

ECO FISH

Enhancing equitable economic growth by promoting sustainable fisheries in the EA-SA-IO region



ECO 2022



ECOFISH MARINE FISHERIES WORKPLAN 3 REPORT ON ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

IPMU

10th March 2022

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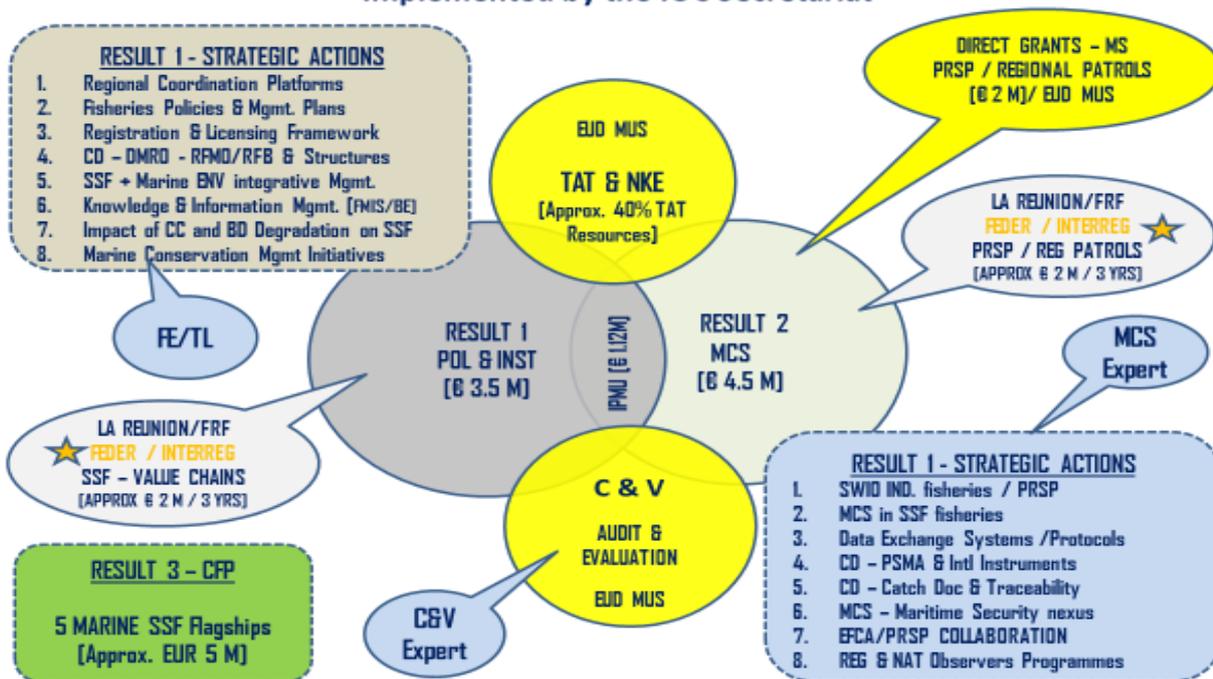
REPORT ON ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

This section summarizes the works performed by Results.

MARINE FISHERIES WORK PLAN

The report highlights the activities of the ECOFISH Marine Fisheries Work Plan for the period. It is the most The report highlights the activities of the ECOFISH Marine Fisheries Work Plan for the period January 2022 to February 2023. It is the most comprehensive component that implements all mandated strategic actions of ECOFISH Results 1 and 2, including enhancing PRSP, a Regional Fisheries Surveillance Plan hosted by the IOC. The work plan operates at various geographic scales, from regional to local levels, engaging 11 island and coastal beneficiary countries directly and through several maritime-related economic, fisheries and environmental organisations of Eastern Africa – Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO) region. An overview of the work plan is illustrated as follows.

Ecofish – Marine Fisheries Work Plan Implemented by the IOC Secretariat



However, to implement the programme activities, mainly Result 1, more efficiently, the vast geography of the maritime façade of the EA-SA-IO region has been divided into two sub-group, the SWIO and HOA (Horn of Africa) led by IOC and IGAD. Result 2 focused mainly on PRSP covering the SWIO region. However, technical assistance will provide to IGAD for establishing a Sub-Regional MCS Coordination Centre for sharing strategic intelligence for combatting IUU fishing in its maritime member countries.

Result 1 – Enhanced Fisheries Policy and Institutional Frameworks

The eight strategic actions of Result 1 consist of various strategic interventions that aim to refine the regional and national policies and management plans to unleash the development potentials of coastal marine fisheries as a sustainable and inclusive growth engine in the EA-SA-IO Region. Most strategic actions have crossed the preliminary research, stakeholder consultation, and planning to converge the implementation phase. Moreover, procuring an NKE for the three African REC (COMESA, IGAD and SADC) has helped lay the groundwork for leapfrogging their priority activities. In addition, the situational analysis for the IOC counterpart was carried out by the TAT/IPMU. This initiative has strengthened mutual trust and collaboration between TAT/IPMU and the DMRO. The main outputs and milestones for the reporting period are as follows:

Result 1.1 – Strengthened regional collaboration and cooperation.

It is a synergistic work package that cuts across various work plans and result areas to enhance collaboration and cooperation in the fisheries sector within and beyond the EA-SA-IO region. On the side-line of the 3rd Steering Committee meeting at Lusaka, Zambia, in March 2022, a knowledge and experience-sharing workshop was organised for the inland fisheries. It engaged stakeholders from regional economic (COMESA and IGAD), fisheries (LVFO and LTA) and four awarded sustainable small-scale fisheries projects of Result 3. Moreover, the 2nd annual IGAD Fisheries Coordination Platform was organised in Addis Ababa to finalise the first annual work plan for the Horn of Africa. Apart from the coastal countries, it included the IGAD landlocked countries, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda, facilitated by the SIDA project.

Some tangible progress has been achieved in developing a web-based Regional Coordination portal for coastal marine fisheries and associated projects, Donor and Development Agencies, and implementing organisations. In other words, a Project Tracking System to enhance effective collaboration/synergies between these endeavours. The initiative is bound to enhance the value for money of donor financing and resource mobilisation. The software was tested and presented to the National Focal Points and relevant stakeholders of the SWIO beneficiary countries at regional workshops. The programme needs some improvements, and a professional programmer will be hired to finish the work. Furthermore, practical collaboration with other fisheries programmes, such as EU-FISHGOV 2, AFD-IORA, SIDA -SWIOFC/UNEP-NC, FAO-NANSEN, etc., have been upheld.

Result 1.2 – Rebooted Fisheries Policy and Management Plan

The expected result aims to re-engineer fisheries policies to adopt the triple-bottom-line of sustainable development, review and assess existing fishery management plans and identify national priority and transboundary fisheries that can be managed more efficiently through regional collaboration. It continued the works started during the preceding period of reporting, namely:

- i) Inventory and status of various fishery management strategies and plans at the national level in the SWIO region.
- ii) A review of the definition and characterisation of the different segments of the small-scale fisheries to promote transparency and equity;
- iii) Formulation of a Sustainable development Reference Framework or Dashboard to balance the triple bottom line: Economic Efficiency, Social Well-being and Environmental Integrity in the management of small-scale fisheries;

A high-level regional workshop was held to validate the national inventory and evaluation fishery management plans and to select national priority fisheries, such as the sea cucumber, octopus and crab, which be subject to a regional network for sharing scientific and socio-economic knowledge and experiential learning and management best practices in the SWIO region. The same regional platform was used to validate the technical report regarding point (i) and (ii).

At no cost to the Marine Fisheries Work Plan, a sustainable and profitable strategy for the fisheries sector of Rodrigues 2023-2032 has been accomplished by ECOFISH FE/TC. It will serve as a model for other SWIO countries.

The next wave of activities under these expected results is as follows:

- i) To formulate a regional fisheries management strategy for common national priority fisheries, including a regional platform for sharing knowledge, experience, best practices and capacity-building. The sea cucumber and octopus fisheries have been identified by the SWIO countries;
- ii) To formulate a regional sustainable and responsible coastal tuna fishery development strategy and action for interested SWIO countries.
- iii) To Formulate a regional framework for the registration of fishers, fishing boats, fish transport boats, fishing gears, fishmongers, fish processors, etc., in small-scale fisheries. Building on the recent works completed in the sub-sector, the research will start with an inventory and assessment of the various systems in the SWIO countries.
- iv) To create a regional Technical, Socio-Economic Frame Survey Framework for the artisanal fisheries sub-sector, including an assessment of the national capacity and procedure for the SWIO countries

Result 1.3 – Mainstreaming the principles of the FAO VGSSF

This expected result is halted at present, although several integrative activities have either been done or are in progress, until the work package related to registration and licensing in the artisanal fisheries is completed. Therefore, it is on top of the agenda for the next quarter. The intended activity will be ground-breaking in transitioning artisanal fisheries from open access into secured tenure systems.

Result 1.4 - Strengthening operational capacities of national and regional agencies

The strategic action is demand-driven. Several activities about this expected result have been implemented through the NKE pool managed by INCATEMA Consortium during the COVID-19 pandemic. They include the supply of STE to the African marine-focus RECs (COMESA, IGAD and SADC) to build fisheries capabilities. In addition, IGAD benefited from it to access financing from SIDA for its Regional Blue Economy project. Likewise, Mauritius was facilitated to invigorate its National Ocean Council, equivalent to the National Blue Economy Coordination Framework or Mechanism.

Moreover, at no cost, the work plan, a BA (Hons) Law, Blue Economy and Sustainable Fisheries programme, has been launched in collaboration with the Open University of Mauritius. SWIOFC has been assisted in developing a Socio-economic Working Group the Regional Fisheries Body is dormant due to a lack of leadership. Relevant institutional stakeholders are sensitised about the scope of the result area for them to seize the opportunity.

Result 1.5 – Developing a Regional Fisheries Information Management System

The expected result is on standby as it is at a crossroads. Several regional multilateral organisations, such as FAO, UNEP-NC and UNESCO are engaged in developing interdisciplinary and cross-sector – coastal fisheries and ecosystems, land-based and marine pollution, climate change and Blue Economy meta database. AU-IBAR has established APRIFAAS (An African Platform for Regional Institutions for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Systems). Moreover, the result area overlaps other ECOFISH marine fisheries strategic actions, such as the sustainable development dashboard for the marine artisanal fisheries, the Blue Economy Fisheries Satellite Account, etc. Therefore, it needs to be reoriented.

Result 1.6 – Improved evidence-based fisheries policy-making and monitoring

Championed by COMESA, the strategic action is anchored in the Blue Economy Fisheries Satellite Account (BEFSA), a wealth management approach to mainstream the triple-bottom-line of sustainable development balanced by strong institutions and principles of good governance. It also considers external factors, such as biodiversity loss, climate change and inequalities. An interdisciplinary and multistakeholder workshop has validated a regional BEFSA framework. On the side-line of that event, an inter-agency consultative meeting was held in Kenya to plan the national chapter. In October last, the Kenya BEFSA was launched as an in-house initiative with the engagement of the parent Ministry and the Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI). The project is progressing satisfactorily so far. It is bound to be used as a model/case study for propagating the concept in other interested countries like Comoros, Seychelles and Madagascar. Moreover, following a request from COMESA, a regional (intensive) training workshop on operationalising BEFSA will be organised in the shortly.

Result 1.7 – Mainstreaming Climate adaptation in coastal fisheries

Climate change is a looming threat to fisheries ecosystems, fish production, and fishing communities' livelihood and well-being. Therefore, an inventory and assessment of the potential socio-economic impacts of climate change on the small-scale fisheries in the SWIO countries were completed. In addition, a multistakeholder workshop was held to validate the regional sensitivity and vulnerability of the framework.

A project document, including budget and operational modalities, has been finalised between the PMU and the Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI) for operationalising the Regional Fisheries-Climate Observatory. Finally, the initiative is ready to take off, and a regional inception workshop will be organised soon. It will engage the national marine fisheries research agencies of the SWIO region.

Building on the climate sensitivity and vulnerability assessment carried out in the preceding period, a call for interest has been launched to invite participating countries to seek technical assistance for mainstreaming climate adaptation and resilience building into their fisheries policies and management strategies.

Result 1.8 – Rehabilitation/Restoration of degraded coastal fisheries ecosystems

SADC champions this strategic action. However, its focus was limited to voluntary transboundary conservation initiatives in the WIO region. The project concept was presented at a regional virtual workshop hosted by SADC/GIZ and the SWIOFC Scientific Committee Session.

A call for interest has been launched to identify prospective public, private and non-state organisations to seek technical and financial assistance for ongoing projects.

Conclusions

To conclude, Result 1 activities have progressed considerably despite the relatively low expenditure. Several tasks were performed in-house, mainly by the FE/TL, amounting to significant savings. Moreover, the post of Fisheries Management Officer has been vacant since July 2022 and recruitment is in process. Over the next year, the

expected result will emphasise activating the National Chapter of the SWIO countries. In addition, IGAD will be motivated to roll out its prioritised activities as approved by its Regional Fisheries Coordination Platform.

Result 2 – Strengthened fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) capacities

Report on activities undertaken during 2022 and Q1 2023

MCS operations are a component of fisheries management at par with the policy and institutional frameworks, governance systems, strategies, and management plans. Therefore, the strategic actions of Result 1 and 2 are mutually enriching. The aim of Result 2 is to strengthen MCS capacities (enforcement and compliance functions) of beneficiary countries as a requisite to advance sustainable management of the shared and sedentary marine fisheries resources in the EA-SA-IO region.

The expected result covers the small-scale and the industrial fisheries that require a common but differentiated approach. It also facilitates regional sea and air patrol operations, human and technical capacity-building, and intra-and interagency collaboration exchange of secured strategic intelligence to combat, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing and fisheries-related crimes in the SWIO basin following the FAO and IOTC guidelines.

These activities are carried out in close collaboration with IOC-PRSP, the first Regional Action Plan to fight IUU fishing in all its forms, introduced as one of the EU flagships at the World Ocean Conference in 2018. Building upon the legacies of the EU DG MARE supports and SmartFish programme over the past 15 years, E€COFISH is now committed to strategizing PRSP as a multi-functional and cost-effective **Regional MCS Coordination Centre** within the IOC institutional ecosystem.

It is also essential to acknowledge the contribution of the European Fisheries Control Agency for its expert advice and Reunion Island for mobilising additional financial resources through ERDF/INTERREG to undertake regular fisheries surveillance patrol in the PRSP participation zone.

There have been some unexpected gaps in the continuity of PRSP operations during the SmartFish-E€COFISH transition that have been patched up promptly to reinstate IOC-PRSP as a Regional Centre of Excellence. As a result, some achievements and milestones passed by Result 2 to date are as follows:

- ✓ MSV Osiris II was deployed for two regional fisheries patrols and on-board capacity-building in collaboration with La Reunion/France with ERDF/INTERREG funding.
- ✓ The regional VMS based at the IOC Secretariat is reactivated, and the contract with the service provider is renewed. As a result, the exchange of VMS information among

- the National Competent Authorities is on. Designated room has been provided by IOC for the regional VMS and PRSP. AIS data will be procure soon, as an additional tool for risk analysis.
- ✓ All seven eligible country's applications have been approved and received their prefinancement. The beneficiary countries can now utilise the funding to synergise their human and technical capabilities and plan joint regional fisheries surveillance missions over the next three years. Three regional missions have been used the grant funds.
 - ✓ Building on the recommendation of the PRSP Ministerial Conference 2017 and a cross-disciplinary technical study conducted by SmartFish, the consultation on the institutionalising PRSP started with a high-level multi-stakeholder meeting in Seychelles in October 2021. This multi-stakeholder meeting, (the ERCU) paved the way forward for the institutionalisation, with several recommendations to be completed before the next fisheries ministerial meeting planned on Q3 2023.
 - ✓ After a five year process the IOC Council of Ministers approved Somalia's integration to PRSP in the IOC mechanism with advice of a progressive approach, starting with fisheries information exchanges and capacity building actions.
 - ✓ A MoU between PRSP and EFCA to strengthen technical and strategic alliance between the two MCS Centres is under signature. The service contract will involve activities under strategic action 2.5 and 2.7, respectively catch certification and traceability and risks assessment.
 - ✓ PRSP is back on track regarding its collaborative relationship with the regional fisheries organisations, such as IOTC, SWIOFC, SIOFA, and other regional MCS and maritime security-related initiatives, including the two regional coordination centres of the EU MASE programme (maritime security) and SADC MCS Coordinating Centre in Mozambique.
 - ✓ Two national and regional observer assignments are completed. One to understand the present status of National Observer Programme (NOP) and regional Observer Programme (ROP) in the region including development of electronic observer monitoring system (EMS) in the region. This will evolve into assisting countries to develop NOP and ROP. Secondly the development of Standard operating procedures (SOP) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) and information sharing procedure that will serves as the foundation of setting up NOP and ROP in the region.

The medium to long term objective is to assist countries with their NOP and set up a regional observer deployment coordination programme in the SWIO region.

2023 Action plan

- ✓ The below table defines activities planned for 2023. The list may be exhaustive, but efforts will be put to realise the plan in an effort to catch up with lost time due to COVID -19 snags and complication to proceed with most activities.

ACTIVITIES		CALENDAR MONTHS 2023											
		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
RESULT 2: Strengthening the capacity to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in the EA-SA-IO region Specific to Marine fisheries: Strengthening the capacity to fight IUU fishing in the Indian Ocean region through improved regional coordination mechanisms													
Strategic Action 2.1: Support inter-regional (at regional level), inter-agency and inter-governmental MCS cooperation, coordination and harmonisation processes in the EA-SA-IO in view of more effective fight against IUU fishing at regional level													
2.1.1.1	Technical supports to the existing WG and regulatory/enforcement national institutions actively engaged against IUU fishing												
2.1.1.2	Specific TA supports in MCS to the Participating States and RFBs												
2.1.1.3	MCS assessment and scorecard for periodical assessment												
2.1.2.1	Facilitate the participation of key stakeholders of the Region in MCS to international fora (OOC etc)												
	National MCS interagency												

2.1.9.2	Assist PRSP Participating States to organise (including publicising and monitoring) regional joint patrols (earmarked under direct management) in the zone of cooperation												
2.1.9.3	Ministerial Meetings												
2.1.9.4	Meetings of the Regional Coordination Units												
2.1.9.5	Review of the governance structure of the PRSP												
Strategic Action 2.2: Support the exchange of experience and the development of coordinated approaches to improve MCS of artisanal and semi-artisanal vessels targeting shared marine resources													
2.2.1.1	Country specific capacity building through the provision of equipment and logistics												
2.2.2.2	Awareness raising and sensitization campaigns												
2.2.3.1	Capacity building programme for National MCS Units on ad hoc basis												
Strategic Action 2.3: Facilitate the interoperability of systems and exchange of data at (sub)regional level													
2.3.4.1	Web based platform												
Strategic Action 2.4: Support capacity building for regionally harmonised Enforcement, Compliance and Prosecution procedures in the fisheries sector – including support to the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement													

2.4.1.1	A Needs Assessment to be undertaken in view of coherence of the legal procedures												
2.4.1.2	Capacity Building programme for trainers, inspectors, observers, officers and legal personnel												
Strategic Action 2.5: Provide capacity building and technical assistance on certification and traceability schemes													
2.5.1.1	One regional training workshop with support of relevant institutions / agencies and STE-TAT contract					EFCA MoU							
2.5.2.1	Capacity building in traceability												
Strategic Action 2.6: Encourage synergies with other regional initiatives including marine security programmes													
2.6.1.1	Technical support for exchange of information for security issues							finalise Mou				WS	
2.6.3.1	Harmonise fisheries MCS tools and processes with those of EU-funded MASE programme												
Strategic Action 2.7: Establishment of a regional risk assessment framework with support of EFCA through a twinning programme													
2.7.2.1	Establishment of a Risk Assessment Methodology and SOPs					EFCA MoU							
2.7.2.2	A Service contract Agreement will be signed with EFCA to undertake activities earmarked under result 2												
	regional workshop												

RESULT 3: CONCRETE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN SMALL-SCALE INLAND AND MARINE FISHERIES SUPPORTED.

Technical monitoring and coordination assistance were provided to the nine flagships (five maritime and four inland) resulting from a successful call for proposals for grants awarded to projects leading to Programme Result 3, spread across the EA-SA-IO region. A regional mechanism for sharing knowledge, practical experiences and developing best practices are in place and operational.

Based on periodic performance reviews, virtual interactions and audio-visual communications, these projects are on track. E€OFISH mid-term evaluation mission confirms so. So far, only five projects (UNDP Mauritius, C3 Madagascar, Mwambao in Zanzibar, WWF Kenya and Action Aid Zambia) have been visited. Therefore, further site visits will be undertaken by a representative of EUD Mauritius and the TAT to the other four projects in the coming semester.

These projects are expected to conduct their own external mid-term evaluation, providing a deeper understanding of these model projects' reality, prospects and exit strategies.

Ecopêche – OI, promoted by local fishing associations and social enterprises in La Reunion (France), in collaboration with the TAT, is considered a 10th project contributing to Result 3 in the programme region, having a different funding source (EDRF). However, it is not progressing as swiftly due to a delay in the new funding programme of ERDF.

COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The communication and visibility structure started to be fully operational in 2021. For 2022, activities under this component focused on stakeholder **engagement** and **awareness**, while ensuring that **E€OFISH becomes a reference in the fishing sector**. This approach was adopted to ensure as many fisheries stakeholders as possible can **join, support, promote and adopt the Programme's actions to bring about positive change** in the region.

E€OFISH website now records more than 1,000 visits per month (3,441 for 2022 last quarter); 895 people voluntarily signed up for the newsletter; 6,077 people follow E€OFISH Facebook account; the number of appearances of an ECOFISH link as a search result on Google has increased by 26.95% (from 2,820 to 3,580).

As part of the progress in public engagement, E€OFISH **target audiences have now begun to participate in promoting and raising awareness on sustainable fishing issues in the region**. Following the training sessions for journalists and E€OFISH implementing partners, the media coverage of the initiatives and topics covered by the programme has substantially increased. Over 125 media materials mentioned ECOFISH during 2022 ([see list of media material](#)

[links](#)), with an overall average of 2.28 articles per week, as opposed to 2021, with an average of 0.94 article per week.

In addition, through the interactions promoted among stakeholders, the **programme is becoming a fisheries reference in Africa**, and EEOFISH and its website are increasingly associated with activities related to sustainable fishing. While the website only appeared in the first 10 search results with the keyword "ECOFISH" at the end of 2021, today it is associated with the keywords "sustainable fishing Africa" and appears 1st ranked in the region and 16th worldwide. This proves that the programme is increasingly recognized for its contribution to sustainable fishing.

EEOFISH team also began to **work on its achievements sustainability**. In anticipation of the end of the Programme, its website has been revamped (www.ecofish-programme.org) to align with the Content Management System (CMS) of the IOC. This will allow an easy migration of all data from EEOFISH to IOC website at no additional cost when the Programme is over.

Finally, special attention was also given to **strengthen the capacities of the organizations and institutions working for the fisheries sector**, beyond the lifespan of EEOFISH. Among other things, LTA and LVFO have been equipped with the tools that will allow them to communicate better, not only during the duration of the programme, but even after it ends.

With this in mind, the following communication and visibility efforts have been undertaken as regards the 5 work plans of EEOFISH Programme:

- *Work Plan 1: LVFO*
 - ECOFISH-LVFO's website was launched: <https://lvfo.org/node/133>;
 - LVFO introduced the 7th Newsletter of ECOFISH and two (2) articles related to LVFO were featured in 2 newsletters;
 - LVFO's works are showcased through ECOFISH's communication channels (website, newsletter, social media...).
- *Work Plan 2: LTA*
 - ECOFISH-LTA's website was launched (<https://latafima.org/fr/bienvenue/>);
 - LTA's works are also showcased through ECOFISH's communication channels (website, newsletter, social media...);
 - LTA's branding guidelines were drafted and approved ([see guidelines](#));
 - LTA's human resources profile to assist in communication, knowledge management and IT management has been drafted through ToR submitted to LTA ([see ToR](#));
 - Consultations were carried out with LTA's stakeholders for the development of a communication strategy ([see data received up to now](#)).
- *Work Plan 3: Marine fisheries*
 - The visibility and proper communication of the following initiatives were ensured:
 1. Launching of the Blue Economy Fisheries Satellite Account (BEFSA): <https://www.ecofish-programme.org/befsa-1>;

2. Validation of the reports on fisheries management plans and the redefinition and characterisation of small-scale fisheries: <https://www.ecofish-programme.org/fmp>;
3. Workshop to set up a regional network to assess and mitigate the impact of climate change on small-scale, launch the Regional Coordination Platform and initiate the Regional Fisheries Coordination Platform: <https://www.ecofish-programme.org/cc>;
4. Event to end the 57th regional patrol of PRSP: <https://lagazettedescomores.com/soci%C3%A9t%C3%A9/fin-de-la-57%C3%A8me-patrouille-r%C3%A9gionale-de-surveillance-des-p%C3%A0ches-.html>;
5. Launching of the Blue Economy Fisheries Satellite Account (BEFSA) in Kenya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmOLYCX6vPU>;
6. Second workshop of the IGAD's Fisheries and Blue Economy Coordination platform: <https://igad.int/igad-strives-for-a-better-coordination-of-sustainable-fisheries-initiatives/>;
7. Materials and equipment delivery to inspectors from countries participating in the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Plan: <https://mbradio.tv/article/le-journal-t%C3%A9l%C3%A9vis%C3%A9-%E2%80%93-decembre-12-2022>

- Euro news Oceans documentary series showcased the activities of the PRSP: [https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/06/21/how-a-european-project-is-reducing-illegal-fishing-in-the-western-indian-ocean](https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/06/21/how-a-european-project-is-reducing-illegal-fishing-in-the-western-indian-ocean;);

- Over 350 photos and 1,000 video footages related to Results 1 and 2 were added to the photobank and video bank;
- For PRSP 15th year, a retrospective video is being finalized, and over 100 photos and 50 video footages related to Results 1 & 2 were added to the photo and video banks.

- *Work Plan 4: Demonstration Projects*

- 22 field stories are now available online: <https://www.ecofish-programme.org/stories>;
- The activities of the 9 demonstration projects are showcased on the various communication channels of ECOFISH: website, newsletter, social media, traditional media...;
- A video showcasing the impact of the ECOFISH ADPP has been finalized and the edition of another one for the ECOFISH-ActionAid Project in Zambia is ongoing. A script to showcase the impact of the ECOFISH-IGAD Project in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya was approved and video shooting will start.

- *Work Plan 5: Cross-cutting Activities*

- The media advocacy training for implementing partners was completed.
- A network of journalists specializing in sustainable fisheries has been set up.
- The website and website indexing were enhanced.

- ECOFISH community on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn is growing.
- 4 newsletters have been edited and released.
- Seven (7) press releases relating to ECOFISH have been issued
- Administrative procedures for a framework contract for programme contents editing and translation has being initiated.
- ECOFISH website was revamped
- All ECOFISH’s visibility material were produced and delivered.

Overall, the activities implementation and budget consumption of the Communication and Visibility component are on track. One year and 9 months before the end of ECOFISH, **around 26% of the budget has been disbursed and 56% committed.**

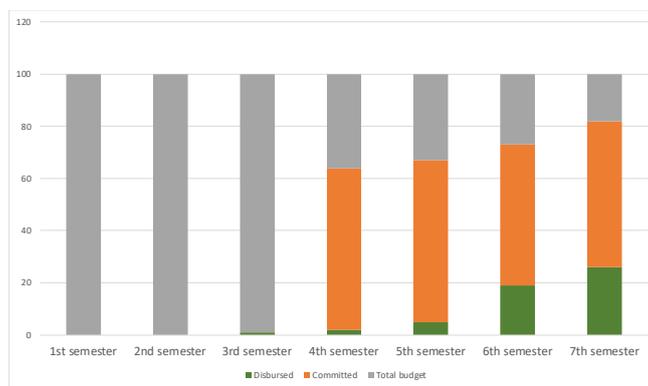


Figure 1: ECOFISH communication & Visibility activities implementation and budget consumption

As regard the activities, out of **28 activities planned, 6 have been completed, 19 are ongoing and 4 remain to be initiated.**

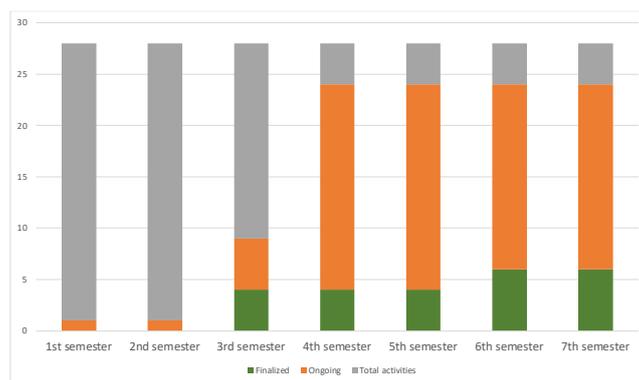
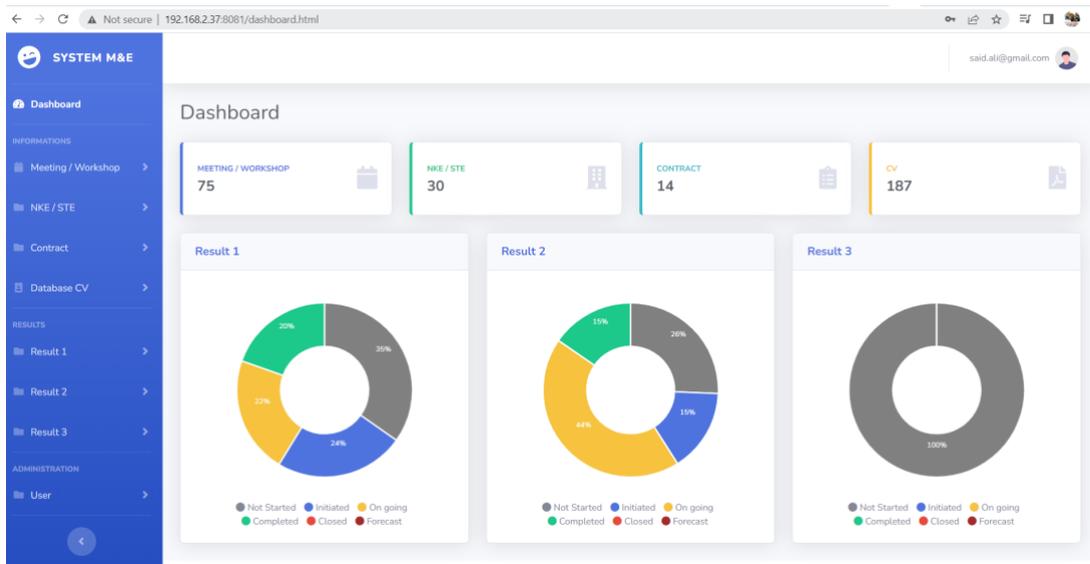


Figure 2: ECOFISH communication and visibility activities implementation status

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND DATABASE MANAGEMENT

The activities under this component (information technology and database management) focused on the implementation of information technology tools. The following were delivered:

- A monitoring and evaluation system for Ecofish programme activities has been created and operationalised.



- Inventory and launch of the Regional Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) completed.
- The StarFish database has been reactivated and work is in progress on its use by countries.
- The Ecofish programme information management and data archiving strategy are now operational.
- The Regional Coordination Mechanism application is now completed and the phase 2 of this application is underway.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The budget execution as of February 2023 is € 1,813,137.35 (18%), while the financial engagement amounts to € 2,143,526 (21%). The third year saw a significant increase in expenditures due to the implementation of activities under Results 1 and 2. The borders of most countries were opened in 2022, allowing ECOFISH activities to reach the site of our beneficiary states. We remind the committee that 70% of the Programme Estimate budget is allocated to workshops and seminars for working sessions, validation of activities and creation of awareness.

Although there has been an improvement in the recruitment of consultants, we have still experienced failures in the tender procedures for some activities. This is due to the cumbersome procedures for a single bidding threshold, as well as the unavailability of experts for specific periods.

As the project reaches its mid-term, it is necessary to reallocate financial resources to reflect on the new strategic reorientation of activities. The ipmu will, for this purpose, submit a new budget to the committee for approval.

