine and coastal plastic pollution will be addressed through actions aimed at reducing plastic pollution from land-based sources and from abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gears (ALDFG). Legal and policy frameworks will be improved and effectively implemented at various geo-political scales and partnerships with local coastal communities will be established to create and implement "on-ground" programmes. Interventions will aim to increase human and institutional capacity, foster collaborative research and knowledge sharing and include the development of a regional circular economy blueprint to reduce plastic waste at selected sites.

The prevention and response to oil spills will be improved by strengthening regional capacity and available resources to avoid and respond to oil spills. New regional coordination mechanisms and agreements will be developed and adopted supported through a variety of capacity-building initiatives aimed at reducing the incidence of oil spills and minimise impacts.

Actions to reduce the impacts of small-scale IUU fishing (at selected sites) include the development of new management arrangements and protocols e.g., fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and/or community-based programmes. And include initiatives that benefit local communities such as promoting alternative livelihoods, ensuring adequate food and water and maintaining cultural practices. Actions will complement the ongoing work of the existing RPOA-IUU regional coordination mechanism.

Regional populations of priority species and their related critical habitats will be protected through the effective implementation of the Regional Actions Plans (RAPs) e.g., Regional Action Plan for Sea Turtles, and development of a new RAP for prioritised specie(s), as well as continuing to effectively implement international conventions/agreements e.g., CITES, CMS, IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Critical habitats will be protected through an expansion of the MPA networks and improvements in the management effectiveness of MPAs as well as the development of other area-based protection mechanisms to protect habitat outside of MPAs. Coastal communities will be engaged to ensure Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is maintained and supports the management of threatened species.

Implementation of the four thematic operational objectives will be strengthened through the integration and mainstreaming of climate change and gender/equity priorities (GESI) into priority actions and results at both regional and national scales.

Coordination of SAP regional and national strategic priorities will be supported through the implementation of an agreed Regional Governance Mechanism (RGM). The RGM will ensure that the necessary enabling conditions and supporting structures (mobilising financial and human resources, establishing the SAP Monitoring System, and implementing a stakeholder and engagement plan) are in place to successfully implement the SAP priority actions.

SAP COMPONENT RESULTS CHAINS

The following diagrams have been prepared to help demonstrate the causal relationships between the SAP programme's priority actions, expected results and how these results aim to achieve the programme objectives. These elements form the relevant component's results chain and aim to help guide implementation by partners at both regional and national scales.

Definition: *A results chain is a diagram that depicts the assumed causal linkage between an intervention and desired impacts through a series of expected intermediate results (Foundations of Success, 2009). Note: the results chain provides more detail on what results are to be achieved and how progress will be measured.*

ATS SAP Component 1 - Reducing Marine & Coastal Plastic Pollution (including ALDFG)

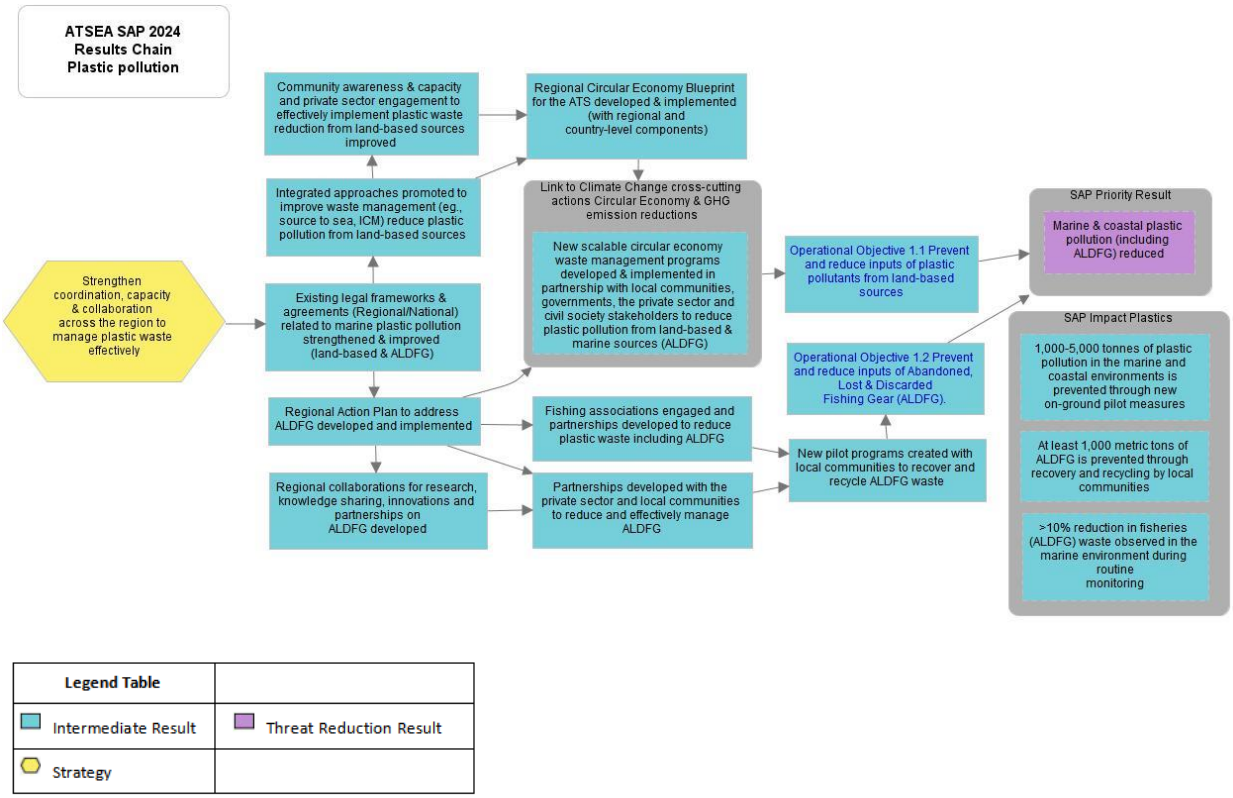

Figure 2 – ATS SAP Component 1 - Reducing Marine & Coastal Plastic Pollution (including ALDFG)

Results Chain Narrative

Component 1 aims to reduce the impacts of plastic pollution in the ATS marine environment. This component has two complementary objectives - the reduction of plastic pollution from land-based sources and pollution from marine debris - specifically the impacts caused by abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear (ALDFG).

As identified by the TDA analysis - land-based sources include pollution resulting from the dispersal of solid or plastic wastes from port facilities, coastal communities or land-based waste dumps. Land-based issues may also be exacerbated from a lack of adequate coastal sanitation infrastructure, or waste disposal facilities in ports and coastal settlements.

With respect to marine debris - the TDA identified discarded fishing nets (ALDFG) as a major issue of concern. ALDFG poses a direct threat to certain endangered, threatened and protected species (ETP) in the region causing a decline of populations, including sea turtles and marine mammals.

To reduce the impact of marine and coastal pollution, the SAP will implement a broad strategy aimed at strengthening coordination, capacity, and collaboration across the region to manage plastic waste more effectively. Existing legal frameworks and agreements relating to the management of land-based and ALDFG plastic pollution - at both regional and national scales - will be assessed for their effectiveness and strengthened where necessary.

To address land-based issues, priority actions include the promotion of integrated approaches - such as the development of 'source-to-sea', Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) etc., as well as implementing 'circular economy' waste management programmes. Integrated approaches will engage various sectors and stakeholders including government, communities, private sector, academe, and NGOs.

Community awareness and capacity will be improved to effectively implement plastic waste reduction programmes. Initiatives include the development of a new and scalable circular economy intervention that will be implemented in partnership with local communities, governments, the private sector and civil society stakeholders.

Marine debris caused from ALDFG will be addressed through the development and implementation of a new regional action plan to reduce or eliminate ALDFG waste across the ATS. The plan will aim to drive new innovative collaborations and research partnerships to explore and develop new ways to manage ALDFG waste effectively. Coastal communities, the private sector (including fishing associations) and other stakeholders will be engaged to help develop and implement new pilot programmes to recover and recycle ALDFG waste.

Draft Risks and Assumptions

Risks	Assumptions
Technical challenges or logistical constraints in implementing pilot projects to recover and recycle plastic waste and ALDFG waste may result in limited success.	Local communities and the private sector are willing to acquire the necessary skills and capacity to participate effectively in pilot projects on plastic and ALDFG waste collection, recycling, and processing activities.
Differences in regulatory mechanisms and standards across the ATS countries may complicate efforts to harmonise policies and regulations as part of the development of a Regional Action Plan on ALDFG and Regional Circular Economy Blueprint.	The ATS RGM, particularly through the Regional Stakeholder Working Groups (RSWGs) and possible National Stakeholder Working Groups (NSWGs), will serve as platforms to promote necessary assessments, consultative workshops, and consensus-building towards development and implementation of a Regional Action Plan for ALDFG and Regional Circular Economy Blueprint

ATS SAP Component 2 - Preventing & Responding to Oil Spills

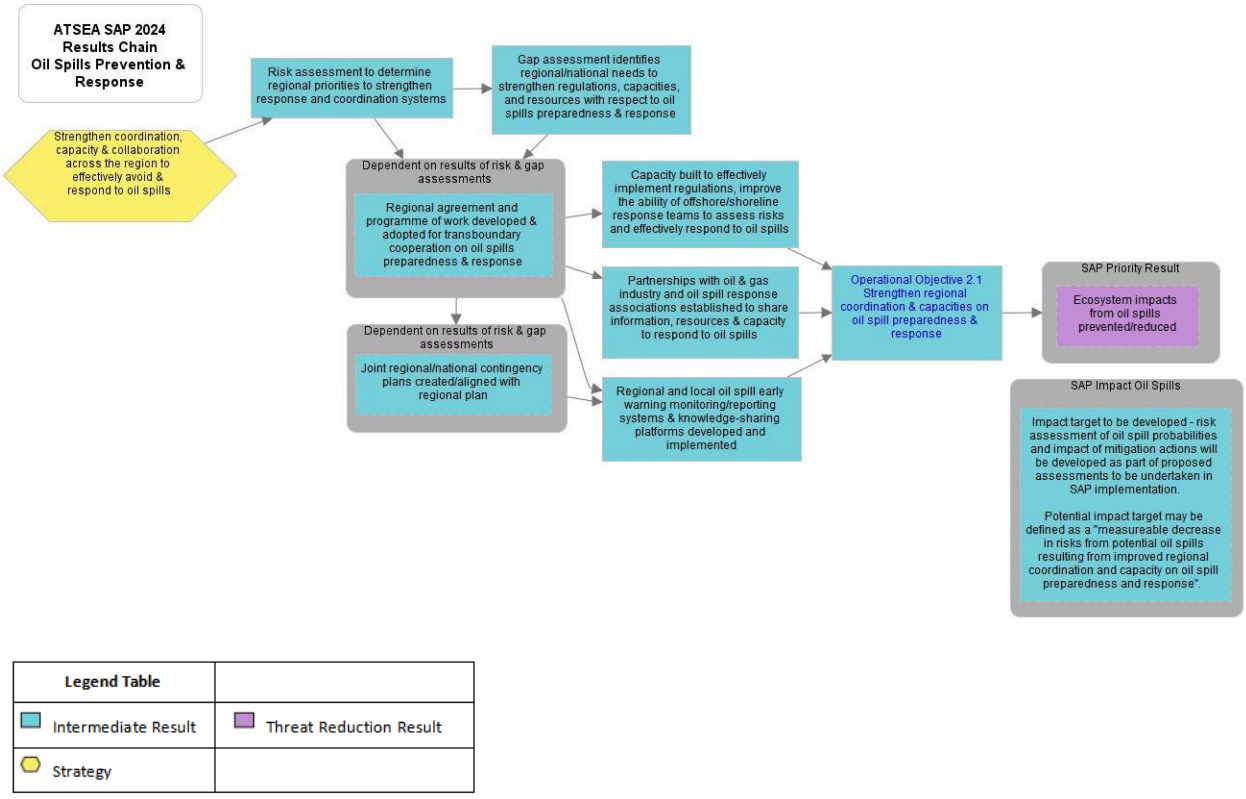

Figure 3 – ATS SAP Component 2 - Preventing & Responding to Oil Spills

Results Chain Narrative

The accidental discharge or loss of crude oil from offshore platforms and wells, tankers and pipelines pose a significant risk to the ATS large marine ecosystem. The environmental impacts of oil spills also have significant flow-on economic and social impacts to communities across the region.

As noted in the ATSEA-2 Regional Marine and Land-Based Pollution Assessment (Shin, 2021), oil spills are an ever-present risk to the region. Numerous oil rigs are actively operating - particularly in the former Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA) and other adjacent areas in the Timor Sea. The ATS region also lacks a regional collaborative platform for oil spill response.

Component 2's main objective is to strengthen regional coordination and capacity in order to minimise the risk of oil spills and enhance the effectiveness of response if they occur, thereby reducing their impact on the environment.

Improving the coordination, capacity and resources necessary to prepare and respond to oil spills is the overarching strategy for this SAP component. In order to assess needs and target resources effectively, a regional risk assessment and gap analysis will be undertaken to identify legal and policy frameworks that may need strengthening as well as identify capacity-building and resource needs to respond to oil spills.

Based on the risk assessment and gap analysis, a programme of work to support effective transboundary cooperation on oil spills preparedness and response will be developed and adopted through an agreement to be signed by the four ATS countries. The programme of work may include the development of adequate monitoring, reporting and knowledge management systems; developing early warning, monitoring and reporting platforms; creating joint regional/national contingency plans to identify and respond to oil spills; and establishing partnerships with oil and gas industry and oil spill response associations.

Draft Risks and Assumptions

Risks	Assumptions
Delays or disagreements in developing joint regional/national contingency plans and agreements for transboundary cooperation on oil spills may hinder timely and effective response measures in the event of an oil spill.	The ATS RGM, particularly through the RSWG and possible NSWGs, will serve as key platforms to facilitate necessary assessments and consensus- building processes, supporting the development of regional contingency plans and agreements for oil spill prevention and response.

ATS Component 3 - Reducing the Incidence of Small-scale IUU Fishing in Transboundary Areas

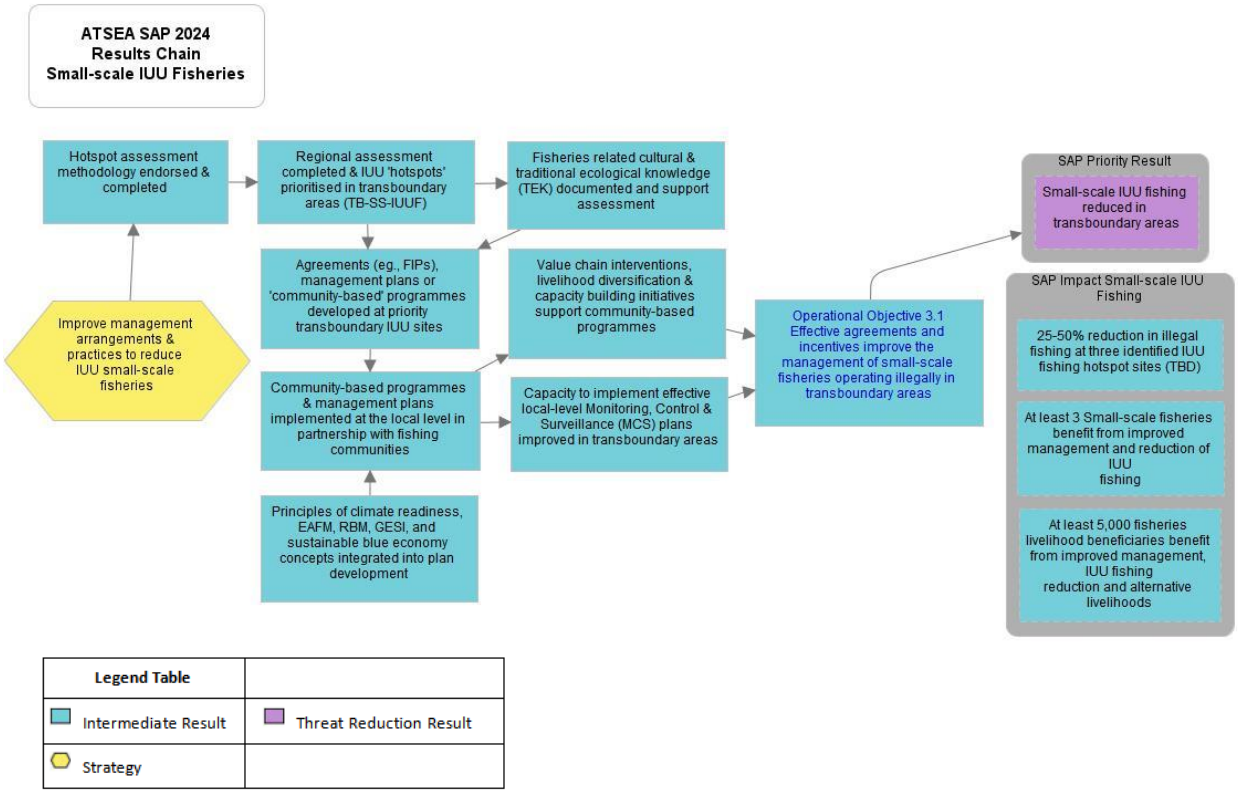

Figure 4 – ATS Component 3 - Reducing the incidence of Small-scale IUU fishing in transboundary areas

Results Chain Narrative

Component 3's primary objective and overarching strategy is focused on improving the management arrangements and practices of those small-scale capture fisheries that may be operating illegally, are unreported, or are unregulated (IUU) in ATS transboundary areas. In addition to the lack of appropriate community-based management arrangements, drivers of small-scale IUU fishing activities may potentially relate to historical cultural or customary practices, fishing grounds that are disputed by remote communities, or influenced by the nature of transboundary market forces and related supply chains.

Regional assessments will be undertaken in order to identify and prioritise transboundary IUU 'hotspots and root causes' and develop suitable strategic interventions to improve the management of fisheries at these sites. Actions may include the development of tools and agreements (e.g., bilateral/regional or /multilateral agreements) supported by direct engagement with local fishing communities, targeted awareness raising and capacity building initiatives, and developing local-level monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems.

Incentives, including community livelihood support and supply chain interventions, will be developed to help address some of the systemic issues related to small-scale IUU behaviour, and aim to improve livelihood outcomes for communities and local fishers.

This component is intended to complement the ongoing work of the existing RPOA-IUU regional coordination mechanism and aligns with broader commitments made by ATS countries to adopt the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the 'SSF Guidelines').

Draft Risks and Assumptions

Risks	Assumptions
SAP activities involving fisheries, introducing alternative livelihoods and nutrition have the potential to impact on the rights, lands, livelihoods and traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities (e.g., loss of assets or access to resources; access restriction).	The capacities and plans cultivated through the Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management (EAFM) and Rights-Based Management (RBM) initiatives could potentially mitigate the risk of access restrictions to fisheries resources. Awareness and community-scale management initiatives provide adequate benefits (livelihoods & cultural practice) to effectively engage local communities and small-scale fishers.

ATS Component 4 - Increase the resilience of regional populations of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species and critical habitats

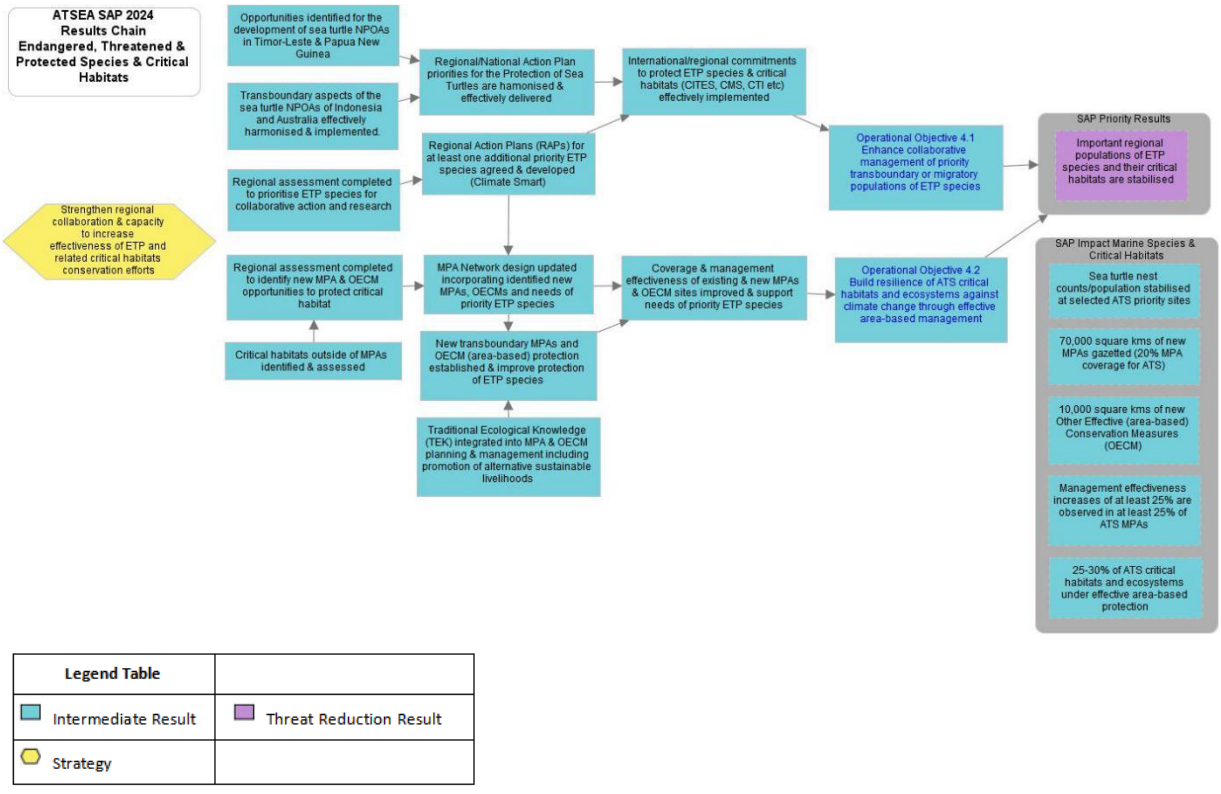

Figure 5 – ATS Component 4 - Increase the resilience of regional populations of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species and critical habitats

Results Chain Narrative

Component 4 has two complementary objectives that seeks to stabilise, and where possible recover, populations of ETP species and protect/strengthen critical habitats by improving the collaborative management of transboundary species and related habitats.

International and/or regional conventions and agreements to protect threatened species e.g., the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS), and the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) will be strengthened through the effective implementation of national policies, laws and enforcement mechanisms. This includes the on-going work to effectively implement the existing Regional Action Plan (RAP) for Sea Turtles, as well as the proposed assessment, development and implementation of an additional RAP for other priority transboundary ETP species.

Regional action plans will aim to prioritise and improve collaborative action and research on transboundary and migratory species. The ability to monitor and protect local populations of ETP species will be enhanced through awareness raising and capacity building initiatives involving local communities.

This component incorporates actions to identify and conserve critical habitats for ETP species through a range of protected area mechanisms. 'Area-based measures' include the expansion and improved management effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as well as 'other effective conservation measures' (OECMs) that aim to protect critical habitats outside of MPA. Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) will be integrated into protected area planning and management and include opportunities to develop alternative and sustainable livelihoods for local communities.

Draft Risks and Assumptions

Risks	Assumptions
Collaboration on transboundary species management may be hindered by competing national interests or economic opportunities.	There is a shared understanding among countries in the region about the importance of conserving transboundary species and habitats.
Failure to effectively engage local communities in conservation efforts could lead to lack of cooperation or resistance.	Local communities exhibit willingness to engage in conservation efforts and embrace sustainable practices (supported by the development of viable alternative livelihood options).

SAP CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES: MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE CHANGE AND GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI) IN SAP IMPLEMENTATION

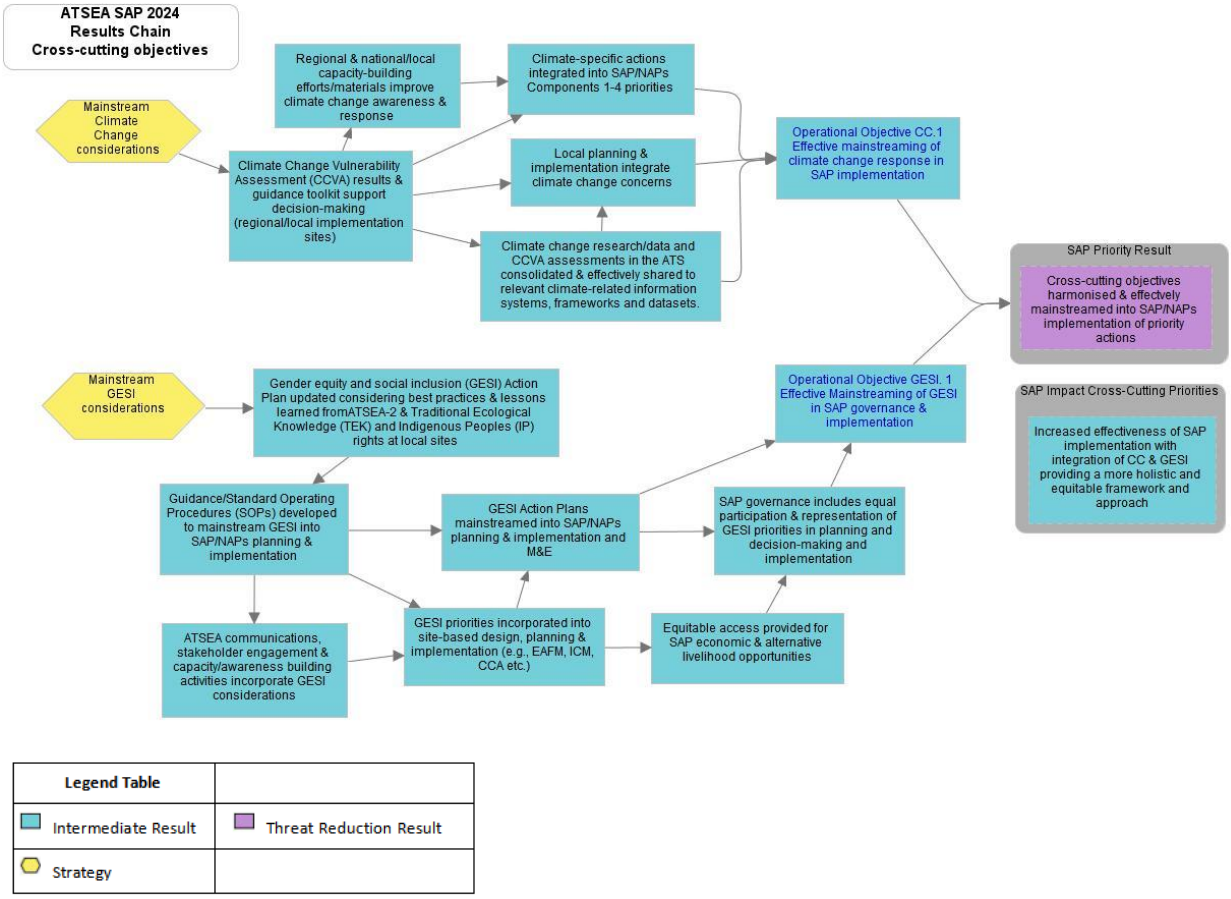

Figure 6 – SAP Cross-cutting Objectives

Results Chain Narrative

In addition to the four issue-driven SAP components outlined above, the SAP incorporates two 'cross-cutting' strategic objectives that have been developed to strengthen implementation and delivery - the effective mainstreaming of climate change considerations and gender equity priorities into the thematic priorities.

Climate change is a significant driver of the transboundary environmental issues - as identified in the TDA analysis - and has therefore been considered throughout the development of the SAP. Associated climate change priority actions include both mitigation and adaptation strategies to minimise climate change impacts across the region.

The Regional Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) (Johnson, 2021) and the CCVA Guidance Toolkit (Johnson, 2023) developed under ATSEA-2 will guide the development of local level CCVAs for selected pilot/project sites, and the design and implementation of SAP site-based interventions. Research data will be consolidated and shared across the region to help build regional capacity, awareness and response to climate related priorities.

Mainstreaming Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) priorities into the SAP focuses on the social inclusion of potentially marginalised groups - including gender (women and men), children and youth, the elderly, those living with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples (IPs), religious minorities and migrant populations and other groups.

The GESI Analysis and GESI Action Plan developed under ATSEA-2 will serve as the basis for addressing gender considerations throughout the different components of the SAP - including climate change and governance. In particular, this will inform the development of supporting guidance such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to mainstream GESI considerations into SAP/NAPs planning and implementation.

Mainstreaming GESI considerations within the SAP ensures that best practices and lessons learned from ATSEA-2 are effectively implemented - including the integration of traditional ecological knowledge and Indigenous Peoples rights into SAP site-based interventions and policies. These actions aim to benefit marginalised groups who may be impacted by transboundary issues, and help guide resource management decisions that provide equitable access to SAP economic opportunities.

Integration of both climate change and GESI as cross-cutting issues and objectives will be considered in collaborative planning and implementation processes at the regional, national and site levels.

Draft Risks and Assumptions

Risks	Assumptions
Impacts of climate change in the ATS could undermine the sustainability of marine and coastal resource utilisation by adversely impacting biological process underpinning provisioning, regulating and supporting services.	ATS governments are committed and support the mainstreaming of climate change considerations - including the implementation of the CCVA Guidance Toolkit for local adaptation planning during the implementation of the SAP and NAPs.
There is a potential that gender-based and marginalised groups discrimination may be replicated, especially regarding participation in decision-making, project design and implementation and potentially access to opportunities and benefits.	ATS governments are committed to addressing the GESI Action Plan for effective engagement of women and marginalised groups.

SAP GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

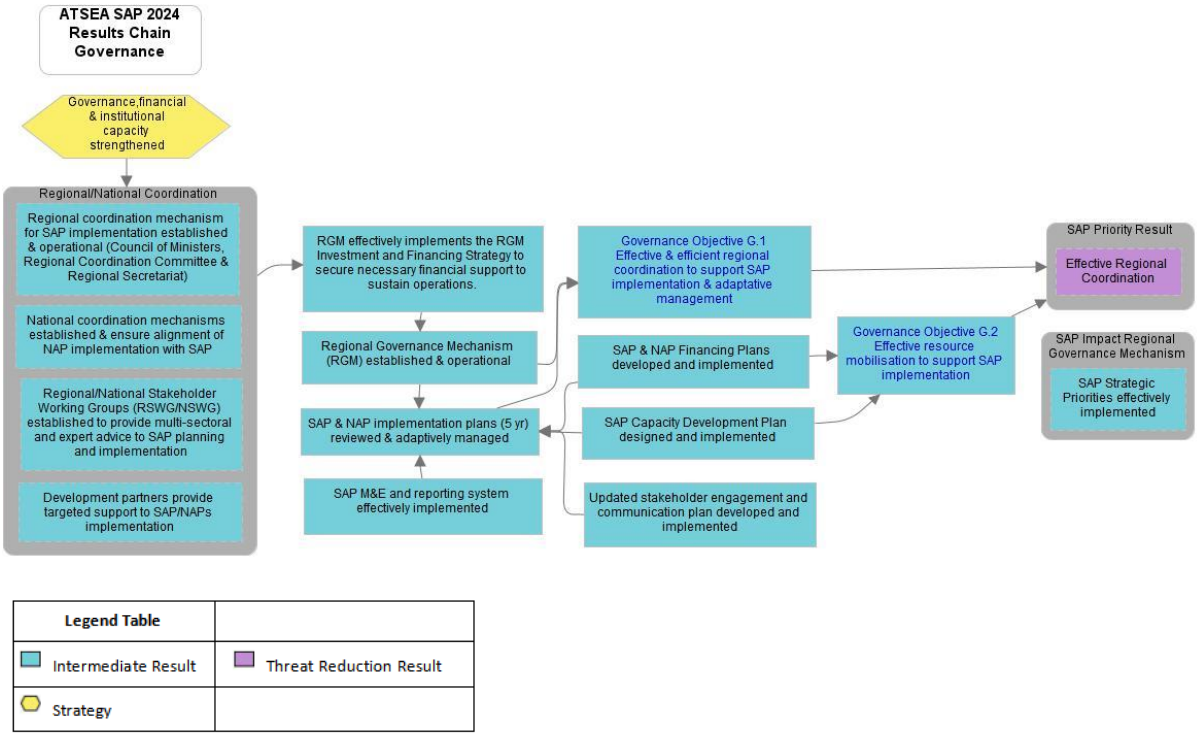

Figure 7 – SAP Regional Governance & Sustainability

Results Chain Narrative

The SAP regional governance and sustainability objectives aim to ensure an effective governance structure is in place to take overall responsibility for the implementation of the SAP and ensure adequate financial support to sustain operations. A Regional Governance Mechanism (RGM) will be established to ensure the necessary enabling conditions are in place for successful implementation of the SAP. The RGM will include the following elements:

- Regional component: Council of Ministers as the highest decision-making body for the regional collaboration, Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) to lead regional SAP planning and implementation with the support of the Regional Secretariat, and Regional Stakeholder Working Group (RSWG) to provide multi-sectoral and expert advice to SAP planning and implementation;
- National Component: National Coordination Committees (NCCs), National Secretariats, and National Stakeholder Working Groups (NSWGs), or similar mechanisms to be created at the discretion of the four ATS countries to coordinate NAP implementation in support of the SAP; and
- Strategic Development Partners to support and fund targeted projects contributing to SAP implementation

The RCC, with the support of the Regional Secretariat, will lead the development and review of 5-year implementation plans and annual work plans - delivered at both regional and national scales - and ensure adequate financing and capacity strategies are in place to support implementation.

Draft Risks and Assumptions

Risks	Assumptions
Financial sustainability of program activities might be threatened by inadequate allocation of funding.	Countries endorse the RGM Investment & Financial Plan and mainstream the SAP 5-year Financial Plan within country programs and budgets.
Change in key policy and/or decision makers or other events beyond the control of the project might lead to changes in policies and/or support for the project.	The ATS RGM is endorsed as a long-term mechanism with regional and national components that provides policy and strategic guidance support for SAP and NAP implementation.
Enabling decisions required for implementation of some of the key project activities might be delayed due to inefficiencies, capacity challenges and changing levels of interest or ownership by national and/or local government units.	Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan will help address capacity and ownership issues and drive collective participation and impact.

SUMMARY

The development of a high-level ToC and supporting results chains for the SAP aims to communicate and help guide implementation and planning at the regional, national and local scales. The visual descriptions and accompanying narratives help to articulate 'how and why' priority actions will lead to expected results, what are the main outcomes and impact of the programme, how are the intermediate results causally linked and who are the potential key actors and stakeholders involved at the regional, national and local scales.

The thematic components, cross-cutting, and governance level results chains - with accompanying narratives, help provide a more succinct description of what strategies and actions the SAP will employ to deliver expected results and what assumptions and pre-conditions are necessary to ensure success. These assumptions will be tested at regular strategic reviews of implementation progress and revised as necessary as part of a continuous monitoring, evaluation and learning framework for the SAP.

The high-level ToC, more detailed results chains and accompanying narratives aim to provide guidance for the development of more detailed 5-year Implementation Plans, assist in the finalisation of the SAP Monitoring System, and establish a robust framework to adaptively manage the programme over time to identify areas of concern, what works and what does not, and minimise risks where possible. Lessons learned will be shared across the region and support the scaling up and replication of successful interventions where appropriate.

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ANNEXES

- **ANNEX 1. SAP STRUCTURE**
- **ANNEX 2. PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE TOC FOR THE ATS SAP 2024-2033**
- **ANNEX 3. LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOC**

ANNEX 1. SAP STRUCTURE

This SAP is structured around issue-based program **Components**, each with its own **Goal**, and several subordinate **Operational Objectives,** supported by enabling **Governance Objectives,** to be achieved within the SAP implementation period. There are a total of four SAP components and six operational objectives, as shown below:

SAP COMPONENT 1: Reducing marine and coastal plastic pollution including ALDFG	**SAP COMPONENT 2:** Preventing and responding to oil spills	**SAP COMPONENT 3:** Reducing incidence of small-scale IUU fishing in transboundary areas	**SAP COMPONENT 4:** Increase resilience of regional populations of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species and critical habitats
COMPONENT GOAL: Reduction of the levels of marine and coastal plastic pollution, including ALDFG, in the ATS	**COMPONENT GOAL:** Ecosystem impacts from oil spills prevented or reduced through enhanced regional coordination and best practices	**COMPONENT GOAL:** Reduce small-scale illegal fishing through improved management arrangements in transboundary areas in support of RPOA/NPOA-IUUF	**COMPONENT GOAL:** Important regional populations of priority ETP species and their critical habitats are stabilised
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 1.1: Reduce inputs of plastic pollutants from **land-based sources**	**OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 2.1:** Strengthen regional coordination and capacities on oil spill preparedness and response	**OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 3.1:** Create effective agreements and incentives to improve management of small-scale fisheries operating illegally in transboundary areas	**OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 4.1:** Enhance collaborative management of priority transboundary or migratory populations of ETP species
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 1.2: Reduce inputs of Abandoned, Lost and otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (**ALDFG**)			**OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 4.2:** Build resilience of ATS critical habitats and ecosystems against climate change through effective area-based management
Cross-cutting Objective 1: ***Mainstreaming Climate Change*** **Objective:** Effective mainstreaming of climate change response in SAP governance and implementation			
Cross-cutting Objective 2: ***Gender equity and social inclusion*** **Objective:** Effective mainstreaming of GESI in SAP governance and implementation			
SAP Governance Objectives **Objective 1:** Effective and efficient regional coordination to support SAP implementation **Objective 2:** Effective resource mobilisation to support SAP implementation			

ANNEX 2. PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE TOC FOR THE ATS SAP 2024-2033

Key Steps and Timeline for ToC Development

Schedule	Key Steps Undertaken
February 2024	Engagement of ToC Specialist by ATSEA-2 RPMU
February - March 2024	Development of 1st draft ToC by ToC Specialist in consultation with RPMU considering the SAP 2024-2033 and related documents generated by ATSEA-2
28 March 2024	1st draft ToC shared with ATS countries for review
8 April 2024	Workshop to review 1st draft ToC participated by representatives from the 4 ATS countries
16-21 April 2024	2nd draft ToC submitted by ToC Specialist and reviewed/refined with RPMU
22-29 April 2024	2nd draft ToC circulated to the 4 ATS countries for review and feedback through email
2-7 May 2024	Final draft ToC submitted by ToC Specialist and reviewed/ refined with RPMU
8-15 May 2024	Final draft TOC shared with RSC via email for concurrence
20 May 2024	ToC finalised for publication

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