

Report of the Second Meeting of the Project Steering Committee (2-PSC) of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

**5-6 March 2026
Palawan, Philippines**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), through the Regional Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project convened the Second Meeting of the Project Steering Committee (2-PSC), hosted by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines (BFAR/PH), from 5 to 6 March 2026, in Palawan, Philippines. The Project is funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), implemented by the World Wildlife Fund, Inc (WWF-US), which serves as the GEF Implementing Agency. The Project execution is carried out by three agencies: SEAFDEC, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines (BFAR/PH), and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam (DFiS/VN).

2. The 2-PSC was attended in person by the PSC members who represented the Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines, the Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP), and SEAFDEC Secretariat. The Meeting also included observers from senior officials and officers from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, the SEAFDEC/Aquaculture Department (AQD), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines, while the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS) of Viet Nam and WWF US and WWF Philippines, as observers joined through online platform. The List of Participants appears in **Annex 1**.

3. The objectives of the 2-PSC were (1) to review the progress of project implementation following the arrangements and resolutions adopted during the 1-PSC Meeting, (2) to receive updates on the completion of pending actions, including the status of the Grant Agreement of Viet Nam and implementation of agreed contingency measures to address project delays, (3) to assess improvements in coordination mechanisms among SEAFDEC PMU, National PMUs, and WWF-US to ensure timely reporting and compliance with GEF requirements, (4) to review and adopt the revised composition of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) members in the Terms of Reference (ToR), (5) to review updates and refinements to the Gender Action Plan and stakeholder engagement strategies to strengthen gender mainstreaming and inclusive participation, (6) to review and approve the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) Year 3 of SEAFDEC PMU and AWPB Year 2 of BFAR/PH, prior to submission to WWF-US for final approval, (7) review and adopt the

knowledge management and communication and M&E plan of the project, and (8) to provide strategic guidance and recommendations to ensure effective, timely, and results based implementation of the Project moving forward.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. *Ms. Imelda R. Calixto*, Alternate PSC Member for the Philippines, in her capacity as the Chairperson on behalf of the Undersecretary for Fisheries, Department of Agriculture, *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*, the PSC member for the Philippines warmly welcomed the participants to Palawan. She highlighted the importance of advancing sustainable seaweed aquaculture in Southeast Asia and reiterated that the shared commitments of each partner to implementing this Project would strengthen sustainable seaweed value chains, improve fisherfolk livelihoods, and protect marine ecosystems through strong regional collaboration. Her Welcome Remarks appear in **Annex 2**.

5. The SEAFDEC Secretary-General and PSC Member for SEAFDEC, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, welcomed the participants to the 2-PSC. In her opening remarks, she emphasized the importance of convening the meeting as part of the GEF-supported initiative jointly executed by SEAFDEC, DA-BFAR, and DFiS of Viet Nam, with WWF US serving as the GEF Implementing Agency. She highlighted the project's significance in advancing sustainable seaweed aquaculture, enhancing ecosystem services, and strengthening coastal community livelihoods across the region. Emphasizing the rationale and importance of the 2-PSC, she underscored that the guidance and collective expertise of PSC members would help ensure effective implementation and promote collaborative and gender-responsive approaches throughout the project. She concluded by expressing her hope for productive discussions and successful outcomes of the meeting. Her opening remarks appear in **Annex 3**.

II. INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES, AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM) for the “Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture” Project, *Mr. Muhamad Nour* presented the objectives, expected outputs, and proposed agenda of the 2-PSC. After his presentation, the PSC adopted the agenda. The prospectus appears in **Annex 4**, and the agenda of the 2-PSC appears in **Annex 5**.

III. PROJECT UPDATES AND ACHIEVEMENT

8. The National Focal Point for the Philippines, *Ms. Ida T. Capacio*, presented the project updates from BFAR, highlighting two components of the project under BFAR's

components: Component 2, improving the enabling environment for seaweed aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam, and Component 3, enhancing seaweed value chains. BFAR also has small activities under Component 4 on advancing knowledge management and monitoring which cross cutting with SEAFDEC PMU. The presentation outlined the project budget as well as the identified pilot sites in Roxas, Palawan and Buenavista, Zamboanga City. Key start-up activities include recruitment of the National Project Management Unit (N-PMU), financial arrangements, and coordination with partners, including SEAFDEC are currently undertaking. Her presentation appears in **Annex 6**.

9. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, provided an update on the project's progress and key achievements. In his presentation, he highlighted the progress of the project during Year 2 under Components 1 and 4 implemented by the SEAFDEC PMU. He noted that the implementation of the Year 2 work plan for the SEAFDEC component is on track and the SEAFDEC PMU will submit the Year 3 work plan, covering the period of July 2026 to June 2027, by April 2026.¹⁰ The PM also reported progress under Component 1, particularly Output 1.1.1, where the establishment of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG) has been completed. The project will proceed with the recruitment of consultants to develop the Guide and Principles for sustainable seaweed aquaculture under Outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.3, and 1.1.4, in close collaboration with SEAFDEC/AQD.

11. Meanwhile, under Component 4, the PM shared updates on the establishment of the PSC, the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan, and the finalization of the Gender Action Plan as well as the Knowledge Management and Communication Plan. He also reported that the project website has been developed and is now fully operational. In collaboration with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the project will organize M&E and Communication training sessions in April 2026. His presentation appears in **Annex 7**.

12. The PSC Member for SEAFDEC, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat* sought clarification on signing the grant agreement and the timeline for Viet Nam. The representative from DFIS responded that Viet Nam is still under the organizational changes, and she would try to expedite the signing once the project document is approved by the relevant agencies.

12. After discussion, the PSC took note of the Project Updates and Achievements.

IV. FOLLOW-UP ON KEY DECISIONS OF THE 1-PSC

12. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Follow-up on Key Decisions that include (1) Completion of Viet Nam Grant Agreement,

(2) Circulation of 1-PSC Report, and (3) Coordination Improvement with WWF GEF. His presentation appears in **Annex 8**.

13. The PSC Member for SIAP, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa*, sought clarification on the status of the grant agreement of Viet Nam that was supposed to be signed based on the agreement in the 1-PSC meeting. In this regard, the PM responded that Viet Nam has not yet signed the agreement. Later, the representative from Viet Nam provided an update that the Draft of Grant Agreement was submitted in November 2025 to the Vice Minister and he directed the establishment of an appraisal council on December 17, 2025 to finalize the draft grant agreement. Based on the Chair of the Council, DFiS was requested to collect comments from the relevant ministries and local authorities participating in the project. Currently, the project document has been submitted to the Vice Minister, who will review and finalize the Agreement.

14. The PM shared the input from Rachel of WWF-US on the 1-PSC that GEF has no policy on the delay signature of the agreement from the participating country, and she suggested following the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review (MTR), which is scheduled to be conducted in September 2026.

15. The PSC Member from SIAP, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa*, noted that the Grant Agreement with Viet Nam has not yet been signed and raised concerns about the differing implementation status among the executing agencies. He asked how the project intends to address this situation. In response, the PM explained that a possible option would be to request a no-cost extension and adjust the project timeline accordingly. He further noted that the formal mechanism for such adjustments would be through the Mid-Term Review (MTR). WWF US will be responsible to develop the Terms of Reference and hire consultant to conduct the MTR. PSC members will also be invited to participate in the MTR process and may be interviewed by the consultant.

16. The Chief of SEAFDEC/AQD, *Mr. Dan Baliao*, sought clarification on the mechanism of amendment of the project timeframe. The PM responded that the framework could be adjusted based on the result and recommendation from the MTR.

17. The PSC Member for SEAFDEC, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, expressed that she understands the situation regarding the different of the timeline of each executing agency on project signing. She expressed her expectation that Viet Nam could sign the agreement soon. She also expected that the PSC members could provide recommendations and suggestions during the MTR.

18. After the presentation, the PSC adopt of key decisions of the 1-PSC. The report of the 1-PSC appears in **Annex 9**.

V. REVISE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

19. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the current Terms of Reference (ToR) and highlighted several concerns and challenges related to convening PSC meetings. He invited PSC members to review the existing provisions and provide suggestions on whether revisions may be necessary. In particular, he noted that the current ToR specifies the names of individual PSC members under the composition section and sought the members' views on whether the ToR should instead remain flexible by referring only to the names of the respective organizations.

20. The PSC Member from SIAP, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa*, suggested to include the names of each designated PSC member. In response, the PM clarified that the Project Document specifies only the names of the institutions representing the PSC members. *Mr. Pedrosa* then proposed listing the institutions while indicating their designated representative and alternate members.

21. The PSC Member from SEAFDEC, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, shared her views that the name of the authorized person could be included, followed by alternate members. In addition, the PSC members agreed on the suggestion to specify the institution agency followed by the names of primary and alternate members.

22. Meanwhile, the representative from Viet Nam informed the meeting of the recent restructuring of the ministerial government, in which the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture were merged to form the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment. She explained that, following this restructuring, the mandate for the aquaculture program now falls under the authority of the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS). She further requested the inclusion of two (2) members from DFiS Viet Nam to ensure balanced representation in the PSC alongside the Philippines.

23. The PSC agreed that this request is pending until Viet Nam signs the Grant Agreement and receives no objection from WWF US. Later on, DFiS can resume serving as a formal member of the PSC.

24. Regarding the schedule of the PSC Meeting, the PSC Member from SIAP, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa*, suggested that the scheduling of PSC meetings could follow either an annual or biannual arrangement, provide flexibility while allow additional ad hoc meetings to be convened as necessary. In response, the PM explained that holding the annual PSC meeting in March would be ideal, as each executing agency is required to submit the approved AWPB to WWF-US no later than 30 April. This timing would allow PSC members to review the draft AWPB and provide approval prior to its final submission to WWF-US.

25. In addition, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa* raised a point during the quorum discussion at the PSC Meeting, noting that Viet Nam should be counted as a member if the quorum requirement is set at 80% of PSC members. In response, the Chairperson, *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*, clarified that since Viet Nam has not yet signed the Grant Agreement, the quorum will be calculated based on 80% of the current signatory parties, which presently include the Philippines and SEAFDEC. She further noted that the quorum arrangement may be adjusted once Viet Nam signs the agreement. Consequently, Viet Nam's participation status was designated as "observer" until the Grant Agreement is formally signed.

26. The PSC agreed to revise the agenda as suggested. The revised version is shown in **Annex 10**.

VI. UPDATE ON CONTINGENCY PLANS AND REVISED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINES

27. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Update on Contingency Plans and Revised Implementation Timelines. In his presentation, he updated the current status that Viet Nam has not yet signed the agreement, SEAFDEC is currently implementing AWPB Year 2, and is proposing AWPB Year 3 to be submitted by April 2026. Meanwhile, BFAR is implementing AWPB Year 1 and will submit AWPB Year 2. The PM also informed that WWF US is responsible for conducting the Mid-term Review (MTR). The WWF US will draft the ToR for MMTR approximately by May 2026, hire the consultant, and conduct the MTR in September 2026. The PM also provided a situation analysis on the current implementation status by component and activities. He suggested establishing communication and coordination protocols to improve problem-solving and accelerate project activities. His presentation appears in **Annex 11**.

28. The PSC took note of the contingency plans and the implementation timeline.

VII. SEAWEED TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (1-STWG) PROGRESS AND UPDATES

29. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the progress and updates of Seaweed Technical Working Group (1-STWG). In his presentation, he refreshed the key activities under Component 1 that include the development of Guide, and Principle and toolkits, including training activities. He outlined that Component 1 is technically supported by SEAFDEC/AQD and will work together with the consultant to ensure national interests are reflected in the Guide and Principles. He updated the PSC Members that the SEAFDEC PMU is in the process of recruiting consultants to develop the target outputs under Component 1. The ToR of the consultant to develop the

Guide has been approved by WWF-US. The PM also shared the plans for the 2nd S-TWG meeting to be organized in Bangkok from 20-21 April 2026.

30. After the deliberation, the PSC took note of the S-TWG progress and updates, which appear in **Annex 12**.

VIII. MONITORING & EVALUATION (M&E) MATRIX REVISIONS AND REPORTING COMPLIANCE

31. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan. In his presentation, the PM shared an overview of the M&E framework that aligns with the Grant Agreement and the project results framework, as well as gender mainstreaming strategies. The M&E plan has included means of verification, data collection tools, and the deliverable and reporting schedule. The SEAFDEC PMU will train N-PMUs in the Philippines and Viet Nam on how to collect data using M&E Plan. The first training will be conducted in April 2026 for N-PMU personnel of the Philippines. His presentation appears in **Annex 13**.

32. The PSC Member from SIAP, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa*, suggested to look at the details of the M&E Plan. The Chairperson responded in the next meeting that PM will show the preliminary results in the M&E matrix.

33. After the presentations, the PSC took note Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

IX. STRENGTHENING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP) AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)

34. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the strengthening of the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). He noted that project activities are being tracked by components and outputs, including the collection of gender-disaggregated data. He also highlighted that the Gender Action Plan is integrated into the M&E training, which includes an introduction to gender equality and social inclusion. In addition, gender considerations will be incorporated into communication training, with specific focus on gender-sensitive and gender-responsive knowledge management and communication plans. His presentation appears in **Annex 14**.

35. After the presentation, the PSC took note of the update to the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) as presented.

X. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET (AWPB)

36. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the proposed activities under SEAFDEC's responsibility for Component 1 and Component 4. Under AWPB Year 3, Component 1 will focus on finalizing the Guide and Principles as well as the training sessions in collaboration with SEAFDEC/AQD and members of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG), prior to submission to the SEAFDEC Governing Council for final approval. Subsequently, activities will concentrate on capacity building through training using toolkits developed based on the Guide and Principles. The PM also presented the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of Component 1. Meanwhile, under AWPB Year 3, Component 4 will focus on disseminating the project's good practices, organizing the PSC Meeting and the Pause and Reflection Workshop, and submitting project progress reports in accordance with the deliverables agreed in the Grant Agreement. His presentation appears in **Annex 15**.

37. The National Focal Point of the project from BFAR, *Ms. Ida Capacio*, presented the current activities of BFAR under AWPB Year 1. However, as the National Project Management Unit (N-PMU) has not yet been fully established and the Project Manager has not yet been recruited, BFAR was only able to provide a preliminary overview of the proposed activities for AWPB Year 2. BFAR therefore requested the organization of an ad hoc PSC meeting, to be held online, to review and approve the AWPB Year 2 of the N-PMU Philippines once the Project Manager has been recruited.

38. After presentation, the PSC approved AWPB Year 3 of SEAFDEC PMU and took note of BFAR's request to organize an ad hoc PSC meeting to approve AWPB Year 2 of the N-PMU Philippines.

XI. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

39. The Project Manager and Technical Officer, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Knowledge Management and Communication Plan, which aims to guide the project in developing coordinated communication products, tools, and outreach activities. The plan is intended to inform target audiences and the public about the project's implementation, while highlighting its good practices and key achievements. The plan is aligned with the GEF Communication Policy and IW:LEARN guidelines, and has incorporated inputs from BFAR and WWF-US. His presentation appears in **Annex 16**.

40. After the presentation, the PSC took note of the Knowledge Management and Communication Plan.

XII. FINANCIAL PROGRESS AND AUDIT COMPLIANCE

41. The Project Manager and Technical Adviser, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the project's financial progress and audit compliance. He informed the PSC that the SEAFDEC

PMU is in the process of engaging an audit firm to conduct the project's financial audit, scheduled for April–May 2026, with the audit report to be submitted to WWF-US in June 2026. He also presented the project's total expenditures and the remaining balance for each component, and confirmed the timely submission of quarterly financial reports as well as adherence to the AWPB timeline.

42. During the discussion, the PSC Member from SIAP, *Mr. Alfredo A. Pedrosa*, recommended providing information on the audit firm to enhance the credibility of the audit findings. In response, the PM explained that the PMU will engage a qualified audit firm in accordance with WWF's audit policy and in compliance with U.S. auditing standards, as specified in the Grant Agreement. His presentation appears in **Annex 17**.

42. After the presentation, the PSC took note of the Financial Progress and Audit Compliance.

XIII. ENDORSEMENT OF DECISIONS AND NEXT STEPS

43. The PSC endorsed the following decisions and next steps:

- PSC agreed on the need to accelerate the finalization of the Grant Agreement in Viet Nam.
- PSC agreed to revise several key provisions of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the PSC.
- PSC agreed to organize PSC meeting via online in April 2026 to review and approve the AWPB Year 2 of the N-PMU Philippines.
- PSC also supported the organization of M&E and Communication Training to strengthen project implementation.
- In addition, PSC agreed to convene an ad hoc PSC meeting in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, in July 2026.

XIV. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

44. In closing the 2-PSC, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, expressed sincere appreciation to all PSC members, observers, and partners for their active engagement and constructive contributions during the two-day deliberations. She highlighted the progress made in strengthening the project's implementation direction, including the consolidated work plan and budget, gender and stakeholder engagement strategies, and proposed contingency measures to address potential delays. She also thanked the participating countries, collaborating organizations, and SEAFDEC staff for their

dedication in ensuring the smooth conduct of the meeting, emphasizing that the outcomes would guide the project into its next phase and reinforce collaboration among SEAFDEC, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Department of Fisheries Surveillance (DFiS), and WWF US. Her remarks appear in **Annex 18**.

45. OIC-Regional Director, *Mr. Roberto R. Abrera*, delivered his remarks, reiterating the importance of the PSC mechanism in guiding the executing agencies in project implementation and emphasizing the need to accelerate the agreement process in Vietnam to ensure balanced implementation of the project. He then officially declared the meeting closed. His closing remarks appear in **Annex 19**.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PHILIPPINES

<p>Drusila Esther E. Bayate (Ms.) Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of Agriculture and PSC Member</p>	<p>Department of Agriculture Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, 1100, Philippines E-mail: debayate@da.gov.ph usecfish@da.gov.ph</p>
<p>Imelda R. Calixto (Ms.) Chief, and Alternate PSC Member</p>	<p>Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Division Email: ifadco@bfar.da.gov.ph Icalixto2021@gmail.com</p>
<p>Hiyas C. De Guzman (Ms.) Ecosystems Management Specialist II, and PSC Member</p>	<p>Management Bureau Department of Environment and Natural Resources E-mail: osec@denr.gov.ph hiyas.deguzman@bmb.gov.ph</p>
<p>Alfredo A. Pedrosa III Chairman of Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP) and PSC Member</p>	<p>Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines 935 San Jose St. Mauway, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila Philippines Tel: (+63) 0917-884-1226 E-mail: aapiii7773@yahoo.com</p>

SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SEAFDEC)

Secretariat

<p>Sampan Panjarat (Ms.) Secretary-General and PSC Member</p>	<p>P.O. Box 1046, Kasetsart Post Office Bangkok 10903, Thailand E-mail: sg@seafdec.org</p>
<p>Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn (Ms.) Policy and Program Coordinator</p>	<p>E-mail: pattaratjit@seafdec.org</p>
<p>Muhamad Nour Project Manager/ Technical Advisor of the Blue Horizon Seaweed Project</p>	<p>E-mail: muhamad@seafdec.org</p>

Onjira Korboon (Ms.)
Policy and Program Officer-II

E-mail: onjira@seafdec.org

Thanitta Sookklam (Ms.)
Administrative Officer

E-mail: thanitta@seafdec.org

Aquaculture Department (AQD)

Dan D. Baliao
Department Chief

Brgy. Buyu-an, Tigbauan, Iloilo,
5021, Philippines
Tel: + 63 033 330-7010
E-mail: dbaliao@seafdec.org.ph

Joseph Polido Faisan Jr.
Technical Specialist

Tel: + 63 956 058 9214
E-mail: jfaisan@seafdec.org.ph

OBSERVERS

Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)

Ida T. Capacio (Ms.)
Center Chief
National Seaweeds Technology
Development Center

Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
(BFAR)
Quezon City, Philippines
Tel: (+63) 0998-889-9214
E-mail: icapacio@bfar.da.gov.ph

Rhoda S. Bacordo (Ms.)
Alternate SEAFDEC National
Coordinator for the Philippines

E-mail: rbacordo@bfar.da.gov.ph

Elymi Ar-J S. Tunacao (Ms.)
SEAFDEC National
Coordinator for the Philippines

E-mail: etunacao@bfar.da.gov.ph

BFAR MIMAROPA Region

Roberto R. Abrera
Regional Director / Regional Seaweed Focal,
Regional Fisheries Office

Department of Agriculture, Bureau of
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)
Brgy. Guinobatan, Calapan City, Philippines
E-mail: records.mimaropa@bfar.da.gov.ph

Rosalie S. Masinas (Ms.)
Alternate Regional Seaweed Focal

ONLINE

Rachel Kaplan (Ms.)
Director,
WWF-US

World Wildlife Fund, INC.
WWF GEF Agency
1250 24th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Email: Rachel.Kaplan@wwfus.org

Luz Baskinas (Ms.)
Director of Project Development
WWF Philippines

WWF-Philippines Headquarters
4/F JBD Plaza 65 Mindanao Avenue,
Barangay Bagong Pag-Asa,
Quezon City 1105
Email: lbaskinas@wwf.org.ph

Nguyen Vu Mai Anh (Ms.)
Officer, Aquaculture Division

Department of Fisheries and Surveillance
10 Nguyen Cong Hoan, Giarg Vo Ward
Hanoi, Viet Nam
E-mail: nvmaianh@gmail.com
nvmanh2@mae.gov.vn

Secretariat of the Meeting

Lindsay Ann I. Gabriel (Ms.)
Technical staff, Enhanced Philippine
Seaweed Development Program

Department of Agriculture, Bureau of
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)
Quezon City, Philippines
E-mail: lindsayanngabriel@gmail.com

Madelyn L. Aguilar (Ms.)
Technical staff, Enhanced Philippine
Seaweed Development Program

E-mail: ncu_sdp@bfar.da.gov.ph

Von-Klent J. Opiana
Technical staff, Enhanced Philippine
Seaweed Development Program

E-mail: klentopiana.epsdp@gmail.com

Richard Manlapaz
Technical staff, Information and Fisherfolk
Coordination Unit

E-mail: richardmanlapaz93@gmail.com

Neil S. Farodaldane
Technical staff, Inland Fisheries
and Aquaculture Division

E-mail: neilfarofaldane.bfar@gmail.com

Rhea N. Elemento (Ms.)
Aquaculturist

E-mail: elementorhea@gmail.com

JC Terrenz P. Cuario
Technical staff
Provincial Fishery Office Northern Palawan

Department of Agriculture, Bureau of
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)
MIMAROPA Region
Brgy. Tagumpay, Coron, Palawan
E-mail: pfonorthpal@gmail.com

Project Steering Committee Meeting Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture

5 March 2026, Coron, Palawan, Philippines

OPENING REMARKS

By Ms. USEC. DRUSILA ESTHER E. BAYATE

Opening Message

To our valued partners from the Global Environment Facility, WWF-US, SEAFDEC, distinguished members of the Project Steering Committee, colleagues in government, and friends.

A very pleasant morning to all of you. On behalf of the Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, I warmly welcome you to Coron, Palawan for the 2nd Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project.

I am grateful that we have gathered here today to advance sustainable seaweed aquaculture in Southeast Asia. This project is proof of our strong commitment to building resilient seaweed value chains that benefit our oceans and coastal communities.

The 1st PSC Meeting in Bangkok formally established our governance structure and laid the foundation for implementation. During that meeting, we adopted the PSC Terms of Reference, endorsed the Seaweed Technical Working Group, ratified the initial Annual Work Plans and Budgets, and provided strategic guidance on contingency planning, gender mainstreaming, and coordination mechanisms. Those decisions gave this project operational clarity and direction.

Today, we build on that momentum. The overarching goal of Blue Horizon is to develop sustainable seaweed value chains that deliver both ecosystem services and socioeconomic benefits. Its four components —strengthening regional approaches and capacity, improving the enabling environment, enhancing seaweed value chains in production, processing, and marketing, and advancing knowledge management and monitoring — provide a comprehensive framework for action.

At the same time, we remain guided by the principle that development must be anchored in sustainability. The seaweed sector supports thousands, if not millions, of fisherfolk families in the Philippines and across the Pacific region. For many, seaweed farming is a primary source of income and a buffer against economic uncertainty. Guided by this committee’s philosophy, improving fisherfolk welfare must remain central to our decisions. Strengthening value chains should lead to more stable incomes. Enhancing production systems should increase resilience against climate variability and disease outbreaks.

Expanding market access should result in fairer returns at the community level. When we speak of sustainable aquaculture, we speak of dignified livelihoods, inclusive participation, and long-term security for coastal households.

Simultaneously, environmental stewardship remains non-negotiable. Seaweed aquaculture, when properly managed, contributes to ocean health, nutrient cycling, and climate mitigation. Our responsibility is to ensure that growth in the sector aligns with ecological balance and sound governance.

By the end of this meeting, we expect concrete outputs: confirmation of progress on previously adopted action points; endorsement of updates on grant arrangements and contingency measures; strengthened implementation of the Gender Action Plan; approval of the Annual Work Plans and Budgets; and adoption of clear decisions and next steps to guide implementation moving forward.

As host country, the Philippines remains committed to translating this project into concrete action on the ground. We continue to strengthen technical support for seaweed farmers, improve access to quality planting materials, enhance post-harvest handling and value-adding practices, and work closely with local government units to ensure effective policy implementation at the community level. We, at the DA-BFAR, advance science-based management, capacity-building initiatives, and stronger monitoring systems to support both productivity and environmental sustainability.

Today, we look forward to our partners' continued technical guidance and collaboration so that we can scale these interventions, address existing gaps, and deliver lasting impact to our fisherfolk and coastal ecosystems.

I commend all members of the Steering Committee and our partners for your dedication and cooperation. Through sustained collaboration and clear accountability, we can ensure that Blue Horizon delivers meaningful results. On behalf of the Department of Agriculture, I wish this 2nd Project Steering Committee Meeting every success.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang ating mga mangingisda.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Project Steering Committee Meeting Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture

5 March 2026, Coron, Palawan, Philippines

OPENING REMARKS

*By Ms. Sampan Panjarat
SEAFDEC Secretary-General*

Distinguished PSC members :

1. Ms. Ms. Imelda R. Calixto , the representative of Ms.Drusila Esther E. Bayate, CESO IV Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of Agriculture of the Philippines
2. The representative from Department of Fisheries and Surveillance Viet Nam, who is also joining online.
3. Ms. Hiyas C. De Guzman, Assistant Director for Biodiversity Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines
4. Mr. Alfredo Pedrosa III, Chairman of SIAP (Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines)
5. And observers

Good morning,

On behalf of SEAFDEC, it is my pleasure to join the **Second Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project**. We are grateful for your participation and your commitment to advancing sustainable seaweed aquaculture across Southeast Asia.

This project represents a significant step forward in our collective efforts to enhance the sustainability of seaweed industry and marine ecosystems, while also improving the economic livelihoods of coastal communities across our region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's workshop marks very important collaboration, supported by the Global Environment Facility through WWF US as the Implementing Agency, and jointly executed by SEAFDEC, BFAR – Bureau of

Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines, and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam. From SEAFDEC PMU project component, we are happy to inform you, the project outputs under SEAFDEC components are on the track, we are moving forward to develop regional guidelines on *Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry and Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture* working together with SEAFDEC/AQD and Seaweed Technical Working Group.

We are also happy to bring you the member of PSC, with the help of our BFAR partner, to get together in the next two days how we can strengthen the project implementation and ensure the project on track. Hope we can find a good solution to help Viet Nam to speed up Grant Agreement process and make some adjustments to the project delay.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Again, your guidance is essential in shaping effective implementation, ensuring strong collaboration among WWF US as Implementing Agency, SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DFIS. Lastly, I would like to reiterate the integration of gender mainstreaming, stakeholder engagement plan, project visibility, and monitoring and evaluation system in the project implementation.

Thank you once again for your dedication. I look forward to productive discussions and collective decisions that will support a harmonized and sustainable seaweed sector for our region.

I wish you all a productive discussion and look forward to seeing good outcomes of our meeting today and tomorrow.

Thank you and I wish you all a successful meeting.

Provisional Prospectus

I. Background

The Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF US) as the GEF Implementing Agency, with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) as Lead Regional Executing Agency, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR, Philippines) and the Department of Fisheries (DOF, Viet Nam) as national executing partners. The Project duration covers the period from May 2024 to December 2028, with the possibility for extension. The overarching goal of the project is to develop sustainable seaweed value chains that deliver ecosystem services and socioeconomic benefits. The project comprises four components: 1) Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia; 2) Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam; 3) Seaweed Value Chains (production, processing, and marketing); and 4) Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional). The Project implementation is managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU), under the supervision of the SEAFDEC Secretary-General. The PMU Office is based at the SEAFDEC Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand. The Project is governed by the Project Steering Committee to oversee implementation throughout the project's duration.

The 1st Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting, held on 27–28 November 2025 in Bangkok, Thailand, formally established the PSC, adopted its Terms of Reference, endorsed the Terms of Reference of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG), ratified the initial Annual Work Plans and Budgets, and provided strategic guidance on contingency planning, gender mainstreaming, and coordination mechanisms.

In line with the recommendations and agreed next steps, the 2nd Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting is convened to review implementation progress through approved work plans and budget, address outstanding risks, and provide further strategic guidance to ensure timely and effective implementation of the Project.

II. Objectives of the 2nd PSC Meeting

1. To review the progress of project implementation following the arrangements and resolutions adopted during the 1st PSC Meeting
2. To receive updates on the completion of pending actions, including the status of the Grant Agreement of Viet Nam and implementation of agreed contingency measures to address project delays
3. To assess improvements in coordination mechanisms among SEAFDEC PMU, National PMUs, and WWF-US to ensure timely reporting and compliance with GEF requirements
4. To review and adopt the revised composition of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
5. To review updates and refinements to the Gender Action Plan and stakeholder engagement strategies to strengthen gender mainstreaming and inclusive participation
6. To review and approve the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) Year 3 of SEAFDEC PMU and AWPB Year 2 of BFAR/PH prior to submission to WWF-US for final approval

- 7.
8. To review and adopt the knowledge management and communication plan of the project
9. To provide strategic guidance and recommendations to ensure effective, timely, and results-based implementation of the Project moving forward

III. Expected outputs

1. Confirmation of progress on action points and recommendations adopted during the 1st PSC Meeting
2. Endorsement of updates on the signing status of the Grant Agreement of DFiS/Viet Nam and related implementation arrangements
3. Review and adopt the revision of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
4. Agreement on refined contingency measures and updated timelines to address project implementation delays
5. Endorsement of strengthened Gender Action Plan (GAP) implementation and stakeholder engagement approaches
6. Approval of the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) Year 3 of SEAFDEC PMU and AWPB Year 2 of BFAR/PH for submission to WWF-US
7. Adoption of the knowledge management and communication plan
8. Adoption of key decisions, action points, and agreed next steps to guide the continued implementation of the Project

IV. Participants

The 2nd Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting will be attended by members of the PSC, representatives of the executing agencies, technical officers, and invited observers from partner organizations:

1. Senior officials, Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam
2. Undersecretary of Fisheries, Department of Agriculture of the Philippines
3. Director, Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines
4. Chairman, Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP)
5. Secretary-General, SEAFDEC

Executing Agencies and Technical Representatives:

6. 1 representative from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)
7. 2 representatives from SEAFDEC/AQD
8. 2 representatives from SEAFDEC Secretariat
9. SEAFDEC PMU
 - 9.1 Project Manager / Technical Advisor, SEAFDEC Secretariat
 - 9.2 Administrative Officer, SEAFDEC Secretariat

Observers:

10. WWF GEF Project Manager, WWF-US
11. Representative from WWF-Philippines
12. Representative from WWF-Viet Nam
13. 3 representatives from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)

V. Meeting Venue

The meeting will be held at Coron, Palawan, Philippines, during the period of 5-6 March 2026

Provisional Agenda and Timetable

Time	Agendas
Day 1 – 05 March 2026	
08.30 – 09.00	Registration
09.00 – 09.30	Agenda 1. Opening of the Meeting <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome Remarks by Host Country (BFAR/PH) 2. Remarks by SEAFDEC Secretariat <i>Self-Introduction of Participants</i>
09.30 – 09.45	Agenda 2: Introduction, Objectives and Adoption of the Agenda
09.45 – 10.00	Agenda 3: Project updates and Achievement <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BFAR 2. SEAFDEC PMU
10.00 – 10.30	Refreshment
10.30 – 11.00	Agenda 4: Follow-up on Key Decisions of the 1st PSC Review of adopted resolutions including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. completion of Viet Nam Grant Agreement. 2. circulation of 1st PSC Report; and coordination improvements with WWF-US
11.00 – 11.30	Agenda 5: Revise the Term of Reference of Project Steering Committee
11.30 – 12.30	Agenda 6: Update on Contingency Plans and Revised Implementation Timelines Follow-up on PSC guidance to address implementation delays and strengthen coordination among PMU, N-PMUs, and WWF-US
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch break
13.30 – 14.00	Agenda 7: S-TWG Progress and Updates

14.00 – 14.30	<p>Agenda 8: Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Matrix Revisions and Reporting Compliance</p> <p>Review of revised targets, indicators, and alignment with donor requirements as advised by the 1st PSC</p>
14.30 – 15.30	<p>Agenda 9: Strengthening Implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)</p> <p>Review improvements on gender indicators, sex-disaggregated reporting, and stakeholder outreach as recommended in the 1st PSC</p>
15.30 – 15.45	<i>Coffee Break and Group Photo</i>
15.45 – 16.30	<p>Open Discussion</p> <p><i>Strategic Guidance from PSC Members</i></p>
16.30 – 17.00	Closing Day
Day 2 – 06 March 2026	
08.30 – 09.30	Recap for Day 1
09.30 – 10.30	<p>Agenda 10: Consideration and Approval of Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWPB)</p> <p>Review and approval of: AWPB Year 3 (SEAFDEC PMU), AWPB Year 2 (BFAR/PH)</p>
10.30 – 10.45	<i>Refreshment</i>
10.45 – 11.15	<p>Agenda 11: Knowledge Management and Communication Plan</p> <p>Review the KMCP of the Project</p>
11.15 – 11.45	<p>Agenda 12: Financial Progress and Audit Compliance</p> <p>Review of financial reporting compliance and audit arrangements under Grant Agreements</p>
11.45 – 12.15	<p>Agenda 13: Endorsement of Decisions and Next Steps</p> <p>Adoption of resolutions, agreed action points, and <i>proposed schedule/venue for the 3rd PSC</i></p>
12.15 – 12.20	<p>Closing of the Meeting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Closing Remark by BFAR 2. Remark by SEAFDEC Secretariat



Agenda 3 – BFAR PH Project Updates and Achievements

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through
Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture
is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

PROJECT COMPONENTS

COMPONENT 1	Regional approach and capacity for Seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia
COMPONENT 2	Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam
COMPONENT 3	Seaweed Value Chains (production, processing and marketing)
COMPONENT 4	Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)

DA-BFAR BUDGET BREAKDOWN

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ALLOCATION
1		0
2	Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Vietnam	US\$ 378,438
3	Seaweed Value Chain (production, processing, and marketing)	1,574,133
4	Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)	116,000
To be allocated		206,857
Total Project Cost (DA-BFAR)		US\$ 2,275,428

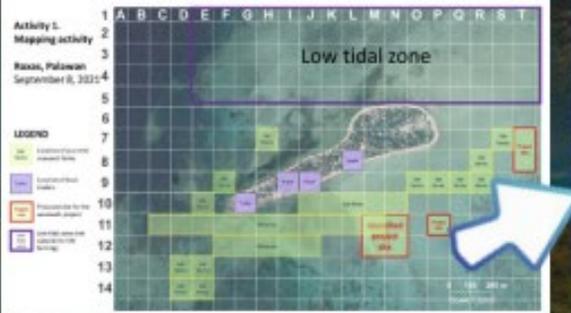
CO – FINANCING COMMITMENTS

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (\$)	Amount (PhP)
Civil Society Organization	Coast4C	In-Kind	300,000	17,400,000
Civil Society Organization	Marine Environmental and Resources Foundation, Inc. (MERF)	In-Kind	50,000	2,900,000
Civil Society Organization	Marine Science Institute	In-Kind	20,000	1,160,000
Private Sector	Barbender GmbH & Co.KG	In-Kind	300,000	17,400,000
Recipient Country Government	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Central Office	In-Kind	343,189	19,904,962
Recipient Country Government	BFAR Regional Fisheries Office No. IX	In-Kind	75,444	4,375,752
Recipient Country Government	BFAR MIMAROPA	In-Kind	180,155	10,448,990
TOTAL			1,268,788	73,589,704

PROJECT SITES

GREEN ISLAND ROXAS, PALAWAN

- Northern Palawan Fisherfolk Cooperative



PROJECT SITES

BUENAVISTA ZAMBOANGA CITY

- Aplaya Buenavista Seaweed Farmers Association



COMPONENT 2 UPDATES / ACHIEVEMENTS

START-UP ACTIVITIES:

- Posted the recruitment of NPMU Key Personnel | December 2025
- Endorsed to HRS the application documents | January 2026
- Issuance of Unified Account Code Structure (UACS) by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) | January 23, 2026
- Requested the Opening of a Special Bank Account for the Blue Horizon Project with the Department of Finance (DOF) | February 2026
- Ongoing coordination with the Bureau of Treasury (BTr) for the issuance of Special Bank Account for the Blue Horizon Project | March 2026



SUPPORT TO COMPONENT 4



Established strong coordination with SEAFDEC through regular meetings

Hosting of the 2nd PSC Meeting



Thank You !



Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Next Steps and Activity Timeline

MARCH 2026	APRIL 2026	MAY 2026	JUNE 2026
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring of the NPMU key personnel Review of Draft Partnership Agreements of Coast4C and MERF (UP-MSI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring of the remaining NPMU staff 2nd S-TWG Meeting Communication and M&E Trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of Year 2 AWPB Procurement of office supplies & IT equipment Project Inception Workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct of Courtesy Calls Orientation Seminars on Barangay Officials and Community Leaders

Revised Implementation Timeline

ACTIVITIES	UPDATED TIMELINE
Project Steering Committee Meetings and NPMU Quarterly Meetings	March 2026 June 2026
Hiring of remaining staff for the operation of the National Project Management Unit (NPMU)	April 2026
Hiring of field staff for the initial test planting of seaweed for the off-the-coast farming in Green Island, Roxas and Buenavista, Zamboanga City	March - April 2026

Revised Implementation Timeline

ACTIVITIES	UPDATED TIMELINE
Participation in Communication & M&E trainings (hosted by SEAFDEC)	April 2026
Preparation of Year 2 Annual Work Plan and Budget	May 2026
Project Inception Workshop and Courtesy meetings by NPMU	May - June 2026



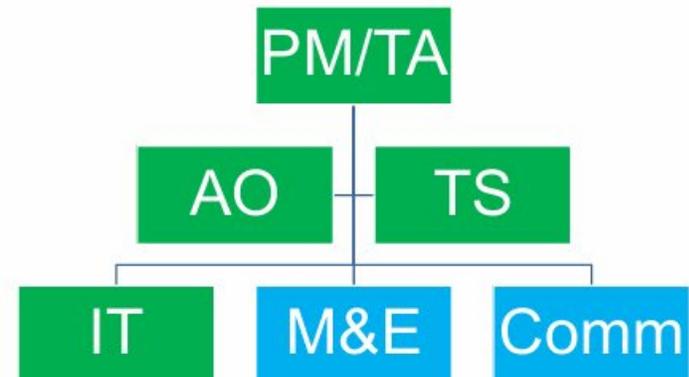
Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, The Philippines



GENERAL UPDATES:

- The implementation of 2nd Year Annual Workplan and Budget of SEAFDEC Components is on the [track](#)
- SEAFDEC PMU will submit 3rd Year Annual Workplan and Budget of SEAFDEC Components covering 1 July 2026 – June 2027 in April 2026
- Project Management Unit staff: PM/TA, AO, TS, and M&E Specialist, and part-time IT Specialist. Communication Specialist will be recruited soon
- Viet Nam has not yet sign Grant Agreement. There was inter-ministerial meeting to finalize the draft in January 2026.

SEAFDEC PMU





COMPONENT 1:

- The establishment of Seaweed Technical Working Group
- 2nd Meeting S-TWG will be conducted in April 2026 to discuss Output 1.1.2 and 1.1.3
- To recruit consultant to develop guide to Promoting Sustainable Seaweed Industry (Output 1.1.2) and to develop Principle Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture (Output 1.1.3)

5



COMPONENT 4:

- The establishment of Project Steering Committee members
- 2nd Meeting of PSC will be conducted in 5-6 March 2026
- M&E Training in 9-10 March 2026
- Communication Training will be conducted in 11-12 March 2026
- Project's website development:
<https://bluehorizonseaweed.org/> 

6





2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee
Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 4: Follow-Up on Key Decisions of the 1st PSC Meeting

WP05

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

- 1. Completion of VietNam Grant Agreement**
- 2. Circulation of 1st PSC Report**
- 3. Coordination Improvement with WWF GEF**

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Required Consideration by PSC

The meeting is requested to take note and adopt the decision made

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

**Report of the First Meeting of the Project Steering Committee (1-PSC) of the Blue Horizon:
Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project
27–28 November 2025, Bangkok, Thailand**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) through the Regional Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project convened the First Meeting of the Project Steering Committee (1-PSC) from 27 to 28 November 2025, in Bangkok, Thailand. The Project is funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), implemented by the World Wildlife Fund, Inc (WWF-US), and serves as the GEF Implementing Agency. The Project execution is carried out by three agencies: SEAFDEC, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines (BFAR/PH), and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam (DFiS/VN).
2. The 1-PSC was attended by the PSC members who representing the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS) of Viet Nam, the Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines, the Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP), and SEAFDEC. The Meeting also included observers from WWF Viet Nam, as well as senior officials and officers from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, the SEAFDEC/Training Department (TD), and the SEAFDEC/Aquaculture Department (AQD). The List of Participants appears in **Appendix 1**.
3. The objectives of the 1-PSC were (1) to provide an overview and status of the Project, (2) to finalize and adopt the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), (3) to finalize and adopt the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG), (4) to review and confirm key amendments that were amended in the approved project document (as stated in a Memorandum dated 28 March 2024), (5) to review and approve work plan and budget of executing agencies, (6) to discuss and provide suggestion on contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays, and (7) to refresh the content of the Gender Action Plan.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General, *Mr. Koichi Tahara*, welcomed the participants to the 1-PSC M. In his opening remarks, he reiterated that the significant to convene this First Meeting which marked the formal commencement of the GEF-supported initiative jointly executed by SEAFDEC, Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines (DA-BFAR), and DFiS Viet Nam together, with WWF-US serving as GEF Implementing Agency, noting its significance in advancing sustainable seaweed aquaculture, enhancing ecosystem services, and strengthening coastal community livelihoods across the region. While emphasizing the rationale and importance of the 1-PSC, he then underscored that underlined that the guidance and collective expertise of the PSC would ensure effective implementation and foster collaborative and gender-responsive approaches throughout the project. Lastly, he wished a productive discussion and successful outcomes of the 1-PSC. His Opening Remarks appear in **Appendix 2**.
5. The Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of Agriculture, *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*, he PSC member for the Philippines delivered the remarks on behalf of BFAR/PH. In her remarks, she

emphasized the significance of the Blue Horizon Ocean Relief through the Seaweed Aquaculture Project for the Philippines, highlighting the economic and environmental importance of seaweeds. She stressed that the project aligns with national priorities for sustainable aquaculture. She reaffirmed that the Philippines committed to implementing Components 2 and 3 of the Project, which focusing on national enabling environments and seaweed value chains. As outlined in the objectives of the 1-PSC, she looked forward to the discussion, which would opportunity for clarity, and foresight needed to guide the project's next phases. Her Remarks appear in **Appendix 3**.

6. The Representative of the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam, *Ms. Nguyễn Vũ Mai Anh*, the PSC member for Viet Nam expressed appreciation to GEF, WWF-US, SEAFDEC, and the Philippines for their partnership and support in implementing the Project to advance sustainable seaweed aquaculture as a nature-based solution for ocean health, climate resilience, and community livelihoods. She highlighted Viet Nam's strong commitment to the responsible and sustainable development of the seaweed sector and welcomed the Project's support in strengthening governance frameworks, improving national and provincial planning, and applying ecosystem-based and marine spatial planning approaches to promote environmentally sound and socially inclusive expansion. She reaffirmed Viet Nam's commitment to active cooperation throughout the Project implementation and emphasized the importance of regional knowledge sharing, particularly on sustainable farming models, traceability, post-harvest technologies, and market development, expressing confidence that the Project would deliver lasting regional and environmental benefits. Her Remarks appear in **Appendix 4**.

II. INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES, AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM) for the "Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture" Project, *Mr. Muhamad Nour* introduced the background, objectives, expected outputs, and proposed agenda of the 1-PSC. After his presentation, the PSC adopted the agenda. The Prospectus appears in **Appendix 5**, and the Agenda of the 1-PSC appears in **Appendix 6**.

III. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND STATUS

8. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor (PM), *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, provided information on the short summary of the project overview and status of the Project, which appears in **Appendix 7**.

9. The PSC member for the Philippines, *Ms. Drusila Bayate* sought clarification on the point based on the project workplan of SEAFDEC PMU that has not yet been approved and how the PSC should address it. In response, the point raised by the Philippines would be discussed in the later agenda item. In addition, the PM informed the PSC that the workplan of SEAFDEC was approved by WWF-US during the time the PSC has not in place, and he added the project progress was made by the PMU focus on the inception phase, which it had already established the foundation of the project management unit, including the establishment of the PSC and Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG). He also informed that the PMU is recruiting Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) consultant to establish the M&E plan and system.

10. He further informed the PSC, on the current update of the current project implementation arrangements, SEAFDEC, as the one of Executing Agency, signed the Grant Agreement in April 2024, followed by BFAR/PH in July 2025. Viet Nam, however, has not yet finalized its Grant Agreement. This

outstanding formalization has become a significant risk to the project's operational timeline, as SEAFDEC and the Philippines have already progressed more than one and a half years into implementation. The PSC acknowledged that the delay in Viet Nam's signing of the Agreement, due to an extended period of internal administrative transition within the Government of Viet Nam, which affected the internal review, processing, and clearance of the Agreement.

11. After discussion, the PSC **took note** of the Project overview and current status of the Project.

IV. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC)

12. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) and Rules and Procedures for the PSC for the Committee's consideration and approval. As outlined in the draft ToR, the PSC serves as the project's primary decision-making body, responsible for providing strategic guidance and ensuring accountability. In his presentation, he highlighted that the PSC comprises essential representatives from the government agencies, the seaweeds industry, and the SEAFDEC Secretariat, including key departments from the Philippines and Viet Nam, while noting that Viet Nam will submit a new PSC member due to recent government structural changes. Furthermore, the PSC noted the PSC's core functions include reviewing and approving annual work plans, endorsing financial reports, and ensuring that project implementation complies with WWF and GEF requirements and aligns with national priorities. The PSC also noted that to maintain rigorous governance, the procedures require regular biannual meetings and require a high quorum of 80% of all member institutions for official decision-making.

13. The PSC agreed that the composition of the PSC follows the structure approved in the WWF-GEF project documents. After the discussion, the ToR was **adopted** by the PSC, which appears in **Appendix 8**.

V. REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE INCEPTION WORKSHOP INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INCEPTION WORKSHOP

14. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the report on the outcomes of the Inception Workshop for the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project held on 14 August 2025. The workshop was aimed at kicking off the project and engaging a broader audience in its objectives and activities, discussing the project's objectives, components, implementation strategies, and expected outcomes. He informed that during the Inception Workshop, it was informed on the agreement of implementation arrangements of the project, the establishment and the coordination mechanisms for both the PSC and the S-TWG, the progress was made by the PMU on the project institution arrangement.

15. After the presentation, the PSC **took note** of the outcome of the Inception Workshop and recommendations from the Inception Workshop. The report of the Workshop appears in **Appendix 9**.

VI. REVIEW OF THE MEMORANDUM DATED 28 MARCH 2024 ON AMENDMENT TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DOCUMENTS

16. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Memorandum dated 28 March 2024 concerning the amendment of the Project Document as approved by GEF CEO Council in July 2022. The amendment revised the project's implementation structure; WWF-US provides the funds directly to each Executing Agency, which differed from the original Project Document. The memo also mentioned new arrangements for fund flow and budget allocation, under which WWF-US disburses funds directly to the three (3) executing agencies, and each executing agency will need to submit the progress report to WWF-US for approval for each tranche. The total GEF budget remains USD 6 million, with revised allocations of 1,359,144 USD for SEAFDEC, 2,275,428 USD for BFAR/PH, 2,275,428 USD for DFiS/VN, and 90,000 USD for WWF evaluations. Roles and responsibilities were also clarified: WWF oversees fund administration and reporting; SEAFDEC manages the Regional PMU and responsible for component 1 and component 4, while BFAR/PH and DFiS/VN manage national PMU (N-PMU) and implement Components 2 and 3. The roles and responsibilities of BFAR/PH and DFiS/VN on Component 4 are suggested to use unallocated budget with prior consultation with SEAFDEC and WWF-US.

17. The PSC acknowledged the memo dated 28 March 2024, and was confirmed that the project amendment had already been approved by the WWF-US/GEF Agency. As the amendment was officially endorsed, no further comments were raised. The PSC formally **noted and accepted** the contents of the Memorandum on the project document amendment. His presentation appears in **Appendix 10**.

VII. REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF SEAWEED TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (1S-TWG), CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE MEMBERSHIP AND DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE S-TWG

18. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Report of the First Meeting of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (1S-TWG), which was held on 25-26 November 2025, in Bangkok, Thailand. He informed the PSC that *Ms. Ida T. Capacio, Philippines* and *Ms. Mai Anh, Viet Nam*, to serve as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of 1S-TWG, respectively. The PM also presented the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) of the S-TWG, compositions and membership of S-TWG, roles and responsibilities, and meeting schedules of S-TWG to delivery of the outputs under Component 1. The discussion focused on refining the ToR of the S-TWG, emphasizing that the Guide must function as a regional technical reference with general provisions while also reflecting country-specific seaweed species and local contexts.

19. The suggestion of PSC also highlighted the need to incorporate practical considerations and to develop the Guide, Principles, and Toolkits in parallel. In addition, the PMU acknowledged the members' suggestions, particularly the need to reflect technical considerations and country-specific conditions of seaweed farming in the development of Component 1 outputs, including the Regional Guide, Principles, and Toolkits.

20. After the deliberation, the PSC took note of the recommendations and formally **adopted** the ToR of the S-TWG, which appear in **Annex 11**.

VIII. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

VIII.1 SEAFDEC

21. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) of SEAFDEC, for Year 2 (July 2025-June 2026), with focus on Components 1 and 4, which appears as **Appendix 12**. During the discussion, the PSC expressed concerns regarding the AWPB for Years 1 and 2 of the SEAFDEC Project Management Unit (PMU), noting that although the workplan and budgets had been approved by WWF-US, they had not yet been formally endorsed by the PSC.

22. In this regard, as this was the first meeting of the Committee, the PSC was now in a position to formally endorse and approve in principle the project budgets covering AWPB Years 1 (April 2024–June 2025) and Year 2 (July 2025-June 2026). The Policy and Program Coordinator of SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana* further explained that the appropriate reference point for financial alignment should be the date of signature of the Grant Agreement, noting that the GEF fiscal year runs from July to June of the following year. In addition, the PSC further confirmed that, in accordance with GEF rules and procedures, project expenditures may commence once at least 50% of participating countries have signed their respective Grant Agreements. As all three executing agencies have already received project funds, no implementation or financial compliance issues were identified for the Philippines and Viet Nam.

23. To ensure operational continuity and financial clarity, the PSC agreed to adopt a resolution authorizing reimbursement and expenditure under the approved workplan and budget both for AWPB Years 1 (April 2024–June 2025) and Year 2 (July 2025-June 2026). Based on this decision, the PSC concluded that the SEAFDEC PMU remains in compliance with implementing and utilizing its allocated budget.

VIII.2 BFAR/PH

24. *Ms. Ida T. Capacio*, National Focal Point of the Project presented draft Annual Workplan and Budget Year 1 of BFAR/PH. Her presentation appears in **Appendix 13**.

25. The PSC agreed *in principle* to **approve** the budget and proposed Annual Work Plan and Budget Year 1 of the BFAR/PH for the period July 2025 to June 2026.

26. After the presentations made by SEAFDEC and BFAR/PH, the PSC **ratified** the previously approved the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) Year 1 and Year 2 of SEAFDEC and Year 1 of BFAR/PH, with suggestions to improve coordination regarding the timing of submissions to better align with the schedule set by the WWF-US/GEF Agency.

IX. ANNUAL CO-FINANCE LETTER

27. The Project Manager and Technical, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the co-finance commitment of SEAFDEC, noting the total pledged amount of 600,000 USD from SEAFDEC in-kind contribution, with 120,000 USD already reported to WWF-US for Year 2025.

28. While the representative from BFAR/PH confirmed the co-finance contributions as follows: Component 2 is 2.3 million PHP; Component 3 is 4 million PHP; and Component 4 is 900,000 PHP (in kind).

29. The PM added that the co-finance letters are required to be submitted annually every July to WWF-US. The PSC requested that all Executing Agencies to consistently submit their annual co-finance letters in July. The PSC adopted the annual co-financing commitments as presented. His presentation appears in **Appendix 14**.

X. FINANCE PROGRESS

30. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the financial progress. The PM reported that the financial report follows the WWF-US required format, ensuring full compliance with agency rules and standards. He further informed that as for SEAFDEC, according to the Grant Agreement of SEAFDEC, an annual project financial audit will be conducted by SEAFDEC. The WWF-US will lead for the mid-term and final evaluation, including the selection and recruitment of the consultant of mid-term and final evaluation, which the budget was hold by WWF-US, at amount of 90,000 USD. The mid-term and final evaluation for overall project implementation, of which three executing agencies will provide support during the audit process. The PSC **took note** of the update and approved the financial progress as presented. His presentation appears in **Appendix 15**.

XI. DISCUSSION ON THE CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR ADDRESSING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DELAYS.

31. The Project Manager and Technical Advisor, *Mr. Muhamad Nour*, presented the contingency plans to address delays in project implementation. The agenda focused on identifying delayed activities, examining their root causes, and outlining necessary contingency actions to bring implementation back on schedule. His presentation appears in **Appendix 16**.

32. The PSC acknowledged that delays were caused by several factors, mainly the delay signature of the Grant Agreements and external conditions affecting field activities. The PSC recommended providing clearer guidance to PMU regarding timelines, reporting requirements, and coordination responsibilities to minimize further bottlenecks. The PSC further emphasized the need to improve communication among the SEAFDEC PMU, N-PMUs, and WWF-US by increasing the frequency of coordination meetings and ensuring timely updates on revised plans. The PSC also advised revising activity timelines and updating the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) matrix so that the revised targets, indicators, and deliverables accurately reflect the project's current pace. Overall, the PSC agreed that enhanced coordination, realistic scheduling, and proactive management measures are essential for reducing delays and ensuring continued compliance with donor requirements as the project moves forward.

XII. REFRESH THE GENDER ACTION PLAN

33. The Gender Focal Point of the SEAFDEC Training Department, *Ms. Jariya Sornkliang* presented the gender action plan. Her presentation appears in **Appendix 17**. She emphasized the importance of strengthening the Gender Action Plan (GAP) to ensure inclusive and equitable participation across all project components. The PSC Members noted that gender considerations should be integrated not only

into community-level activities but also into policy dialogues, capacity-building events, and S-TWG processes. Several members recommended developing clearer gender indicators and sex-disaggregated reporting tools to enable consistent monitoring and better reflect progress within the M&E system. It was further suggested that the Project expand its outreach to women's groups, indigenous communities, and small-scale seaweed farmers to promote meaningful stakeholder representation. Participants proposed increasing national-level consultations and utilizing more accessible communication platforms to reach stakeholders. The PSC further encouraged aligning the GAP with the existing national gender frameworks to ensure that gender considerations are addressed across the different value chains of the seaweed cultivation. Overall, the PSC agreed that reinforcing gender mainstreaming, broadening stakeholder engagement, and improving data tracking would greatly enhance the effectiveness and inclusiveness of project implementation moving forward.

34. After discussion, the PSC **took note** of the Gender Action Plan

XIII. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS AND ENDORSEMENT OF PSC RECOMMENDATIONS

35. On the Conclusion and Next steps and Endorsement of PSC recommendations, the PSC took note, provided suggestions, and adopted as follows;

- The PSC adopted the term of reference of PSC and agreed that the composition of the PSC follows the structure approved in the WWF-GEF project documents. Viet Nam will submit revised nominations for appointment as PSC members.
- The PSC **adopted** the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the S-TWG and took note of the 1S-TWG report, held on 25-26 November 2025. The PSC also **adopted** the ToR of the Consultant to develop the *Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region*
- The PSC **agreed** to elect *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*, Undersecretary for Fisheries of the Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, as Chairperson.
- The PSC **took note** of the outcomes of the Inception Workshop held on 14 August 2025.
- The PSC **ratified** the previously approved the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) Year 1 and Year 2 of SEAFDEC and Year 1 of BFAR/PH, with suggestions to improve coordination regarding the timing of submissions to better align with the schedule set by the WWF GEF Agency.
- The PSC further **agreed** on the Annual Co-financing Letter of SEAFDEC and BFAR/PH.
- The PSC **noted** the financial progress for Years 1 and 2 of SEAFDEC and noted the financial progress for Year 1 of BFAR/PH.
- The PSC **took note** of the Gender Action Plans.
- The PSC provided suggestions and guidance to the PMU to address unexpected project delays and to consider appropriate contingency plans.
- The PSC requested the PMU to circulate the full report of the 1-PSC to all PSC Members by 12 December 2025.
- The PSC suggested the schedule and venue for the next PSC meeting would be tentatively in the first week of March 2026 in the Philippines to review and approve the AWPB Year 3 of the SEAFDEC PMU, AWPB Year 2 of BFAR/PH, and AWPB Year 1 of DFIS/VN, prior to submission to WWF-US for final approval.
- The PSC suggested the PMU to work in close coordination with WWF-US and the DFIS/VN, to complete the signing of the Grant Agreement by 2025. In parallel, the PMU will finalize and implement appropriate contingency plans aimed at preventing further delays in the implementation

of the Project.

XIV. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

The SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General, *Mr. Koichi Tahara*, expressed his sincere appreciation to all PSC members, observers, and partners for their active engagement and constructive contributions throughout the two-day deliberations. He highlighted the progress made in strengthening the project's implementation direction, particularly with respect to the consolidated work plan and budget, the gender and stakeholder engagement strategies, and the proposed contingency measures to address potential implementation delays. He extended his gratitude to the PSC members for their valuable insights, and to the SEAFDEC staff for their dedication in ensuring the smooth conduct of the Meeting. He emphasized that the outcomes of the 1-PSC would guide the project confidently into its next phase and reinforce collaboration among SEAFDEC, BFAR, DFiS, and WWF-US in achieving its intended regional impacts. He then declared the 1-PSC closed. His Closing Remarks appear in **Appendix 18**.

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

I. BACKGROUND

The Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF US) as the GEF Implementing Agency, with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) as Lead Regional Executing Agency, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR, Philippines) and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS) as national executing partners. The Project duration covers the period from 2024 to 2028¹, with the possibility for extension. The overarching goal of the project is to develop sustainable seaweed value chains that deliver ecosystem services and socioeconomic benefits.

The project comprises four components: 1) Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia; 2) Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam; 3) Seaweed Value Chains (production, processing, and marketing); and 4) Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional). The Project execution is managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU), under the supervision of the SEAFDEC Secretary-General. The PMU Office is based at the SEAFDEC Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand. The Project is governed by the Project Steering Committee to oversee implementation throughout the project's duration.

II. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

To facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the project entitled "*Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture*", a **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** will be established as the primary decision-making body for the project, to provide strategic oversight, guidance, and approval of key project deliverables in line with the Project Document, Grant Agreements, and GEF requirements.

The role of PSC shall provide guidance, coordination, and accountability across the regional and national levels to the project, and to guide the Project Management Unit (PMU) of SEAFDEC and National PMUs in the Philippines and Viet Nam in the implementation and monitoring of the project, ensuring that the project remains on track to deliver tangible environmental and socio-economic benefits both at regional and national level.

The PSC will serve as a regional forum for reviewing and resolving cross-cutting concerns, reviewing and approving annual work plans and budgets, and facilitating stakeholder participation. One of the first activities during full project implementation will be to reconfirm and/or constitute the membership of the PSC, agree on meeting procedures, and finalize the Terms of Reference for the PSC.

¹ SEAFDEC's activities will be completed within this period, while implementation in the Philippines and Viet Nam will extend to 2029.

III. THE TERM OF REFERENCE OF THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

- a. Provide direction and strategic guidance to the Project Management Unit (PMU) and National executing partners regarding project execution of agreed activities over the entire period of the project, including incorporating gender mainstreaming
- b. Approve at their first meeting: a) the membership, meeting arrangements, and terms of reference of the committees; and b) such standing orders and manners of conducting business as may be considered necessary by the committee
- c. Meet on an annual basis during the implementation of the project to guide the timely execution of project activities
- d. Approve annual work plans and budgets and approve any changes to the project strategy or budget alongside WWF GEF Agency
- e. Approve the financial reports of the expenditure for prior years and also adopt the audited financial reports
- f. Provide guidance and advice for the Project Management Unit (PMU) on the project monitoring and evaluation plan, Project Progress Report (PPR), annual Results Framework and workplan tracking, Mid-term Project Evaluation Report, and Project Closeout Report, for submission to SEAFDEC, WWF US, and GEF Secretariat
- g. Approve key project outputs (e.g. reports, policy documents, communication and knowledge projects, etc)
- h. Assist the PMUs in ensuring coordination among national site-based activities and other national-level activities to further enhance national capacity to develop integrated approaches seaweed aquaculture and environmental management.
- i. Provide guidance on the interactions and partnership with other relevant bodies and network
- j. Assist the PMU in leveraging required project co-financing and additional funds that may be required from time to time
- k. Work with the PMU and National Lead Agencies in mainstreaming integrated seaweed aquaculture and environmental management and the replication of project successes at the national level.
- l. Participate in both virtual and in-person annual reflection workshop to discuss the theory of change and project progress.

IV. COMPOSITION OF PSC

The PSC members will consist of well-balance representatives from target countries and agencies with equal representation men and women, comprising:

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Viet Nam
2. Department of Agriculture of the Philippines
3. Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines

4. Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP)
5. SEAFDEC Secretariat

The PSC shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson from amongst its full members with responsibility for chairing each formal meeting of the Committee and for acting as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of any meetings convened during the subsequent inter-sessional period. At the start of each meeting, the PSC may agree by consensus to invite additional experts to participate as observers or advisors for all or part of the meeting, as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

V. SECRETARIAT OF THE COMMITTEE

- a. The Project Manager/Technical Advisor of SEAFDEC's PMU shall act as Secretary to the meetings of the Committee.
- b. Other staff of SEAFDEC's PMU may provide secretariat and technical support to the meetings of the PSC as required.

VI. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

- a. The PMU shall convene regular biannual and annual meetings
- b. *Ad hoc* meetings may be convened by the Chairperson both in person and online: when a majority of the Committee members make a request for such a meeting to the Project Steering Committee; and at the request of the Project Steering Committee when circumstances demand.

VII. CONDUCT OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Committee shall operate and take decisions on the basis of consensus, regarding any matter relating to project execution that has regional significance. Where full consensus cannot be achieved in reaching agreement during a full meeting of the Committee, on any matter relating to project execution that has regional significance, the Secretariat shall, in consultation with the Chairperson, facilitate negotiations during the subsequent inter sessional period with a view to seeking resolution, and will report the results of these negotiations to the Committee members. The detailed operational guidance of the PSC is provided below:

- a. *Members*: Each organization represented in the PSC will appoint a primary representative and an alternate in case the primary representative is not available to ensure that each organization is represented appropriately.
- b. *Convening*: PSC meeting invitations, materials and agenda will be issued by the PMU at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the meeting. New items can be added to the agenda at the request of any member of the PSC on the condition that it is informed before the meeting to the other members.

- c. *Quorum*: the quorum of the PSC will be 80% of the member institutions.
- d. Protocol: PMU SEAFDEC will coordinate with the PSC Chair to set the date of meetings, agenda, and invitation to PSC members. PSC materials will be shared in advance.
- e. *Meeting minutes*: as the secretary of the PSC, the SEAFDEC PMU will provide PSC meeting minutes (including summary of decisions and agreements) and share with all PSC members no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the meeting is held.
- f. *Amendments to the PSC TOR*: Any changes to the TOR, including its membership, must be approved by both WWF GEF Agency and approved by the PSC following the decision-making clause above.

VIII. Require Consideration by PSC Members

- PSC members are requested to review and adopt the revision of the Terms of Reference (ToR).



2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee
Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 6: Update on Contingency Plans and Revised Implementation Timeline

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Current Status

-  Viet Nam has not yet signed the Grant Agreement
-  SEAFDEC PMU is in AWPB Year 2 and will develop AWPB Year 3
-  BFAR is in AWPB Year 1 and 2
-  WWF US plan to conduct Mid-Term Review in September 2026

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Situation Analysis

SEAFDEC PMU:

1. Current implementation status (by component, activity, and country) is on the track according to initial timeline of the project.
2. **Component 1:** Regional Guide, Principles, and Toolkits are ready to develop together with Consultants under guidance of S-TWG and AQD
3. **Component 4:** Supporting platforms to support the project implementation of National Project Management Units are ready: M&E Plan, Knowledge Management and Communication Plan, Gender Action Plan, and Project Website. The Regional PMU is standby to support capacity building of PMU personnel.
4. **Establish** communication and coordination protocols for problem solving and accelerate project activities: common Google drive containing project documents, ToRs/provisional prospectus for references,

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Proposed Mitigation and Contingency Strategies

- 
 1. Implement the activities in parallel and or virtually
 2. PMUs to discuss the protocols of delegation and ensure agreed proposed activities are discussed with supervisors (DFIS, BFAR, and SEAFDEC)
- 
 1. Use the existing templates of ToRs, provisional prospectus, and reports that are available in the Google Drive
- 
 1. PMUs always refer to project documents and grant agreements.
 2. Discuss contingency plan for natural disaster events in the project sites
- 
 1. Discuss with WWF US on the policy of budget flexibility for reprogramming or timeline extensions.
 2. PSC members to be fully involved in the Mid-Term Review of the Project to recommend readjust target indicators, timeline, no cost extension and design.

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Communication and Coordination



Existing coordination mechanism: regular meeting, PSC, M&E system, Pause and Reflect Meeting, WA Groups



Strengthen communication channels between SEAFDEC PMU, national PMUs, and WWF-US



Ensure timely updates to stakeholders and donors regarding revised plans or adjustments



Define roles and responsibilities for follow-up and monitoring.

Questions:

- 1 How can coordination between PMUs be improved?
- 2 What reporting or meeting frequency is needed to monitor progress effectively?

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Agreement on Next Steps:

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Required Consideration by PSC

The PSC members are requested to take note, provide comments, and suggestions on the Contingency Plans and Revised Implementation Timeline

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2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee
Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 7: Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG): Progress and Updates

WP06

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Component 1: Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in SE Asia

Outcome 1.1 Regionally adopted plans and principles to harmonize seaweed aquaculture in SE Asia

1.1.1
Regional Seaweed Technical Working Group constituted and formally mandated by SEAFDEC Governing Council

1.1.2
Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region endorsed by the SEAFDEC Governing Council

1.1.3
SEA Regional Principles for Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture Including toolkit for applying principles, aligned to the Global Seaweed Coalition

1.1.4
Training modules and information packages to support a sustainable seaweed industry in Southeast Asia



Purpose:

Regional platform to guide sustainable seaweed aquaculture development and value chain enhancement in Southeast Asia.



1. Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry (Output 1.1.2)
2. Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture (1.1.3)
3. Toolkit for Product, Environmental, and Safety Standards (1.1.4)



Recruit Consultants:

1. To develop *Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry*
2. To develop *Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture*.
3. To develop *Toolkit for Product, Environmental, and Safety Standards*



Expected Outcomes:

1. Regional endorsement of the Guide, Principles, and Toolkit.
2. Strengthened regional collaboration and knowledge exchange.
3. Mainstreamed gender equality across the seaweed industry.

S-TWG Meeting:

1. The 1st meeting was held in Bangkok from 25 to 26 November 2025.
2. The 2nd meeting will be organized in Bangkok 20-21 April 2026 to discuss
 - a. Activity 1.1.2.2: S-TWG meeting to define the scope of the Guide and review ToR for a consultant to assist in drafting the Guide consider gender and inclusion dimensions in the scope of the Guide.
 - b. Activity 1.1.3.2: S-TWG meeting on the Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture





Required Consideration by PSC

The PSC members are requested to take note the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG) Progress and Update

World Bank - Global Infrastructure Anti-Corruption Centre
Infrastructure Anti-Corruption Centre (IACC)



2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee
Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

**Agenda 8:
M&E Plan and Reporting Compliance**

WP07

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines



Overview of the M&E Framework

1. Purpose of the M&E Plan in the Blue Horizon Project
2. Alignment with Grant Agreement and Results Framework
3. Key objectives:
 - Track progress toward outputs and outcomes
 - Ensure accountability and transparency
 - Support adaptive management and evidence-based decision-making
4. Roles of PMUs, AQD, Secretariat, BFAR, DFIS, and WWF US

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines



Results Framework and Key Indicators

1. Project hierarchy: Impact → Outcomes → Outputs
2. Output-level indicators (Output 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, etc.)
3. Means of verification:
 - Meeting reports
 - Technical documents (Guide, policy recommendations)
 - Training reports and participant records
4. Gender and inclusion indicators integration
5. Data collection tools and responsibilities

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Data Collection, Monitoring Tools & Responsibilities

1. Monitoring tools:
 - Progress reporting templates
 - Attendance sheets
 - Training evaluation forms
 - Consultant deliverable tracking
2. Data sources:
 - S-TWG meetings
 - PSC meetings
 - Workshops and consultations
3. Reporting responsibilities:
 - PMU (overall coordination)
 - Technical Specialist (technical validation)
 - AQD and Secretariat (institutional support)

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Learning, Adaptive Management & Continuous Improvement

1. Feedback loops from S-TWG and Governing Council
2. Using M&E findings to refine implementation
3. Integration of Gender Action Plan (GAP) monitoring
4. Communication and dissemination of results
5. Strengthening transparency and stakeholder trust

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Deliverables and Reporting Schedule

1. Draft Annual Workplan and Budget
 - Year 3, and 4 AWPB (July 1-June 30) is due date no later than April 2025, 2026, and 2027
2. WWF GEF Project Progress Report
 - Six months on January 31 (Reporting period July 1 – December 31) and July 31 (for reporting period July 1 – June 30)
3. Quarterly Financial Report
 - Quarterly on July 31, October 31, January 31, and April 30
4. Annual Co-financing Letters (every July annually)

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Required Consideration by PSC

The PSC members are requested to take note of the M&E Plan and Reporting Compliance

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2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee
 Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 9: Strengthening Implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

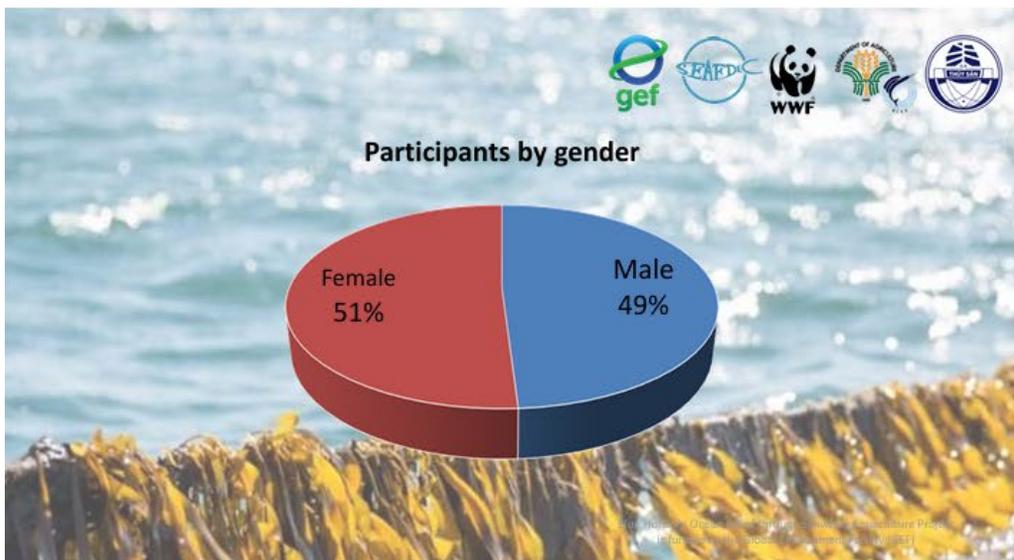
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PROJECT ACTIVITY TRACKING BY COMPONENTS AND OUTPUTS

No	Name of Activity	Component and Output #	Participant		Total	Date	Place/Venue
			Male	Female			
1	Inception Workshop	C4-Output 4.1.2	22	24	46	14-Aug-25	Bangkok
2	Seaweed Technical Working Group	C1-Output 1.1.1	15	16	31	25-26 Nov 2025	Bangkok
3	Project Steering Committee	C4-Output 4.1.2	12	11	23	27-28 Nov 2025	Bangkok
			49	51	100		

PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER




Gender Action Plan: Monitoring and Evaluation Training (TBC)

The training will present **Module 3: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**

1. Introduction to GESI concepts and principles
2. Systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data
3. Gender Action Plan monitoring and reporting
4. Qualitative data collection on women's empowerment
5. Collection of gender-disaggregated data
6. Qualitative data on women's empowerment
7. Hands-on practice: gender data collection



Gender Action Plan: Communication Training (TBC)

The training will present sessions on:

1. Gender-sensitive/responsive knowledge management and communications strategy
2. Produce articles and news on gender mainstreaming

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Program (GEEP)



SEAFDEC PMU and Gender Specialist BFAR will:

1. Ensure gender-disaggregated data collection across all indicators
2. Monitor Gender Action Plan implementation
3. Provide gender analysis support for reports and evaluations
4. Conduct gender-focused learning activities

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Program (GEEP)



Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Program (GEEP)



Project Stakeholders:

1. SEAFDEC Secretariat & PMU
2. SEAFDEC/AQD & TD
3. WWF-US GEF Agency
4. BFAR (Philippines) & DFIS (Viet Nam)
5. ASEAN Member State seaweed experts
6. ASEAN Seaweed Industry Club (ASIC)
7. Global Seaweed Coalition
8. IW LEARN
9. NGOs, academic institutions

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Program (GEEP)



Stakeholder Engagement Overview

1. PSC & STWG consultations
2. Regular coordination meetings
3. National PMU engagement with country partners
4. Workshops and training activities
5. Knowledge-management platforms & communications



Key Elements Engagement Plan Include:

1. Clear roles and responsibilities of Stakeholder groups
2. Engagement methods (meeting, workshop, consultation)
3. Frequency of engagement (annually, semi annually, online)
4. Expected outputs from each engagement



Required Consideration by PSC

The PSC members are requested to take note of the update to the Gender Action Plan and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan



2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 10: Consideration and Approval of Annual Work Plans and Budget (AWPB)

WP08

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Overall Project Implementation

Grant period: April 2024-31 December 2028

Goal To create new sustainable seaweed value chains that will deliver ecosystem services and provide socioeconomic benefits



Component 1: Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia

SEAFDEC 3rd Year Annual Workplan and budget (1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027)

Outcome 1.1: Regionally adopted plans and principles to harmonize seaweed aquaculture in Southeast Asia	Activities	Timeline	Budget
Output 1.1.1: Regional Seaweed Technical Working Groups constituted and formally mandated by SEAFDEC Governing Council	• COMPLETED		
Output 1.1.2: Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region, endorsed by the SEAFDEC Governing Council	• S-TWG meeting to validate the Guide • Submission of Guide to Governing Council	July – Sept 2026 Oct – Dec 2026	20,000 USD
Output 1.1.3: SEA Regional Principles for Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture, including toolkit for applying principles, aligned to the Global Seaweed Coalition	• S-TWG meeting to review the Principles and Toolkit and initiate work to finalize the drafts	July – Sept 2026	29,000 USD
Output 1.1.4 Training modules and information packages to support a sustainable seaweed industry in South East Asia	• Produce training module and information package • Training on sustainable seaweed industry	July – Sept 2026 Oct – Dec 2026	30,000 USD



Component 1

- Key Stakeholders:**
- Project Steering Committee Members
 - Seaweed experts
 - SEAFDEC/AQD
 - Consultants
 - Regional/international organizations (e.g., Global Seaweed Coalition)
 - SEAFDEC Governing Council
- Responsibilities:**
- Advise on sustainable farming practices, value chain improvement, and ecosystem service integration.
 - Facilitate knowledge exchange on technologies and best practices for sustainable seaweed production.
 - Support the consultant in developing, validating, reviewing, and promoting adoption of the regional Guide.

Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)

**SEAFDEC 3rd Year Annual Workplan and budget
(1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027)**



Outcome 4.1:
Full participation in IW: LEARN and knowledge management/communication

Output 4.1.1 Participation in two IW: LEARN regional meetings and one GEF International Waters Conference, delivering IW: LEARN experience

Output 4.1.2: Knowledge management and communication platform and products

- Activities**
- Develop lessons learned/experience notes for IW-LEARN participation and website posting
 - Participate in the IW: LEARN events
 - Develop knowledge products identified in KM Plan
 - Regularly update the Project website with project information
 - Package and disseminate knowledge products
 - Conduct webinars/side events to present project deliverables, best practices, and lessons learned
 - Conduct Communication Training for Viet Nam NPMU

Timeline
Jul 2026 - June 2027
15,000 USD

Jul 2026 - June 2027
13,000 USD

Outcome 4.2:
Monitoring and evaluation system in place

Output 4.2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, terminal evaluation)

- Organize P5C meeting (online and in person)
- Organize Adaptive Management/Reflection Meetings Yearly
- Produce, deliver 6-monthly project progress reports
- Conduct M&E Training for Viet Nam NPMU
- Organize and supervise Midterm Evaluation of Project
- Report to stakeholders the results of the MTE

Jul 2026 - June 2027
109,000 USD



Component 4

Key Stakeholders:

- Project Steering Committee Members
- SEAFDEC/AQD
- M&E and Communication Consultants
- Regional/international organizations (e.g., IW LEARN)

Responsibilities:

- Overall project management implementation, decision making, and project strategy
- Advise on knowledge management and communication plan.
- Advise on M&E Plan and adaptive project management

The Meeting is requested to consider and approve the Annual Workplan and Budget Year 3 of SEAFDEC PMU





2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 11: Knowledge Management and Communication Plan

WP03

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Objectives

- 

Guides the SEAFDEC PMU and National PMUs of DA-BFAR and DFIS/VN in developing coordinated communication tools, products, and outreach activities.
- 

Inform target audiences and the public about the implementation, good practices, and achievements of the Project.
- 

Wider adoption and replication of project initiatives beyond pilot sites, expanding impact across regions and countries.
- 

The Plan also showcases how project outcomes contribute to and align with GEF priorities and objectives.

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Target Audiences



GEF Secretariat, IW/LEARN, and GEF Audiences;

NGOs and environmental organizations

Government agencies and policymakers

Relevant international/regional organizations and the international community e.g. ASEAN, FAO, NACA

WWF-US and relevant national WWF offices;

SEAFDEC Secretariat and the Aquaculture Department (SEAFDEC/AQD)

SEAFDEC Member Countries;

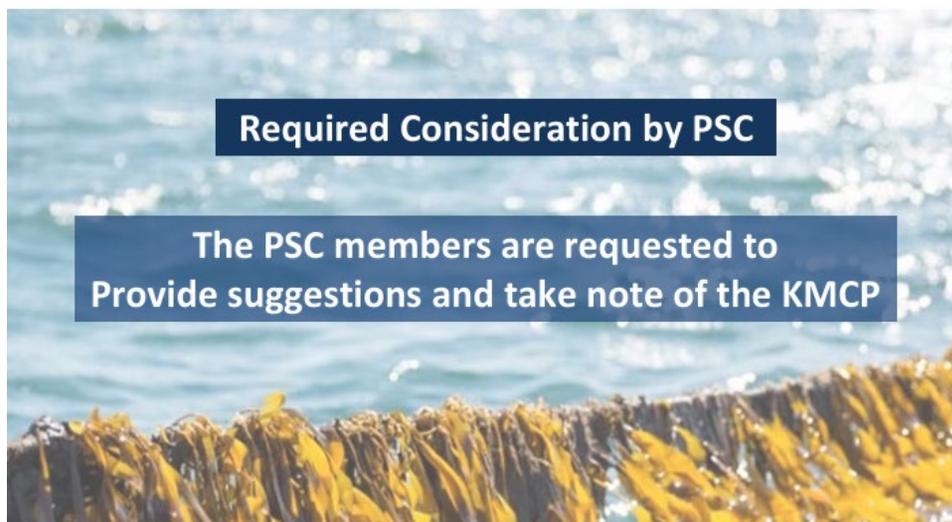
Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines

Communication Strategy



- Key Messages
- Types of Products
- Contents
- Inputs
- Clearance
- Tools and Platforms
- Logos
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Responsibilities and budget
- Work Plan
- Amendment

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines



Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5-6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, the Philippines



2nd Meeting of Project Steering Committee
Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

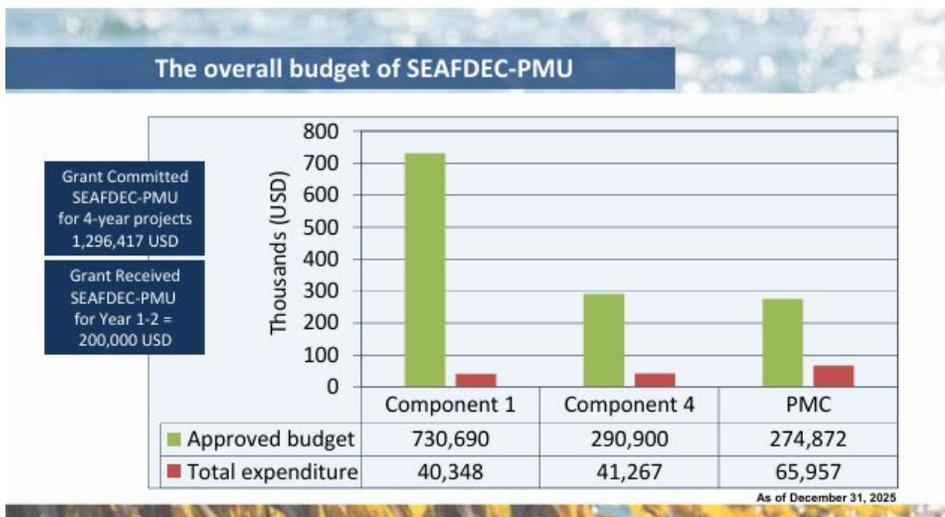
Agenda 12 : Finance Progress and Audit Compliance

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5 – 6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, Philippines

SEAFDEC Finance Audit:

1. SEAFDEC PMU is hiring audit firm to conduct financial audit of the project
2. The audit will be conducted from April – May 2026
3. The audit report will be submitted to WWF US in June 2026

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5 – 6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, Philippines



Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5 – 6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, Philippines

Budget line	Component 1			Component 4			PMC		
	Approved	Expenditure	Balance	Approved	Expenditure	Balance	Approved	Expenditure	Balance
Contract services-Individual	10,000	-	10,000	14,000	-	14,000	-	-	-
Contract services-company	-	-	-	400	-	400	26,000	-	26,000
International Consultants	326,400	-	326,400	102,000	2,683.32	99,316.68	-	-	-
Salary and Benefits/ Staff cost	128,873.22	27,300	101,573.22	72,500	21,300	51,200	111,627	14,068.40	97,558.60
Training, Workshops, Meetings	121,417	9,635.84	111,781.16	36,000	5,861.98	30,138.02	-	-	-
Travel	144,000	3,412.18	140,587.82	64,000	8,564.37	55,435.63	-	-	-
Offices Supplies	-	-	-	2,000	2,857.29	-857.29	12,100	5,187.75	6,912.25
Other Operating Cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	125,100	46,700.90	78,399.10
Total	730,690.22	40,348.02	690,342.20	290,900	41,266.96	249,633.04	274,827	65,957.05	208,869.95

As of December 31, 2025

Deliverables: Financial report

Quarterly Financial Report	Timeline for Submit Report
1 Jan- 31 Mar	30 Apr
1 Apr- 31 Jun	31 Jul
1 Jul- 30 Sep	31 Oct
1 Oct- 31 Dec	31 Jan

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5 – 6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, Philippines

Period of annual workplan and budget 1 July -30 June

Draft annual workplan, budget and procurement plan	Timeline submission
Year 1	30 June 2024
Year 2	30 April 2025
Year 3	30 April 2026
Year 4	30 April 2027

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5 – 6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, Philippines

Required Consideration by PSC

The PSC members are requested to take note of the financial status of each agency

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 5 – 6 March 2026 | Coron, Palawan, Philippines

Project Steering Committee Meeting Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture

6 March 2026

CLOSING REMARKS

*By Ms. Sampan Panjarat
SEAFDEC Secretary-General*

Distinguished representatives, partners, and colleagues,

As we conclude the Second Meeting of the Project Steering Committee, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to all PSC members, observers, and partners for your active engagement and valuable contributions over the past two days.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your collective insights on the project implementation arrangements, workplan and budget, gender and stakeholder engagement strategies, and the contingency measures to address implementation delays have strengthened our shared direction and reaffirmed our commitment to delivering meaningful impact across the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

SEAFDEC, together with BFAR, DFiS, and WWF-US, looks forward to working closely with all of you as we carry forward the recommendations agreed upon in this meeting and move confidently into the next phase of the project.

Thank you once again for your dedication and collaboration. In particular, I would like to extend my high appreciation to Madame Drusila for her leadership in this meeting and BFAR team. We wish everyone safe travels and look forward to reconvening at the next PSC meeting. I wish you all good health, continued success, and I hope you enjoy Coron and safe trip back home. Thank you very much.

Project Steering Committee Meeting Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture

6 March 2026

CLOSING REMARKS

***By RD ROBERTO R. ABRERA
OIC-Regional Director***

Distinguished members of the Project Steering Committee, our valued partners from the Global Environment Facility, WWF-US, SEAFDEC, our counterparts from Viet Nam, colleagues in government, and friends,

As we conclude the 2nd Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project, allow me to express my sincere appreciation for your active participation and thoughtful contributions over the past two days.

This meeting has been productive and purposeful. We have carefully reviewed the progress made since our 1st PSC Meeting in Bangkok, revisited the action points we adopted, and confirmed the steps taken to strengthen governance and implementation. We received updates on the status of the Grant Agreement of Viet Nam and discussed the contingency measures put in place to address earlier delays. These conversations were honest and constructive, and they provide us with clearer direction moving forward.

We also examined improvements in coordination among the SEAFDEC Project Management Unit, the National PMUs, and WWF-US to ensure timely reporting and compliance with GEF requirements. Strengthened coordination and communication are essential if we are to maintain momentum and deliver results according to schedule.

A key outcome of this meeting is the review and approval of the Annual Work Plans and Budgets — Year 3 for SEAFDEC PMU, Year 2 for BFAR Philippines, and Year 1 for DFiS Viet Nam — prior to submission for final approval. These work plans are not merely administrative documents. They are our roadmap for the next phase of implementation. They define our targets, guide resource allocation, and clarify responsibilities across implementing partners.

We also reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing the implementation of the Gender Action Plan and strengthening stakeholder engagement strategies. Inclusive participation remains fundamental to the sustainability of this project. Ensuring that women, youth, and marginalized sectors are meaningfully involved in seaweed aquaculture is both a matter of equity and a strategic investment in long-term success.

Most importantly, our discussions consistently returned to the welfare of fisherfolk communities. The seaweed value chains we are building must translate into real improvements at the community level — more stable incomes, stronger resilience to climate and disease risks, and better access to markets and technology. The success of Blue Horizon will ultimately be measured not only by compliance with project indicators, but by tangible benefits felt by the families who depend on this sector.

At the same time, we remain firm in our commitment to environmental stewardship. Seaweed aquaculture holds great potential to contribute to ecosystem services, ocean health, and climate mitigation. Our responsibility is to ensure that expansion and innovation in the sector are guided by sound science and responsible governance.

As host country, the Philippines reiterates its commitment to translating the resolutions adopted in this meeting into concrete action. Through strengthened extension services, science-based management, capacity-building programs, and closer coordination with local governments and partners, we will continue to advance the objectives of this project.

The decisions, endorsements, and action points we have adopted today provide clear guidance for the months ahead. What is now required is sustained cooperation, timely implementation, and continued accountability from all of us. I commend every member of the Steering Committee and our partners for your dedication and professionalism. Your commitment strengthens not only this project, but the broader goal of building a resilient and sustainable seaweed industry in Southeast Asia.

On behalf of the DA-BFAR, I thank you for your partnership and wish you safe travels as you return to your respective countries and offices.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang ating mga mangingisda.

Mabuhay kayong lahat.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PHILIPPINES

- Drusila Esther E. Bayate (Ms.)**
PSC Member,
Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of
Agriculture
- Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
(BFAR) Fisheries Bldg. Complex BPI
Compound Brgy. Vasra, Diliman,
Quezon City 1101, Republic of the Philippines
E-mail: debayate@da.gov.ph
- Ida T. Capacio (Ms.)**
Center Chief, National Seaweed Focal point
- Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
(BFAR)
Quezon City, Philippines
Tel: (+63) 0998-889-9214
E-mail: icapacio@bfar.da.gov.ph
- Mariglo Rosaida I. Laririt (Ms.)**
PSC Member
Assistant Director for Biodiversity
Management Bureau
- Department of Environment and Natural
Resources
E-mail: osec@denr.gov.ph
ohea@denr.gov.ph
- Alfredo Ancheta Pedrosa III**
PSC Member
Chairman of Seaweed Industry Association of
the Philippines
- Seaweed Industry Association of the
Philippines
935 San Jose St. Mauway, Mandaluyong
City, Metro Manila Philippines
Tel: (+63) 0917-884-1226
E-mail: aapiii7773@yahoo.com

VIET NAM

- Nguyen Vu Mai Anh (Ms.)**
PSC Member
Officer, Aquaculture Division
- Department of Fisheries and Surveillance
10 Nguyen Cong Hoan, Giarg Vo Ward
Hanoi, Viet Nam
E-mail: nvmaianh@gmail.com
nvmanh2@mae.gov.vn

SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SEAFDEC)

Secretariat

Koichi Tahara

P.O. Box 1046, Kasetsart Post Office

PSC Member (on behalf of Secretary-
General)
Deputy Secretary-General

Bangkok 10903, Thailand
E-mail: dsg@seafdec.org

Dr. Worawit Wanchana
Policy and Program Coordinator

E-mail: worawit@seafdec.org

Muhamad Nour
Project Manager/ Technical Advisor of the
Blue Horizon Seaweed Project

E-mail: muhamad@seafdec.org

Onjira Korboon (Ms.)
Policy Officer

E-mail: Onjira@seafdec.org

Training Department (TD)

Jariya Sornkliang (Ms.)
Gender Focal Point

P.O. Box 97, Suksawat Road, Laem Fa Pha,
Phasamutchedi, Samut Prakan, 10290,
Thailand
E-mail: jariya@seafdec.org

Aquaculture Department (AQD)

Dan D. Baliao
Department Chief

Brgy. Buyu-an, Tigbauan, Iloilo,
5021, Philippines
Tel: + 63 033 330-7010
E-mail: dbaliao@seafdec.org.ph

Joseph Polido Faisan Jr.
Technical Specialist

Tel: + 63 956 058 9214
E-mail: jfaisan@seafdec.org.ph

Observers

Imelda R. Calixto (Ms.)
Officer-in-Charge
Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Division

Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
(BFAR) Fisheries Bldg. Complex BPI
Compound Brgy. Vasra, Diliman,
Quezon City 1101, Republic of the Philippines
E-mail: ifadco@bfar.da.gov.ph
icalixto2021@gmail.com

Beverly S. San Juan
RFPN Philippines

P.O. Box 1046, Kasetsart Post Office
Bangkok 10903, Thailand
E-mail: beverly@seafdec.org

Dang Thi Thuy Quynh (Ms.)
RFPN Viet Nam

E-mail: quynh@seafdec.org

DUY Nguyen Phuong
Food Practice Coordinator

WWF Viet Nam
3rd floor, College of Environment and
Natural Resources
Campus II, Can Tho University, 3/2 Str.,
Ninh Kieu Dist., Can Tho City
Tel: +84 292 3872123
E-mail: duy.nguyenphuong@wwf.org.vn

Alijomar T. Pedrosa

Seaweed Industry Association of the
Philippines
935 San Jose St. Mauway, Mandaluyong
City, Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel: (+63) 09178411226.
E-mail: jomar_ped12@yahoo.com

Secretariat of the Meeting

Arpaporn Eiamsa-ard (Ms.)
Senior Administrative Officer

P.O. Box 1046, Kasetsart Post Office
Bangkok 10903, Thailand
E-mail: arpaporn@seafdec.org

Meen Limthammahisorn
Administrative Officer III

E-mail: meen@seafdec.org

Thanitta Sookklam (Ms.)
Administrative Officer

E-mail: thanitta@seafdec.org

OPENING REMARKS

By Koichi Tahara

SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General

Distinguished representatives from *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*, CESO IV Undersecretary for Fisheries from the Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Viet Nam, *Ms. Nguyễn Vũ Mai Anh*, DFiS Viet Nam, *Ms. Mariglo Rosaida I. Laririt*, Assistant Director, Biodiversity Management Bureau, *Mr. Alfredo Pedrosa III*, Chairman of SIAP (Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines),

Observers, *Mr. Dan Baliao*, Chief of AQD, *Mr. Duy Nguyen Phuong*, Representative of WWF Viet Nam, BFAR and DFiS Representatives, SEAFDEC Senior Officers, SEAFDEC Project Management Unit, RPFN colleagues

Good morning and welcome to Bangkok

On behalf of SEAFDEC, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to the **First Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project**. We are grateful for your participation and your commitment to advancing sustainable seaweed aquaculture across Southeast Asia.

This project represents a significant step forward in our collective efforts to enhance the sustainability of coastal and marine ecosystems, while also improving the livelihoods of coastal communities across our region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's workshop marks the official start of this important collaboration, supported by the Global Environment Facility through WWF US as the Implementing Agency, and jointly executed by SEAFDEC, BFAR Philippines, and the Department of Fisheries of Viet Nam. Over the next four years, this project will strengthen seaweed value chains, advance technical innovation, and deliver tangible ecosystem services all contributing to our shared commitment to sustainable fisheries and ocean health.

Today marks an important milestone as we come together to review the overall progress of the project, finalize the Terms of Reference for both the PSC and the Seaweed Technical Working Group, and confirm key amendments introduced in the updated project document. We will also discuss and approve the consolidated work plan and budget, strengthen our coordination mechanisms, and examine contingency measures to keep the project on track.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your guidance is essential in shaping effective implementation, ensuring strong collaboration

among SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DFIS, and upholding the project's goals in gender responsiveness, stakeholder engagement, and results-based monitoring.

Thank you once again for your dedication. I look forward to productive discussions and collective decisions that will support a harmonized and sustainable seaweed sector for our region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish you all a productive discussion and look forward to seeing the outcomes of our collective efforts in the years ahead.

Thank you and I wish you all a successful meeting.

REMARKS

By Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate

Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of Agriculture

Distinguished representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Viet Nam, colleagues from SEAFDEC, our partners from WWF, fellow Philippine delegates from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), esteemed representatives from the Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP), ladies and gentlemen, good morning. It is my honor to represent the Philippine government's Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources at this First Regional Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project. I extend my sincere appreciation to SEAFDEC for organizing this gathering and for graciously hosting us here in Bangkok.

Today marks an important milestone as we formally convene the PSC, an essential body that will guide, oversee, and support the effective implementation of this regional initiative. As this project moves from inception into full implementation phase, our collective leadership becomes crucial in ensuring that the vision of Blue Horizon Project is translated into concrete and sustainable results.

For the Philippines, this project holds immense significance. Seaweed remains one of our most valuable aquaculture commodities—strengthening coastal economies, supporting thousands of fisherfolk households, and contributing to our role as a leading global producer. Beyond its economic relevance, seaweed aquaculture also presents a vital pathway for climate resilience, environmental protection, and community empowerment.

Thus, the Blue Horizon Project aligns deeply with the national priorities of the Philippine government and the broader regional agenda to promote responsible and sustainability-centered aquaculture.

We recognize and appreciate the regional collaborative framework established under this project. The leadership of SEAFDEC, the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through WWF, and the active engagement of Viet Nam all contribute to a strong foundation for shared learning, harmonized standards, and cooperative action. This cooperation is essential if we are to elevate seaweed aquaculture in Southeast Asia to a globally competitive and environmentally sound sector.

As we proceed with the work of this Project Steering Committee, the Philippines reaffirms its full commitment to carrying out its responsibilities under Components 2 and 3, strengthening our national enabling environment and advancing our seaweed value chains. BFAR will ensure active coordination with our domestic stakeholders, local government units, industry partners, and coastal communities so that the project's benefits are felt where they matter most.

We also welcome the project's emphasis on gender inclusivity and meaningful stakeholder participation. Ensuring that women, small-scale producers, and marginalized groups are fully

engaged in planning and decision-making will enrich both the quality and the impact of our interventions.

In this meeting, we look forward to finalizing the Terms of Reference of the Project Steering Committee and the Seaweed Technical Working Group, reviewing the amendments to the project documents, approving the consolidated Annual Work Plan and Budget, and discussing strategies to address potential implementation delays. These actions will provide the structure, clarity, and foresight needed to guide the project's next phases.

Allow me to express once again the Philippines' appreciation to all partners present today. Your dedication strengthens our shared aspirations for a resilient, innovative, and sustainable seaweed aquaculture sector in our region.

On behalf of the Philippines' Department of Agriculture and BFAR, I reaffirm our readiness to collaborate closely with all of you as we work toward achieving the goals of the Blue Horizon Project.

Thank you, and I look forward to a productive and meaningful meeting ahead.

REMARKS
By Ms. Nguyen Vu Mai Anh
Department of Fisheries and Surveillance

Distinguished Chair,

Esteemed Members of the Project Steering Committee,
Colleagues and Partners,

On behalf of Viet Nam, I am pleased to participate in the first Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Blue Horizon Project. We greatly appreciate the partnership with GEF, WWF, SEAFDEC, and Philippines in advancing sustainable seaweed aquaculture as a nature-based solution for ocean health, climate resilience, and community livelihoods.

Viet Nam attaches high importance to the responsible and sustainable development of the seaweed sector. We welcome the project's support in strengthening governance frameworks, improving national and provincial planning, and applying ecosystem-based and marine spatial planning tools to guide environmentally sound and socially inclusive expansion. These efforts align closely with our national priorities for a resilient blue economy and climate adaptation.

Viet Nam reaffirms its strong commitment to active cooperation with GEF, WWF, SEAFDEC, Philippines, and relevant stakeholders throughout implementation. We look forward to constructive collaboration and to contributing to regional knowledge sharing for the benefit of all participating countries. In particular, we value opportunities to exchange experience on sustainable farming models, traceability, post-harvest technologies, and market development.

We are confident that through our collective efforts, the Blue Horizon Project will generate meaningful and lasting benefits for our region and our oceans. We extend our best wishes for a productive meeting and the successful implementation of the project.
Thank you very much.

Provisional Prospectus

I. Background

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture is a project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and officially endorsed by the GEF CEO in July 2022. The project has been allocated USD 6 million for implementation over a four-year period (2024–2028)². The institutional arrangement for the project includes WWF as the GEF Agency, the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) as the Lead Regional Executing Agency (its Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand will host the Project Management Unit (PMU), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) of the Philippines and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS) of Viet Nam as the project executing partners in the Philippines and Viet Nam, respectively, and a Project Steering Committee.

The project comprises four components: 1) Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia; 2) Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam; 3) Seaweed Value Chains (production, processing, and marketing); and 4) Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional). The PMU SEAFDEC will specifically carry out Component 1 and 4 that focus on the development of regional plans and principles of responsible seaweed aquaculture, including a toolkit to guide the application of the principles in developing standards of product, environmental protection, and operational safety. The outputs from component 1 and 4 are expected to foster a harmonized approach across the region. Meanwhile, DOF Viet Nam and BFAR Philippines will implement Component 2 and Component 3 that focus on the development national components of seaweed aquaculture and its value chains.

Under **Component 4**, the project will facilitate the establishment of a Project Steering Committee (PSC) to serve as the oversight, advisory, and support body for the project. The PSC will consist of representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (VN), Department of Agriculture (PH), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (PH), Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines, and SEAFDEC. A representative (s) from WWF, as the GEF Agency, will hold an “observer status” in the Project Steering Committee.

The PSC is responsible for approving annual work plans and budgets, as well as any strategic changes, and ensures that the project remains on track to deliver tangible environmental and socio-economic benefits at both the country and regional scales. The PSC meeting sessions will be organized both virtual and in person.

The PMU SEAFDEC organized an online Inception Workshop on 14 August 2025 to bring together all key stakeholders, including the implementing agency and executing agencies, BFAR/PH and DFiS/VN. The workshop was aimed to kick off the project and engage a broader audience in its objectives and activities, discuss the project’s objectives, components, implementation strategies, and expected outcomes.

² SEAFDEC’s activities will be completed within this period, while implementation in the Philippines and Viet Nam will extend to 2029.

In line with the framework of the project and as follow up the Inception Workshop, the Project Management Unit (PMU) will organize 1st Project Steering Committee (PSC) to discuss project implementation together with proposed PSC members from Viet Nam and the Philippines. The PMU SEAFDEC will promote gender-balanced representation within the PSC, supporting women’s engagement in leadership roles, and ensure that gender perspectives are incorporated into project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

II. Objectives of the 1st PSC Meeting

The objectives of the 1st PSC meeting are:

1. To provide an overview and status of the Project
2. To finalize and adopt the Terms of Reference of the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
3. To finalize and adopt the Terms of Reference of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG)
4. To review and confirm key elements that amended in the approved project document (memorandum dated 28 March 2024)
5. To review and approve work plan and budget of executing agencies
6. To discuss and provide suggestion on contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays.
7. To refresh the content of Gender Action Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan of the project

III. Expected outputs

1. Adoption of the Terms of Reference for the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
2. Adoption of the Terms of Reference of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG)
3. Confirmation on key elements that amended to previously approved project document (memorandum dated 28 March 2024)
4. Approval of the consolidate Annual Work Plan and Budget.
5. Suggestions on contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays.
6. Suggestions on the content of Gender Action Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

IV. Participants

The PSC members will consist of well-balance representatives from target countries and agencies with equal representation men and women, comprising:

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Viet Nam³
 - . Ms. Nguyễn Vũ Mai Anh, Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam
 - 2. Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate, CESO IV Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of Agriculture of the Philippines
2. Ms. Mariglo Rosaida I. Laririt ., Assistant Director for Biodiversity Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines.

³ The PSC will invite two representatives from MAE Viet Nam

3. Mr. Alfredo Pedrosa III, Chairman of SIAP (Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines)
4. Mr. Koichi Tahara, Deputy Secretary General SEAFDEC Secretariat

Meanwhile, the first PSC meeting will also invite observers, comprising:

1. Mr. Dan D. Baliao, Chief of Office AQD
2. Ms. Ida T. Capacio, National Project Focal Point
3. Mr. Duy Nguyen Phuong, WWF Viet Nam
4. Dr. Worawit Wanchana, PPC SEAFDEC Secretariat
5. Ms. Jariya Sornkliang, Gender Focal Point SEAFDEC Secretariat
6. Mr. Beverly S. San Juan, RFPN for the Philippines
7. Ms. Dan Thi Thu Quynh, RFPN for Viet Nam
8. Mr. Muhamad Nour, Project Manager/Technical Advisor
9. Mr. Joseph Faisan/Technical Specialist
10. Ms. Onjira Korboon, Policy Officer

V. Meeting Venue

The meeting will be held at Solitaire Hotel Sukhumvit Bangkok, Thailand during a period of 27 – 28 November 2025.

AGENDA

- Agenda 1: Opening of the Meeting**
- Welcome Remarks by SEAFDEC
 - Country Remarks by BFAR/PH
 - Country Remarks by DFiS/VN
- Agenda 2: Introduction, Objectives and Adoption of the Agenda**
- Agenda 3: Project Overview and Status**
- Agenda 4: Consideration and Adoption of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Project Steering Committee (PSC)**
- Agenda 5: Report on the outcomes of the Inception Workshop including recommendations from the Inception Workshop**
- Agenda 6: Review of the memorandum dated 28 March 2024 on Amendment to previously approved documents under the WWF/GEF Project: Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture**
- Agenda 7: Report of the Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG), Consideration and adoption of the membership and draft Terms of Reference for the S-TWG.**
- Agenda 8: Consideration and Approval of Consolidated Annual Workplan and Budget**
- SEAFDEC
 - BFAR/PH
- Agenda 9: Annual Co-finance letter**
- Agenda 10: Finance progress**
- SEAFDEC
 - BFAR/PH
- Agenda 11: Discussion on the contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays.**
- Agenda 12: Refresh the Gender Action Plan**
- Agenda 13: Conclusion and next steps and Endorsement of PSC recommendations:**
- Summary of major discussion and recommended action points and follow-up actions
 - Endorsement of the recommendations
 - Discuss and propose next PSC meeting (date and venue)
- Agenda 14: Closing of the Meeting**

**A SHORT SUMMARY OF
PROJECT DOCUMENT
ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE YEAR 2025
AND
PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR 2026**

*(based on the document for the 48th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Program Committee, 3-5
November 2025, in Malaysia)*

			Project ID: 202306003
Program Category:	ASEAN-SEAFDEC ASSP and FCG Mechanism		
Project Title:	Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture		
Program Strategy No:	II	Total Period	2024–2028 ⁴
Lead Department:	Secretariat/AQD	Lead Country:	-
Donor/Sponsor:	GEF/WWF-US	Total Project Budget:	GEF IW allocation 6,000,000 USD SEAFDEC received grant 1,359,144 USD
Project Partner(s):	BFAR (PH), DFIS (VN)	Budget for July 2024- June 2025⁵:	SEAFDEC: 217,375 USD
Lead Technical Officer:	Mr. Muhamad Nour	Project Participating Countries	The Philippines and Viet Nam

PART I: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Background/Introduction

Seaweed farming is becoming a lucrative business in coastal provinces - farmed as a foodstuff, with seaweed being cultivated not only as a food source, but also used for in food processing, cosmetics, and medical industries. The livelihoods of coastal communities are closely linked to

⁴ For SEAFDEC Component and other participating countries may go beyond 2028

⁵ Based on 1st Year annual workplan and budget approved by WWF, covers from July 2024-June 2025, fiscal year of WWF)

the quality of water and habitat in these rich marine ecosystems. Seaweed cultivation addresses multiple environmental threats to coastal waters by absorbing excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, thereby reducing the risk of hypoxia and converting these nutrients into valuable protein, oils, green chemical feedstock, and a range of industrial products. This process supports ecosystem services, enhances biodiversity, and contributes to carbon sequestration.

From a socio-economic perspective, seaweed farming promotes livelihood resilience for coastal communities. It can also be integrated into multi-trophic aquaculture systems, further strengthening these communities' economic stability while simultaneously providing environmental benefits that contribute to the overall health and sustainability of coastal ecosystems.

While the seaweed industry has significant untapped potential to supply high-quality, cost competitive biomass for emerging international value chains, such as producing sustainable fishmeal and oil alternatives to support the environmental sustainability of the aquaculture sector, it faces several challenges that hinder its growth. The current industry structure is marked by frequent disease outbreaks (e.g., ice-ice disease) exacerbated by climate change and the low genetic variability of seed stocks. Additionally, the widespread use (and subsequent loss) of plastics, along with the lack of standardized protocols that follow an eco-system approach, limits the ability to optimize the environmental footprint of seaweed production.

The project, *Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture*, aims to strengthen and develop seaweed value chains at global, regional, and national levels. The focus will be on the coastal and marine ecosystems in Viet Nam and the Philippines, where there is significant potential for expanding seaweed aquaculture and its associated value chains. The project is expected to deliver both environmental and socio-economic benefits. Environmental benefits include enhanced ecosystem services provided by seaweed farms, such as reducing ocean acidification, oxygenating coastal waters, mitigating eutrophication and harmful algal blooms, and improving conditions for aquatic biodiversity. Socioeconomic benefits include livelihood opportunities through higher production and quality of seaweed biomass, leading to greater profits for seaweed farmers; enhanced income-producing and trading higher-value processed seaweed products, and strengthened capacities within local communities.

These benefits are expected to be measured as follows:

- 66,000 metric tons of CO₂ emissions mitigated (based on seaweed biomass that falls off during production and ends up sequestering carbon at the ocean bottom)
- 15,000 beneficiaries benefiting from the project
- 4,400 tons of Nitrogen and phosphorus captured

2. Project in relevance to the Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2030



3. Gender Sensitivity of the Project

During the project development phase, the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan were conducted for the Philippines, Viet Nam, and at the regional level (a total of three Gender Analyses and Gender Action Plans) to ensure gender mainstreaming throughout the project cycle. The Gender Analysis examines the differences between men and women, their access and control over resources, and the implications for the project's goals, objectives, outcomes, and outputs. As a result, the project is fully aligned with and supports SEAFDEC, WWF, and GEF. It will also integrate best practices and lessons learned to promote gender equity and empowerment along the seaweed value chain.

4. Project Goal, Components, Outcomes, Outputs, and Overall Implementation Plan

4.1 Project Goal, Outcomes, Outputs

The overarching goal of the Project is to “create new sustainable seaweed value chains that will deliver ecosystem services and provide socio-economic benefits to communities, particularly to households whose livelihoods depend on marine ecosystems.”

To achieve the goal, the project will be conducted in the following four components:

- **Component 1: Regional capacity building for seaweed aquaculture.** This Component focuses on strengthening regional capacity and developing strategic plans for seaweed aquaculture. It also includes participation in global seaweed coalitions to enhance regional collaboration.
- **Component 2: Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in Philippines and Viet Nam.** This component aims to create an enabling environment for seaweed aquaculture at the national level by supporting processes to identify appropriate areas for expansion and operationalizing management plans specific to such areas, with accompanying plans and coordination mechanisms at national and global levels.
- **Component 3: Seaweed Value Chains (production + processing + marketing).** This component requires collaborating with producers and cooperatives to pilot offshore seaweed farms as proof-of- concept sites for off-shore seaweed production. It will also test a scalable seaweed carbon credit model and expand partnerships with finance and private sectors.
- **Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional).** This component involves knowledge sharing and robust monitoring and evaluation. Activities will be monitored and communicated through multiple channels, building on existing baseline initiatives in the seaweed industry in the Philippines and Viet Nam to promote the interests of seaweed farmers, support their communities, and expand the global seaweed market sustainably.

The project will deliver several key outputs and outcomes, as described below:

Component 1 Regional capacity building for seaweed aquaculture

Outcome 1.1: Regionally adopted plans and principles to harmonize seaweed aquaculture in Southeast Asia

- Output 1.1.1 Regional Seaweed Technical Working Group, constituted and formally mandated by SEAFDEC Governing Council
- Output 1.1.2. Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region, endorsed by the SEAFDEC Governing Council
- Output 1.1.3 SEA Regional Principles for Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture, including a toolkit for applying principles, aligned to the Safe Seaweed Coalition
- Output 1.1.4 Training modules and information packages to support a sustainable seaweed industry in South East Asia

Component 2 Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in Philippines and Viet Nam

Outcome 2.1: Improved planning for seaweed aquaculture and capture of nutrients from the ocean

Output: Communication products, including a website to share project outcomes

- Output 2.1.1 Marine spatial planning that integrates more sustainable seaweed farming
- Output 2.1.2 National Seaweed Plan presented for adoption (VN) and National Seaweed Industry Roadmap (PH) adapted to local levels

Outcome 2.2: Robust institutional and regulatory frameworks ensure that the expansion of seaweed farming is sustainable, responsible, and equitable

- Output 2.2.1 Policy and Regulatory gap analysis and associated frameworks (e.g. Circulars; technical guidelines) to facilitate seaweed aquaculture planning, development, and management
- Output 2.2.2 An open-source Information Management System to facilitate national and provincial-level planning and management of the seaweed aquaculture sector (VN)

Component 3 Seaweed Value Chains (production + processing + marketing)

Outcome 3.1: Improved technologies and testing for seaweed value chains in PH and VN

- Output 3.1.1: Six demonstration farms to provide proof of concept of different seaweed farming options:
 - ✓ Four demonstration farms (of Eucheumatoid species) to provide proof of concept of off-the-coast or off-shore scalable seaweed businesses (based on zones identified in 2.1.2).
 - ✓ Two demonstration farms (*Caulerpa* sp.), one in degraded former shrimp ponds and another in an adjacent shallow nearshore area
- Output 3.1.2: Implementation of at least 2 seaweed value chain initiatives (adding

value to raw seaweed in seaweed farming communities; improved propagules; transparency)

Outcome 3.2: Generating benefits from seaweed aquaculture for target communities (PH and VN)

- Output 3.2.1: Sustainable Seaweed Toolkit and training for improved production, processing, and market access
- Output 3.2.2: Seaweed farmer/cooperative support systems (value chain development and participation, business management, access to financing and other key inputs)

Outcome 3.3: Expanded collaboration with the finance sector and private sector to support seaweed value chains in the Philippines and Viet Nam

- Output 3.3.1. Development of 3-4 bankable business propositions to scale up sustainable seaweed value chain solutions tested under 3.1 and new innovative solutions
- Output 3.3.2: Investment seminars and industry and investment forums conducted in collaboration with government representatives, development partners, and the private sector, including key value chain actors

Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)

Outcome 4.1: Full participation in IW: LEARN and knowledge management/communication

- Output 4.1.1: Participation in two IW: LEARN regional meetings and one GEF International Waters Conference, delivering IW: LEARN experience notes
- Output 4.1.2: Knowledge management and communication platform and products

Outcome 4.2: Monitoring and evaluation system in place

- Output 4.2.1: Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, terminal evaluation)

4.2 Project overall implementation plan for Year 1-Year 4 (original project document)

The GEF CEO approved the project document for “*Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture*,” including the overall implementation plan for four years (48 months). WWF-US serves as the GEF Agency, with three (3) Executing Agencies: SEAFDEC as the regional Executing Agency and host of the Project Management Unit (PMU), the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Viet Nam as national Executing Agencies. The overall implementation structure is shown below.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Component 1: Regional capacity building for seaweed aquaculture				
Outcome 1				
Output 1.1.1	X			
Output 1.1.2	X	X	X	X

Output 1.1.3		X	X	X
Output 1.1.4		X	X	X
Component 2: Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in Philippines and Viet Nam				
Output 2.1.1 (PH)	X			
Output 2.1.1 (VN)	X	X	X	X
Output 2.1.2(PH)	X			
Output 2.1.2(VN)	X	X	X	X
Output 2.2.1 (PH)	X			
Output 2.2.1(VN)	X	X	X	X
Output 2.2.2 (VN)	X	X	X	X
Component 3: Seaweed Value Chains (production + processing + marketing)				
Output 3.1.1 (PH)	X	X		
Output 3.1.1 (VN)	X	X	X	X
Output 3.1.2 (VN)	X	X	X	X
Output 3.2.1 (VN)		X	X	X
Output 3.2.2 (PH)	X			
Output 3.2.3 (PH)	X	X	X	X
Output 3.3.1 (PH)		X	X	X
Output 3.3.1 (VN)		X	X	X
Output 3.3.2 (PH)				X
Output 3.3.2 (VN)				X
Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)				
Output 4.1.1		X	X	X
Output 4.1.2	X	X	X	X
Output 4.2.1	X	X	X	X

4.3 Project overall proposed budget for activities implementation for Year 1-Year 4

Component	Budget (USD)	Responsible Agencies
1	730,690	SEAFDEC
2	1,283,629	PH+VN
3	2,646,163	PH+VN
4	588,250	SEAFDEC, PH, VN, WWF-US

PART II: PROJECT STATUS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025

1. Project Summary in 2025 (as of 3 November 2025)

Since the GEF CEO endorsed the project in July 2022, the WWF GEF Agency has been working with SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam to initiate project execution. The WWF GEF Agency would provide grants separately to each executing agency. SEAFDEC and WWF GEF Agency entered into an Agreement on 26 April 2024, with the Grant Agreement effective until 31 December 2028. SEAFDEC is responsible for regional activities under Components 1 and 4, as well as the project management unit, while BFAR and DOF Viet Nam are responsible for national activities under Components 2 and 3, and contributing relevant inputs to the PMU. As of 1 July 2025, the Philippines has signed grant agreement with the WWF US as GEF Implementing Agency, meanwhile Viet Nam is still in progress.

For activities under SEAFDEC’s responsibility, SEAFDEC submitted the 2nd Year Annual Workplan⁶ and Budget of SEAFDEC to WWF-GEF Agency, covering the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. This plan was approved by the WWF GEF Agency on 23 May 2025. The 2nd Year Annual Workplan and Budget would also require approval from the Project Steering Committee (PSC) once the 1st PSC Meeting convenes, which will occur after at least one of the countries begins operations. Meanwhile, SEAFDEC has completed establishing the Project Management Unit (PMU) Office and recruiting PMU staff comprising Project Manager/Technical Advisor, Administrative Office, and Technical Specialist. Several consultants of Monitoring and Evaluation, Information and Technology, and Communications were also recruited to support the project in implementing Component 1 and Component 4.

2. Outputs, proposed activities, and budget in 2025-2026⁷

Project Outcomes/Outputs	Proposed Activities	Duration	Proposed Budget (USD)
Component 1: Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in SE Asia			
Outcome 1.1	Regionally adopted plans and principles to harmonize seaweed aquaculture in SE Asia		
Output 1.1.1: Regional Seaweed Technical Working Group, constituted and formally mandated by SEAFDEC Governing Council	<u>Activity 1.1.1.1</u> Develop a Draft Terms of Reference of the S-TWG, including gender-specific considerations	July 2025	30,000
	<u>Activity 1.1.1.2</u> Obtain Governing Council’s approval of the draft Terms of Reference of the S-TWG, its formation and giving it a formal mandate.	November 2025	

⁶ The fiscal year of the Project is 1 July-30 June of each calendar year.

⁷ Component 1 and 4 of Workplan Year 2 covering 1 July 2025-30 June 2026. The workplan was approved by WWF GEF Agency

	<u>Activity 1.1.1.3</u> Obtain nominations from each government for a member in the S-TWG taking into consideration gender balance in the S-TWG	September 2025	
	<u>Activity 1.1.1.4</u> Convene the First Meeting of the S-TWG taking into consideration gender balance in the STWG	November 2025	
Output 1.1.2: Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region, endorsed by the SEAFDEC Governing Council	<u>Activity 1.1.2.1</u> Draft ToR and contract a consultant to support development of the Guide (of which Guide is developed with gender-sensitive considerations)	September 2025	-
	<u>Activity 1.1.2.2</u> S-TWG meeting to define the scope of the Guide and review ToR for a consultant to assist in drafting the Guide consider gender and inclusion dimensions in the scope of the Guide.	November 2025	
Output 1.1.3: SEA Regional Principles for Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture, including toolkit for applying principles, aligned to the Safe Seaweed Coalition	<u>Activity 1.1.3.1</u> Desktop assessment to inform the development of principles and criteria including consideration of gender and inclusion dimensions.	September 2025	12,000
Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)			
Outcome 4.1: Full participation in IW: LEARN and knowledge management/communication			
Output 4.1.1 Participation in two IW: LEARN regional meetings and one GEF International Waters Conference, delivering IW: LEARN experience notes	Activity 4.1.1.1 website uploaded/included on IW: Learn ensuring gender and inclusion learning are highlighted when and where relevant.	Oct - Dec 2025	15,000

Output 4.1.2: Knowledge management and communication platform and products	Activity 4.1.2.1 Formulate the KM and C Strategy and Plan (including Gendersensitive/responsive consideration)	June 2025	9,400
	Activity 4.1.2.2 Develop the Project website hosted by AQD, continuously update with project information.	Sept - Oct 2025	
Outcome 4.2: Monitoring and evaluation system in place			
Output 4.2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, terminal evaluation)	Activity 4.2.1.1 Inception workshop and PSC meeting taking into consideration gender balance in the event	August 2025	109,300
	Activity 4.2.1.2 Produce, deliver 6monthly project progress reports	July 2025	
	Activity 4.2.1.3 Produce, deliver Financial Reports Quarterly	Jan, Apr, and Jul 2025	
	Activity 4.2.1.4 Organize Adaptive Management/Reflection Meetings Yearly (4th Qtr, Yrs 1,2 and3)	Apr-June 2026	
	Activity 4.1.2.6 M&E consultant develop M&E plan (including Monitoring against gender disaggregated or gender-specific indicators)	Oct - Dec 2025	

3. List of Publications in 2025 (e.g. technical report(s), technical article(s), annual report(s), VDO, presentation file)

- ✓ <https://www.seafdec.org/wwf-blue-horizon-seaweed/>
- ✓ <https://www.seafdec.org/seafdec-conducts-kick-off-workshop-to-advance-sustainable-seaweed-aquaculture/>
- ✓ <https://www.seafdec.org/blue-horizon-seaweed-project-pmu-meets-aqd-bfar-tostrengthen-collaboration/>

4.Evaluation of Workshops/Training Courses by Participants of AMs

None

5. Major Impacts and Issues

SEAFDEC and WWF GEF Agency entered into an Agreement on 26 April 2024 and the 1st Year Annual Workplan and Budget of SEAFDEC was approved on 30 July 2024, the 2nd Year Annual Workplan and Budget of SEAFDEC was approved on 23 May 2025. The Philippines has signed the grant agreement with WWG GEF Agency, meanwhile Viet Nam is currently working on obtaining final government approval before signing the agreement with the WWF GEF Agency. With the Philippines’ agreement, the regional component will proceed, including the PSC and

STWG establishment, M&E training, and finalizing the Gender Action Plan. The PSC meeting will also address approaches to expedite project implementation following a one-year delay.

PART III: PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR 2025 AND 2026 (1 July 2025-30 June 2026)

The 2nd Year Annual Workplan and budget for SEAFDEC activities under Components 1 and 4, along with PMU cost, covering the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 was approved by WWF, as provided in Part II. Below are the proposed activities for the 3rd Annual Workplan (1 July 2026-30 June 2027), which will be submitted to WWF for approval in April 2026.

Proposed Activities	Descriptions	Duration
Component 1: Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in SE Asia		
Outcome 1.1	Regionally adopted plans and principles to harmonize seaweed aquaculture in SE Asia	
Output 1.1.2:	Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region, endorsed by the SEAFDEC Governing Council	
Activity 1.1.2.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Validate the draft Guide	Jan-Mar 2027
Output 1.1.3:	SEA Regional Principles for Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture, including toolkit for applying principles, aligned to the Safe Seaweed Coalition	
Activity 1.1.3.1	<input type="checkbox"/> S-TWG meeting on the Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture.	Jul-Sept 2026
Output 1.1.4:	Training modules and information packages to support a sustainable seaweed industry in South East Asia	
Activity 1.1.4.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Engage consultants to produce training modules and information packages for the ‘Guide’, Principles and	Jul-Sept 2026
	toolkit, and 3 priority subjects selected from the shortlist above	
Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)		
Outcome 4.1:	Full participation in IW: LEARN and knowledge management/communication	
Output 4.1.1:	Participation in two IW:LEARN regional meetings and one GEF International Waters Conference, delivering IW:LEARN experience notes	July 2026-June 2027
Activity 4.1.1.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop lessons learned/experience notes for IWLEARN participation and website posting	July 2026-June 2027
Output 4.1.2:	Knowledge management and communication platform and products	

Activity 4.1.2.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop knowledge products identified in KM Plan	July 2026-June 2027
Activity 4.1.2.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Package and disseminate knowledge products	July 2026-June 2027
Activity 4.1.2.3	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain website hosted by AQD, continuously update with project information.	July 2026-June 2027
Outcome 4.2:	Monitoring and evaluation system in place	
Output 4.2.1:	Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, terminal evaluation)	
Activity 4.2.1.1	Project Steering Committee meeting	July 2026-June 2027
Activity 4.2.1.2	Produce, deliver 6-monthly project progress reports	July 2026-June 2027
Activity 4.2.1.3	Produce, deliver Financial Reports Quarterly	July 2026-June 2027
Activity 4.2.1.4	Organize Adaptive Management/Reflection Meetings Yearly (4th Qtr, Yrs 1,2 and3)	July 2026-June2027

Require Consideration by PSC

- To take note of the overview of the Project and status

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC)

I. BACKGROUND

The **Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture** project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF US) as the GEF Implementing Agency, with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) as Lead Regional Executing Agency, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR, Philippines) and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS) as national executing partners. The Project duration covers the period from 2024 to 2028⁸, with the possibility for extension. The overarching goal of the project is to develop sustainable seaweed value chains that deliver ecosystem services and socioeconomic benefits.

The project comprises four components: 1) Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia; 2) Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam; 3) Seaweed Value Chains (production, processing, and marketing); and 4) Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional). The Project execution is managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU), under the supervision of the SEAFDEC Secretary-General. The PMU Office is based at the SEAFDEC Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand. The Project is governed by the Project Steering Committee to oversee implementation throughout the project's duration.

II. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

To facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the project entitled “*Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture*”, a **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** will be established as the primary decision-making body for the project, to provide strategic oversight, guidance, and approval of key project deliverables in line with the Project Document, Grant Agreements, and GEF requirements.

The role of PSC shall provide guidance, coordination, and accountability across the regional and national levels to the project, and to guide the Project Management Unit (PMU) of SEAFDEC and National PMUs in the Philippines and Viet Nam in the implementation and monitoring of the project, ensuring that the project remains on track to deliver tangible environmental and socioeconomic benefits both at regional and national level.

The PSC will serve as a regional forum for reviewing and resolving cross-cutting concerns, reviewing and approving annual work plans and budgets, and facilitating stakeholder participation. One of the first activities during full project implementation will be to reconfirm and/or constitute

⁸ SEAFDEC's activities will be completed within this period, while implementation in the Philippines and Viet Nam will extend to 2029.

the membership of the PSC, agree on meeting procedures, and finalize the Terms of Reference for the PSC.

III. THE TERM OF REFERENCE OF THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

- a. Provide direction and strategic guidance to the Project Management Unit (PMU) and National executing partners regarding project execution of agreed activities over the entire period of the project, including incorporating gender mainstreaming
- b. Approve at their first meeting: a) the membership, meeting arrangements, and terms of reference of the committees; and b) such standing orders and manner of conducting business as may be considered necessary by the committee
- c. Meet on an annual basis during the implementation of the project to guide the timely execution of project activities
- d. Approve annual work plans and budgets and approve any changes to the project strategy or budget alongside WWF GEF Agency
- e. Approve the financial reports of the expenditure for prior years and also adopt the audited financial reports
- f. Provide guidance and advice for the Project Management Unit (PMU) on the project monitoring and evaluation plan, Project Progress Report (PPR), annual Results Framework and workplan tracking, Mid-term Project Evaluation Report, and Project Closeout Report, for submission to SEAFDEC, WWF US, and GEF Secretariat
- g. Approve key project outputs (e.g. reports, policy documents, communication and knowledge projects, etc)
- h. Assist the PMUs in ensuring coordination among national site-based activities and other national-level activities to further enhance national capacity to develop integrated approaches seaweed aquaculture and environmental management.
- i. Provide guidance on the interactions and partnership with other relevant bodies and network
- j. Assist the PMU in leveraging required project co-financing and additional funds that may be required from time to time
- k. Work with the PMU and National Lead Agencies in mainstreaming integrated seaweed aquaculture and environmental management and the replication of project successes at the national level.
- l. Participate in both virtual and in-person annual reflection workshop to discuss the theory of change and project progress.

IV. COMPOSITION OF PSC

The PSC members will consist of well-balance representatives from target countries and agencies with equal representation men and women, comprising:

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Viet Nam⁹
 - a. Ms. Nguyễn Vũ Mai Anh, DFiS Viet Nam
 - b. Ms. Le Anh, Deputy Head, Environmental Control Division
2. Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate, CESO IV Undersecretary for Fisheries Department of Agriculture of the Philippines

⁹ The PSC will invite two representatives from MAE Viet Nam

3. Mr. Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr., Undersecretary and Deputy Head of OETF Organizational Transformation and Human Resources Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines
4. Mr. Alfredo Pedrosa III, Chairman of SIAP (Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines)
5. Secretary-General or Deputy Secretary-General, SEAFDEC Secretariat

The PSC shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson from amongst its full members with responsibility for chairing each formal meeting of the Committee and for acting as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of any meetings convened during the subsequent inter-sessional period. At the start of each meeting, the PSC may agree by consensus to invite additional experts to participate as observers or advisors for all or part of the meeting, as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

V. SECRETARIAT OF THE COMMITTEE

- a. The Project Manager/Technical Advisor of SEAFDEC's PMU shall act as Secretary to the meetings of the Committee.
- b. Other staff of SEAFDEC's PMU may provide secretariat and technical support to the meetings of the PSC as required.

VI. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

- a. The PMU shall convene regular biannual and annual meetings
- b. *Ad hoc* meetings may be convened by the Chairperson both in person and online: when a majority of the Committee members make a request for such a meeting to the Project Steering Committee; and at the request of the Project Steering Committee when circumstances demand.

VII. CONDUCT OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Committee shall operate and take decisions on the basis of consensus, regarding any matter relating to project execution that has regional significance. Where full consensus cannot be achieved in reaching agreement during a full meeting of the Committee, on any matter relating to project execution that has regional significance, the Secretariat shall, in consultation with the Chairperson, facilitate negotiations during the subsequent inter sessional period with a view to seeking resolution, and will report the results of these negotiations to the Committee members. The detailed operational guidance of the PSC is provided below:

- a. *Members*: Each organization represented in the PSC will appoint a primary representative and an alternate in case the primary representative is not available to ensure that each organization is represented appropriately.
- b. *Convening*: PSC meeting invitations, materials and agenda will be issued by the PMU at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the meeting. New items can be added to the agenda at the request of any member of the PSC on the condition that it is informed before the meeting to the other members.

- c. *Quorum*: the quorum of the PSC will be 80% of the member institutions.
- d. *Protocol*: PMU SEAFDEC will coordinate with the PSC Chair to set the date of meetings, agenda, and invitation to PSC members. PSC materials will be shared in advance.
- e. *Meeting minutes*: as the secretary of the PSC, the SEAFDEC PMU will provide PSC meeting minutes (including summary of decisions and agreements) and share with all PSC members no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the meeting is held.
- f. *Amendments to the PSC TOR*: Any changes to the TOR, including its membership, must be approved by both WWF GEF Agency and approved by the PSC following the decisionmaking clause above.

VIII. Require Consideration by PSC

- Adopt TOR of the Project Steering Committee

REPORT VIRTUAL INCEPTION WORKSHOP

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture 14 August 2025

Executive Summary

The Virtual Inception Workshop of the *Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project* was convened on 14 August 2025, bringing together 44 participants (23 women and 21 men) from SEAFDEC Member Countries, the executing agencies BFAR – Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines), DFIS – Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam, WWF-US, SEAFDEC/AQD, and SEAFDEC Secretariat.

The workshop was formally opened by *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, who underscored the importance of establishing a shared understanding of the project’s objectives, strategies, and outcomes. She emphasized the need for a strong foundation to guide coordinated implementation, strengthen seaweed value chains, advance technical innovation, and deliver tangible ecosystem services for sustainable fisheries and ocean health. *Ms. Rachel Kaplan*, Lead Manager WWF-US, highlighted WWF’s role as the implementing agency and called upon SEAFDEC Member Countries and other stakeholders to actively contribute to the project, particularly in the development of regional seaweed aquaculture guides and principles.

The workshop featured technical presentations in three sessions from the Project Management Unit of SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DFIS, covering the purpose of the inception workshop, project’s objectives, components, project structure, and expected outcomes over its four-year duration.

Feedback from participants indicated strong recognition of the project’s relevance to addressing current needs in ocean relief through seaweed aquaculture. Many expressed interests in further understanding the project’s Theory of Change and welcomed the forthcoming establishment of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the Seaweed Technical Working Group (STWG).

In his closing remarks, the SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General, *Mr. Koichi Tahara* conveyed deep appreciation to all participants for their active engagement and collaboration. He encouraged continued cooperation as the project advances toward its next milestones, including the formalization of the PSC and STWG and the implementation of the Year 2 Work Plan.

The workshop successfully laid the groundwork for a collaborative approach to strengthening sustainable seaweed aquaculture, enhancing coastal ecosystems, and improving the livelihoods of communities dependent on ocean resources.

Introduction

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture is a project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and was officially endorsed by the GEF CEO in July 2022. The project has been allocated USD 6 million for implementation over a four-year period (2024–2028). The PMU SEAFDEC component will specifically cover this 2024–2028 implementation period,

during which regional coordination, technical oversight, and knowledge exchange activities will be carried out. Meanwhile, national-level components in the Philippines and Viet Nam may be extended beyond 2028. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF US) serves as the GEF Implementing Agency, while the project is executed by three agencies: the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines (BFAR/PH), and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance of Viet Nam (DFiS/VN).

Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture seeks to strengthen and develop seaweed value chains at global, regional, and national levels. The primary focus is on the coastal and marine ecosystems of Viet Nam and the Philippines, where there are significant opportunities for expanding suitable seaweed aquaculture and its associated value chains. The project aims to establish new value chains that not only generate economic benefits but also deliver crucial ecosystem services and socio-economic improvements.

As part of the project's implementation, SEAFDEC PMU organized a virtual Inception Workshop to bring together key stakeholders, including SEAFDEC Member Countries, WWF US, SEAFDEC/AQD, the implementing agency and executing agencies, BFAR/PH, and DOF/VN. The workshop aimed at kicking off the project and engaging a broader audience in its objectives and activities, discuss the project's objectives, components, implementation strategies, and expected outcomes.

Opening Session

The Virtual Inception Workshop was formally opened by *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, Secretary-General of the SEAFDEC Secretariat, followed by welcoming remarks from Rachel Kaplan, Lead Manager from WWF US. Both speakers highlighted the importance of the project in strengthening regional collaboration and ensuring sustainable seaweed aquaculture development.

Dr. Suttinee in her opening remarks conveyed this seaweed aquaculture project is very important to strengthen seaweed value chains, advance technical innovation, and deliver tangible ecosystem services. These all outputs will contribute to sustainable fisheries and ocean health. She expects through this workshop, the stakeholders are improved their common understanding of the projects' objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes. In the end her remark, she encourages all participants to actively share your perspectives, experiences, and ideas to help shape the project's direction and maximize its impact.

Meanwhile, *Ms. Rachel Kaplan* in her remark highlighted WWF's role as the implementing agency and she also encourages SEAFDEC Member Countries to actively contribute to the project, particularly in the development of regional seaweed aquaculture guides and principles.

Session Delivered

The workshop was structured into three sessions facilitated by the executing agencies:

- Session 1: Introduction, Objectives, and Agenda. The Project Manager provided an overview of the inception workshop, outlining its purpose and agenda.
- Session 2: Project Objectives, Outcomes, and Theory of Change. SEAFDEC PMU, BFAR (Philippines), and DFiS (Viet Nam) jointly presented the current updates, project's

objectives, key components, strategies, indicators, and Theory of Change. They also highlighted the upcoming work plan and priorities for the next months.

- Session 3: Project Structure and Implementation Arrangements. SEAFDEC PMU and BFAR detailed the project's governance arrangements, including the establishment of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the Seaweed Technical Working Group (STWG). Roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms among SEAFDEC Member Countries were also discussed including the nomination of seaweed experts.

In addition, the Project Manager/Technical Advisor emphasized the integration of gender mainstreaming through the Gender Action Plan, designed to guide executing agencies in ensuring inclusivity across project activities.

Each session provided opportunity for participants to share perspectives and feedback through interactive Q&A discussions, fostering collective understanding and ownership of the project's direction.

Next Steps and Follow-up Actions

It was agreed during the workshop that the following steps will be undertaken:

1. Circulation of invitations to nominate members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and experts for the Seaweed Technical Working Group (STWG).
2. Issuance of official invitation letters to confirmed PSC members.

Annex: Supporting Documents

1. List of Participants
2. Provisional Agenda and Timetable
3. Photo
4. News article <https://www.seafdec.org/seafdec-conducts-kick-off-workshop-to-advancesustainable-seaweed-aquaculture/>

Appendix 9a. List of Participants VIRTUAL INCEPTION WORKSHOP

No.	Full Name	Country	Email Address	Gender	Position	Organization
SEAFDEC MEMBER COUNTRIES						
1	Takeru Iida	Japan	takeru_iida150@maff.go.jp	Male	Assistant Director, Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Office, International Affairs Division, Fisheries Agency of Japan, and SEAFDEC National Coordinator	Fisheries Agency of Japan
2	Takahiro Fukushima	Japan	takahiro_fukushim820@maff.go.jp	Male	Section Chief	Fisheries Agency of Japan
3	Oudone Khounsavanh	Lao PDR	oudone_kh@yahoo.com	Male	Deputy Director of Fisheries Division	Department of Livestock and Fisheries
4	Sophasith Thammaboud	Lao PDR	so88thammaboud@gmail.com	Female	Officer	Department of Livestock and Fisheries
5	Lim Ai Gaik	Malaysia	aigaik@dof.gov.my	Female	Head of International Section Policy and Strategic Planning Division	SEAFDEC National Coordinator for Malaysia
6	Mohamad Firdaus bin Elias	Malaysia	firdauselias@dof.gov.my	Male	Fisheries Officer Marine Aquaculture Section	Aquaculture Division

No.	Full Name	Country	Email Address	Gender	Position	Organization
7	Muhammad Na'im Syafiq bin Othman	Malaysia	naim@dof.gov.my	Male	Assistant Fisheries Officer Marine Aquaculture Section	Aquaculture Division
8	Mya Mya Sint	Myanmar	myamysint@gmail.com	Female	Deputy Director	Department of Fisheries
9	Myat Khine Mar	Myanmar	mar268354@gmail.com	Female	Deputy Director	Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
10	Erna Y	Indonesia	nc.indonesia@gmail.com	Female	Bureau of Public Relations and Foreign Cooperation, Secretariat General	Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries
11	Hendri Kurniawan Hendrikur16@gmail.com	Indonesia	Hendrikur16@gmail.com	Male	Bureau of Public Relations and Foreign Cooperation, Secretariat General	Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries
12	Indri Zaini	Indonesia	indry.zaini@yahoo.com ,	Female	Bureau of Public Relations and Foreign Cooperation, Secretariat General	Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries

13	Jiang Junhui	Singapore	jiang_jun_hui@sfa.gov.sg	Male	Director	SFA
14	Lim Huan Sein	Singapore	Lim_huan_sein@sfa.gov.sg	Male	Senior Consultant Scientist	Singapore Food Agency
15	Choltisak Chawpaknum	Thailand	choltisak.dof@gmail.com	Male	Director of Fisheries Foreign Affairs Division	Department of Fisheries
16	Chaiwud Sudthongkong	Thailand	chaiwudss@gmail.com	Male	Acting Expert on Coastal Aquaculture	Department of Fisheries
17	Nawanith Klongklaew	Thailand	nawanith@gmail.com	Female	Fishery Biologist, Senior Professional Level	Department of Fisheries
18	Irma F. Ortiz	The Philippines	ortizirma472@gmail.com	Female	EPSDP Technical Consultant	BFAR - EPSDP
19	Chanel Odric S. Sauler	The Philippines	chanelodricsauler@gmail.com	Female	EPSDP Staff	BFAR-EPSDP
20	Madelyn L. Aguilar	The Philippines	ncu_sdp@bfar.da.gov.ph	Female	EPSDP Staff	BFAR-EPSDP
21	Elymi Ar-J S. Tuñacao	The Philippines	etunacao@bfar.da.gov.ph	Female	SEAFDEC National Coordinator for the Philippines	SEAFDEC National Coordinator for the Philippines
22	Rhoda S. Bacordo	The Philippines	rbacordo@bfar.da.gov.ph	Female	Alternate, SEAFDEC National Coordinator for the Philippines	SEAFDEC National Coordinator for the Philippines

23	Ida T. Capacio	The Philippines	icapacio@bfar.da.gov.ph	Female	National Focal	Enhanced Philippines Seaweed Development Program
24	Gelli R. Naig	The Philippines	gnaig@bfar.da.gov.ph	Female	Senior Aquaculturist	Mariculture Section, Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Division
25	Nguyen Vu Mai Anh,	Viet Nam	nvmaianh@gmail.com	Female	Focal point of the Project	Department of Fisheries and Surveillance
26	Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung,	Viet Nam		Female	SEAFDEC Alternate National Coordinator	Department of Fisheries and Surveillance
27	Chau Thi Tuyet Hanh,	Viet Nam		Female	Officer of Aquaculture Division	Department of Fisheries and Surveillance
SEAFDEC Secretariat						
28	Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn	Secretariat	sg@seafdec.org	Female	Secretary-General	SEAFDEC
29	Mr. Koichi Tahara	Secretariat	dsg@seafdec.org	Male	Deputy SecretaryGeneral	SEAFDEC
30	Ms. Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn	Secretariat	pattaratjit@seafdec.org	Female	Senior Policy Officer	SEAFDEC

31	Ms. Sawitree Chamsai	Secretariat	sawitree@seafdec.org	Female	Senior Program Officer	SEAFDEC
32	Ms. Onjira Korboon	Secretariat	onjira@seafdec.org	Female	Policy Officer	SEAFDEC
33	Ms. Nattha Srihera	Secretariat	nattha.s@seafdec.org	Female	Program Officer	SEAFDEC
34	Mr. Muhamad Nour	Secretariat	muhamad@seafdec.org	Male	Project Manager/Technical Advisor of the Blue Horizon Seaweed Project	SEAFDEC
35	Mr. Taam Tunsira	Secretariat	taam@seafdec.org	Male	Administrative Officer of the Blue Horizon Seaweed project	SEAFDEC
36	Mr. Beverly S. San Juan	Secretariat	beverly@seafdec.org	Male	Regional Fisheries Policy Network for Philippines	SEAFDEC
37	Ms. Dang Thi Thuy Quynh	Secretariat	quynh@seafdec.org	Female	Regional Fisheries Policy Network for Viet Nam	SEAFDEC
38	Ms. Arpaporn Eiamsaard	Secretariat	arpaporn@seafdec.org	Female	Senior Administrative Officer	SEAFDEC
39	Mr. Satana Duangsawasdi	Secretariat	satana@seafdec.org	Male	Information Officer-II	SEAFDEC
40	Dr. Worawit Wanchana	Secretariat	worawit@seafdec.org	Male	Policy and Program Coordinator	SEAFDEC

SEAFDEC AQD

41	Dan Baliao	AQD	dbaliao@seafdec.org.ph	Male	Department Chief	SEAFDEC/AQD
42	Joseph Faisan, Jr.	AQD	jfaisan@seafdec.org.ph	Male	Associate Researcher	SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department
43	Ronilo Subaldo	AQD	rsubaldo@seafdec.org.ph	Male	Information Assistant	SEAFDEC/AQD
44	Leobert de la Peña	AQD	leobertd@seafdec.org.ph	Male	Division Head/Sr. Scientist	SEAFDEC/AQD

Appendix 9b. Provisional Agenda and Timetable Virtual Inception Workshop

Time (UTC+7:00)	Agenda	Annotation
07:30 – 08:00	Participant registration	
08:00 – 08:10	Opening session 1. Welcome Remarks (SEAFDEC) 2. Opening Remarks (WWF US)	
08:10 – 08:15	Session 1: Introduction, Objectives, and Agenda the Workshop	PM will explain briefly the purposes and agenda of the inception workshop.
08:15 – 08:50	Session 2: Revisit the project’s objectives, outcomes, outputs, and theory of change	PM, BFAR PH, and DOF VN will refresh the objectives of the project, key Components, strategies, key indicators/outcomes, and theory of change, workplan and budget, cross cutting issues
08:50 – 09:00	Q&A Session	Facilitator will moderate this session
08:45 – 09:10	Session 3: Project Structure and Implementation Arrangements - Roles and responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, reporting lines, finalizing the plan for first PSC meeting.	1. In this session, PM will refresh the institutional arrangement of the project, the roles and responsibilities of PMU and PSC 2. Ms. Rachel Kaplan will refresh the roles and responsibilities of WWF US as the implementing agency
09:20 – 09:30	Discussion and Feedback	PM will moderate this session
09:30 – 09:50	Conclusion and Next step Group Photo	PM will conclude and inform the next step
09:50 – 10:00	Closing remark by SG	

Appendix 9c. Photo



MEMORANDUM
AMENDMENT TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DOCUMENTS UNDER THE
WWF/GEF PROJECT:
“BLUE HORIZON: OCEAN RELIEF THROUGH SEAWEED AQUACULTURE”

Introduction

The project “*Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture*” received endorsement from the GEF CEO on 12 July 2022 with WWF-US as the GEF Agency. The original documents for the project were prepared based on the plan to have one lead Executing Agency (EA) responsible for fund management, overall project-level coordination and execution, and reporting. Nevertheless, with the subsequent discussion and decision to separate the implementation by three Executing Agencies, namely: the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) as a regional Executing Agency, the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Viet Nam as national Executing Agencies; there is a need for amendment of relevant documents for the project.

This Memorandum outlines updates and amendments to the following documents:

1. WWF GEF Seaweed ProDoc_Submission 4 (26 May 2022)
2. Blue Horizon_Appendices Submission 4 (26 May 2022)
3. GEF-7 Request for Project Endorsement/Approval (CEO Endorsement) (26 May 2022)
4. Project Budget Seaweed_SEAFDEC Actual

This Memorandum shall constitute as part of the grant agreements signed separately between the WWF-US with SEAFDEC, the Philippine BFAR, and the DOF Viet Nam.

Updated Information to the Documents

Fund Flow and Reporting Lines

The fund flow and reporting lines for the project were updated with the following agreement:

- Funds will directly flow from WWF-US as GEF Agency to SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam
- SEAFDEC, through the regional Project Management Unit (PMU) hosted by SEAFDEC, shall be responsible for regional activities under project Component 1 and 4; while BFAR and DOF Viet Nam shall be responsible for national activities under Component 2 and 3 (and provide relevant inputs to the PMU)

[Annual Workplan and Budget]

- SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam shall submit the annual workplan and budget of their respective components to WWF-US; BFAR and DOF Viet Nam will send a version approved by their national steering committees/advisory groups
- WWF-US shall provide the annual workplan and budget from SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF, after clearance, to the PMU

- The PMU shall consolidate the annual workplan and budget for approval by the Project Steering Committee and send the final approved version to WWF-US. Comments by the Project Steering Committee shall be accommodated by the respective agency.

[Financial Report and Progress Report]

- SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam shall submit “financial reports” and “progress reports” of their respective components to WWF-US
- WWF-US has the responsibility to check/clear the “financial report” from SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam.
- WWF-US has the responsibility to check/clear the “progress report” from SEAFDEC, BFAR and DOF, and provide the progress report to the PMU.
- The PMU shall consolidate the “progress report” for submission by SEAFDEC through the Secretary General to the WWF-US.
- WWF-US shall disburse funds for the subsequent quarter to SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF/VN after clearance of the “financial report” and “progress report”.

The diagram on fund flow and reporting lines shall be as appear in **Figure 1**.

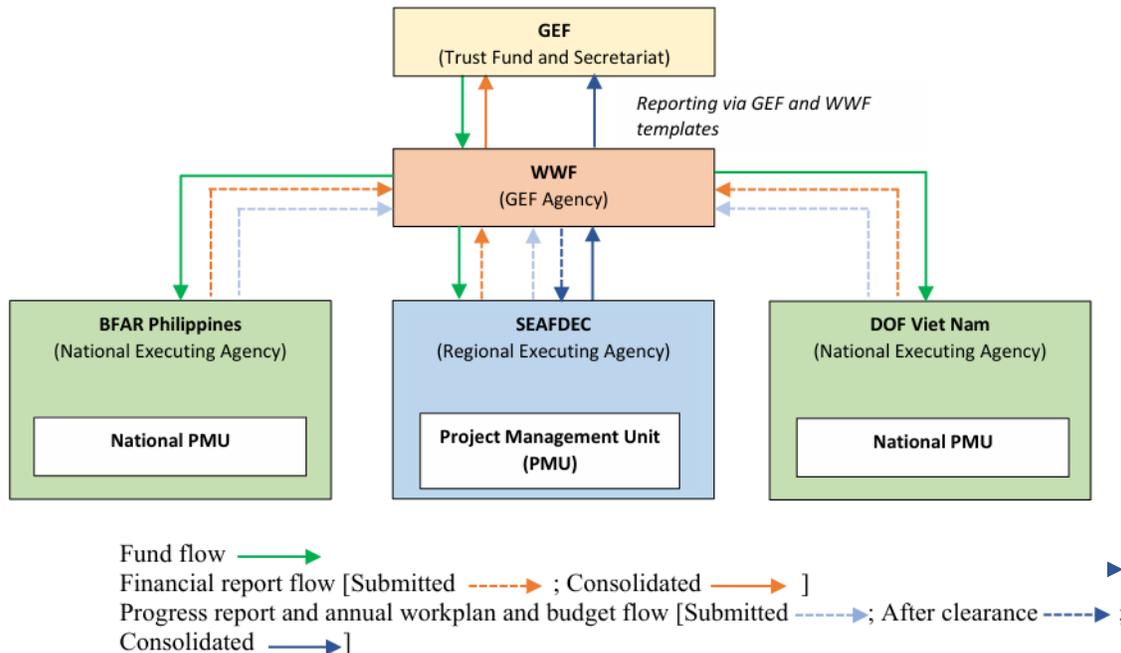


Figure 1. Diagram on fund disbursement and submission of financial and progress reports and annual workplan and budget

Budget

With the separation of the agreement into three agreements between WWF-US with each executing agency, the budget was modified to reflect the revised fund flow structure. The original and revised budget allocation shall be as follows:

Agency	Original allocation (USD)	Revised allocation (USD)
SEAFDEC	1,862,860	1,359,144
BFAR (Philippines)	2,068,570	2,275,428
DOF (Viet Nam)	2,068,570	2,275,428
WWF (for Mid-term and Final Evaluation)	90,000 ¹	90,000
TOTAL GEF	6,000,000	6,000,000

The breakdown of revised fund allocation by Component and Agency is as appears below:

Project Components/Program	GEF Project Financing (USD)				
	WWF-US	SEAFDEC	BFAR	DOF Viet Nam	Total
Component 1		730,690	0	0	730,690
Component 2		0	378,438	905,191	1,283,629
Component 3		0	1,574,133	1,072,030	2,646,163
Component 4	90,000 (for midterm and terminal evaluation)	290,900	116,000	91,350	588,250
Subtotal	90,000 ¹⁰	1,021,590	2,068,571	2,068,571	5,248,732
Project Management Direct Costs (PMC)		151,269			151,269
Project Management Costs (PMC) - SEAFDEC Management fee		123,558			123,558
Sub-total Project Costs	90,000	1,269,417	2,068,571	2,068,571	5,523,559

¹⁰ Captured under the SEAFDEC budget (included in the \$1,862,860); stated in the ProDoc that the funds would be used to recruit an independent consultant with WWF-US, but not explicitly stated that WWF-US would be managing the funds

		62,727	206,851	206,857	476,441
Total Project Costs	90,000	1,359,144	2,275,428	2,275,428	6,000,000

Allocation of budget for outcomes and outputs under each component under the responsibility of each agency was also changed as reflected in the respective grant agreement.

Roles and Responsibilities

In line with the amendment of the budget, fund flow, and reporting lines, the roles and responsibilities of agencies involved in the project shall be as follows:

GEF (Trust Fund and Secretariat)
WWF-US (GEF Agency)
<p>Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide overall oversight to ensure compliance with WWF GEF policies and requirements and achievement of project objectives. • liaise between the project and the GEF Secretariat • provide timely reporting to the GEF Secretariat and GEF trustee • closely work with SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam, approve annual workplan and budget of SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam • approve budget revisions, certify fund availability, and disburse and administer funds to SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam • disburse funds for the subsequent quarter to SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF/VN after clearance of the financial reports. • clear the technical progress reports and provide to the PMU hosted by SEAFDEC • Overall financial oversight of the project, including tracking the budget and checking/clearing the financial reports from SEAFDEC, BFAR, and DOF Viet Nam • certify project operational and financial completion of SEAFDEC, BFAR and DOF Viet Nam • provide no objection to key terms of reference for the Project Management Unit (PMU) and National PMUs. • organize the mid-term and terminal evaluation (USD 90,000) • review project audits <i>GEF Agency Staff:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Manager</i> • <i>Financial Administrator</i> • <i>Safeguards Specialist</i> • <i>Gender Specialist</i> • <i>Results-Based Management Specialist</i>

<p style="text-align: center;">SEAFDEC (Regional Executing Agency)</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting Project Management Unit (PMU), including timely recruitment and oversight of PMU staff positions • provide staff to support project execution, including technical expertise of AQD, financial staff from Finance Division, and others • support procurement of equipment required for project execution under Com 1 and Com 4 • oversight and certify the technical progress reports and quarterly financial statements of Com 1 and Com 4 executed as prepared by PMU, and submit the report to WWF-US • oversight and certify the consolidated progress report (all Components) and financial 	<p style="text-align: center;">Philippine BFAR & DOF Viet Nam (National Executing Agencies)</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting national-level project management units for delivery of Component 2 and 3 (with contributions to Component 4), including timely recruitment and oversight of National PMU staff positions • Ensure compliance with grant agreement guidelines and reporting requirements
<p>statements of Com 1 and Com 4 as prepared by PMU, and submit the report to WWF-US</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to PMU in hosting the Project Steering Committee and annual reflection workshop 	

<p style="text-align: center;">Regional PMU (hosted by SEAFDEC)</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • works under the supervision of SEAFDEC and liaises with the WWF-US • day-to-day management of the project including overall project implementation • project management and execution of Component 1 and Component 4 outputs • coordinate with the Managers of the Philippines and Viet Nam National Project Management Units (N-PMU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare, consolidate, and deliver draft annual workplan, M&E/results framework, project progress reports, and close-out report, in collaboration from BFAR and DOF Viet Nam, for submission by SEAFDEC to WWF-US (see Figure 1 for reporting structure) • prepare and deliver quarterly financial reports of SEAFDEC, audited annual financial reports of SEAFDEC and cofinance letter of SEAFDEC for submission by SEAFDEC to WWF-US (Com 1 and Com 4) • organize and serve as secretariat of the project steering committee meetings and the annual reflection workshops, including prepare reports of PSC meetings and annual reflection workshops and circulate these documents to participants. <p><i>PMU Staff:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Manager/Technical Advisor</i> • <i>Finance and Admin Officer</i> • <i>Technical Specialist Consultants:</i> • <i>M&E Specialist</i> • <i>Communication Specialist</i> • <i>I.T. Specialist</i> 	<p style="text-align: center;">National PMU (hosted separately by BFAR & DOF Viet Nam)</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide contributions to Regional PMU to ensure the achievement of project • day-to-day project management (See ProDoc, Grant Agreement, and TOR's of staff positions for full list of roles and responsibilities) • coordinate with Regional PMU in development of the annual work plan, and M&E/results framework, project progress reports, and close-out report • prepare and delivery of quarterly financial reports, annual co-finance letters, and annual audit to WWF-US • Delivery of Component 2 and 3 (with contributions to Component 4) <p><i>National PMU Staff:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Manager</i> • <i>Finance and Admin Officer</i> • <i>Technical Specialist</i> • <i>Safeguard and Gender Officer</i> • <i>Etc. Ref to Pro doc</i>
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TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR SEAWEED TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

Background

The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) is an autonomous intergovernmental body established in 1967. SEAFDEC comprises 11 Member Countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The mission of SEAFDEC is *“To promote and facilitate concerted actions among the Member Countries to ensure the sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture in Southeast Asia.”*

SEAFDEC is implementing the Project **“Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture,”** which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the WWF-US GEF Agency from May 2024 to December 2028. The Project is managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU) under the supervision of the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, with the PMU Office located at the SEAFDEC Secretariat, Bangkok, Thailand. The overarching goal of the project is to develop sustainable seaweed value chains that deliver ecosystem services and socioeconomic benefits. The project comprises four components: 1) Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in Southeast Asia; 2) Enabling Environment for Seaweed Aquaculture in the Philippines and Viet Nam; 3) Seaweed Value Chains (production, processing, and marketing); and 4) Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional).

Under **Component 1**, SEAFDEC will support the development of regional plans and principles of responsible aquaculture, including a toolkit to guide the application of the principles in developing standards of product, environmental protection, and operational safety. These outputs are expected to foster a harmonized approach across the region. Training activities will enhance the capacity of Member Countries in applying these plans and standards.

To support these efforts, the project will establish a **Seaweed Technical Working Group (STWG)** as a platform for technical collaboration, policy alignment, and capacity building. The project’s Gender Action Plan (GAP) will be integrated across the entire project cycle to ensure inclusive participation, decision-making, and impact. SEAFDEC will promote gender-balanced representation within the S-TWG, supporting women’s engagement in leadership roles, and ensure that gender perspectives are incorporated into project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Objectives

The main objective is to foster a supportive regional enabling environment for seaweed aquaculture through a coordinated regional approach. This will strengthen Southeast Asia’s capacity to expand and modernize its seaweed industry and increase its contribution to global seaweed value chains. In particular, the S-TWG will guide the development of a Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the Southeast Asia; the Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture; and a complementary Toolkit to support the application of these

principles in developing standards of product quality, environmental management, and operational safety aligned with the Global Seaweed Coalition.

Expected Outcomes of S-TWG

1. Completion and regional endorsement of the Guide, Principles, and Toolkit
2. Enhanced regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing
3. Positive stakeholder feedback on the relevance and usability of the outputs
4. Mainstreaming of gender equality strategies into the seaweed industry, including actionable policy and practice recommendations.

Scope of Work

The Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG) will be composed of nominated experts from SEAFDEC Member Countries, a representative from the SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department (AQD) in the Philippines, and technical experts from relevant regional and international organizations, such as the Global Seaweed Coalition. The PMU SEAFDEC will lead the coordination process for the formal establishment of the S-TWG. This includes reaching out to Member Countries to request official nominations, identifying and engaging relevant institutions and experts, and facilitating their participation in technical forums. The PMU will also organize and convene the inaugural S-TWG meeting to review and endorse the Terms of Reference, develop a detailed work program for drafting the Regional Guide and Principles for Seaweed Aquaculture, and define strategies for scaling and sustaining project outcomes across Southeast Asia.

To promote gender equality and meaningful participation of women in the S-TWG, the project will adopt a gender-responsive approach from the start. SEAFDEC will encourage Member Countries to nominate qualified women and prioritize gender balance across sectors. The PMU SEAFDEC will embed gender considerations into the S-TWG's Terms of Reference, invitations, and work program to ensure inclusive participation and diverse perspectives in decision-making. Capacitybuilding will incorporate gender-sensitive content, and progress will be monitored through the Gender Action Plan to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Terms of References of the S-TWG

1. Provide technical advice and recommendations on seaweed aquaculture development, including sustainable farming practices, value chain improvement, and ecosystem service integration.
2. Facilitate knowledge exchange, including technologies and best practices, to improve productivity and sustainability of seaweed products.
3. Provide technical expertise, leadership, and inputs for the consultant to develop, validate, review, and support adoption of the regional Guide (output 1.1.2) and Principles (output 1.1.3), and relevant guidelines/toolkits and standards to ensure the quality and safety of seaweed products.
4. Assist the consultant to connect with Member Countries in assessing seaweed regional and national regulatory, technical, and logistical challenges for market access.
5. Coordinate with regional and global initiatives to ensure strategic alignment and

maximize synergies in sustainable seaweed production and development.

6. Represent a platform for awareness, networking, coordination, knowledge exchange among key authorities and organizations focused on seaweed development
7. Facilitate regional technical cooperation to address specific and shared concerns.

Composition and Membership of S-TWG

1. **Members:** one expert from each ASEAN Member States with expertise in seaweed aquaculture and value chains, and an expert from SEAFDEC/AQD.
2. **Chairperson:** Elected at the start of each meeting, from among members. The Chairperson will report the S-TWG progress to the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
3. Other **resource persons/experts:** Additional experts from ASEAN Member States or international/regional organizations may be invited on an ad-hoc basis as needed.
4. **Gender Expert:** SEAFDEC’s Gender Focal Point will guide the integration of gender perspectives in all outputs.
5. **Secretariat:** PMU SEAFDEC, led by the Project Manager/Technical Advisor in collaboration with the SEAFDEC Secretariat and SEAFDEC/AQD, shall serve as the secretariat of the S-TWG meetings, will coordinate meeting logistics, prepare agendas, and manage documentation.
6. **Rapporteur:** The Secretariat of S-TWG will act as rapporteur and circulate meeting reports to all members.

Nature of S-TWG Activities and Financial Arrangements

1. S-TWG meetings will be convened throughout the project period, coordinated by PMU SEAFDEC with input from members and under the guidance of the SEAFDEC Secretariat.
2. Inter-sessional activities may be conducted as necessary, subject to funding availability.
3. Meetings and workshops will be funded by the Blue Horizon Seaweed Project, including cost for member participation. These may be conducted in-person, online, or hybrid formats.
4. Costs for attendance of consultants and resource persons during meetings or intersessional activities will be covered by the PMU SEAFDEC.

Based on S-TWG’s advice, the SEAFDEC Council will determine appropriate follow-up actions, including referral the ASEAN mechanism.

Meeting Schedule of Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG)

Meeting #	Purpose	Year
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1	Develop the S-TWG work program, agree on meeting schedule and expected outputs, and endorse the ToR	2025
2	Define the scope and outline of the Guide , define tasks and responsibilities and timeline, review ToR for a consultant to assist in drafting the Guide	2026
3	Initiate work on the Principles of Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture with experts and resource persons	2026
4	Review the draft Guide	2026
5	Validate the draft Guide	2027
6	Review the Principles and Toolkit and begin finalization of the drafts	2027
7	Validate the Principles and Toolkit	2028
8	Finalize the Guide , Principles and Toolkits; submit recommendations to SEAFDEC Council for endorsement	2028
9	Organize an online regional workshop to launch the Guide and Principles	2028

Output 4.2.1.1: Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluations, terminal evaluations)	Activity	PMU	Quarterly Progress				Yes	Meetings	0%	0%	\$0
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
1	Activity 4.2.1.1: Inception workshop and PSC meeting taking into consideration gender balance in the event	PMU					1	Meetings	0%	\$0	
2	Activity 4.2.1.3 Produce, deliver e-monthly project progress reports	PMU					2	Reports	0%	\$0	
3	Activity 4.2.1.4 Produce, deliver Financial Reports Quarterly	PMU					4	Reports	0%	\$0	
4	Activity 4.2.1.5: Organic Adaptive Management (Reflection Meetings Yearly (Rth Qtr, yrs 1,2 and 3))	PMU					1	Reports	0%	\$0	
5	Activity 4.2.1.7 Project personal staff cost PM (conduct the NBE tasks)	PMU					1,09,300			\$0	
6	Activity 4.2.1.8 M&E consultant develop NBE plan (including Monitoring against gender disintegrated or gender-specific indicators)	PMU					1	NBE plan	0%	\$0	
7	Activity 4.2.1.9: NBE Training on how to use the ME tools and collect data based on project logical framework	PMU					1	Training/report	0%	\$0	
8	Activity 4.2.1.10 PM participate in the 4th Meeting of S&A/PEE Program Committee, 3-5 Nov 2025, Malaysia	PMU					1	Invitation report	0%	\$0	
9	Activity 4.2.1.11 IT Specialist (total 36000 USD for 4 years)	PMU					11		0%	\$0	
B. Project Management Costs										\$62,018	
Office costs										\$62,018	
1	Stationery (communications, postage, copies, freight, clearance charges, etc)	PMU								385.50	
2	S&A/EEC Operating Costs (rent, HR, legal)	PMU								30,888.50	
3	PMU Personnel cost for Project Manager (others under activities in the components 1 and 4)	PMU								5,400	
4	PMU Personnel cost for admin officer (47,000 THB/month)	PMU								16,977	
5	Annual Financial Audit (duration: May 2024-Dec 2025)	PMU								8,667	
Capital Assets										\$0.00	
GRAND TOTAL (A+B)										\$352,618	
										YR 1	
										0%	
										0%	
										#REF!	
										% achieved for activities overall	

Project Manager/Technical Advisor
Salary total 1,75000 USD

up to 3200 USD/month expected to start in September 2024
3% rise yearly based on work performance
Year 1= 3200*12 months=38400 USD
Year 2= 3360*12 months=40320 USD
Year 3= 3520*12 months=42240 USD
Year 4= 3680*12 months=44160 USD
Year 5= 3840*12 months=46080 USD
Total=171,360 USD
Comm 1= 1375 USD/month
Comm 4= 1375 USD/month
PMU 450 USD/month



Annual Work Plan and Budget

Blue Horizon Project: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture



	Activities	Responsible Entity	Timeline		Budget	
			Q1	Q2	Php	USD
	Start-up Activities					
	Hiring of Project Manager (PM), Project Development Officer (PDO) and Admin/Finance Officer (AFO)	BFAR			1,320,000.00	23,571.43
	Courtesy calls on Concerned Regions, LGU Officials, Other agencies at the Provincial, Municipal, Barangay & Island/Sitio Levels	BFAR				
	Official designation by concerned RDs of BFAR staff to provide local coordination and support to BHP implementation	BFAR				
	Seminar on BHP: Innovative Approach to Development, Management and Conservation of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. Participants are all Project Staff and BFAR personnel involved at the field level (4 days)	BFAR				
	Seminar on Cooperativism: Key to Project Sustainability, Increasing Production and Improving Lives. Participants are all Project Staff and involved BFAR personnel at the field level (4 days)	BFAR				
	Orientation Seminar on BHP for Barangay Officials and Community Leaders in the Project areas to gain their active support to the BHP	BFAR				
	Conduct of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign in the Project Areas to elicit community understanding and acceptance of the BHP	BFAR			700,000.00	12,500.00
	Facilitation of Agreements with Partners	BFAR				
	Office and Field Running Cost					
	NPMU Quarterly Meetings and Project Steering Committee Meetings	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			2,500,000	44,642.86
	Preparation of Workplan/Budget	NPMU				
	Synchronization of Activities in the context of Project Implementation	NPMU, EPSDP				
	Executing agency support to Supervision missions (monthly meetings and EPSDP personnel travelling expenses during site visits/field monitoring)	NPMU, EPSDP			₱885,000.00	\$15,803.57

	Activities	Responsible Entity	Timeline		Budget	
			Q1	Q2	PhP	USD
	Office and Field Running Cost					
	Other direct cost (Palawan and Zamboanga field offices rental and office supplies)	PMU Field Office			₱620,000.00	\$11,071.43
	PMU personnel cost for project management (field operation communication expenses)	PMU Field Office			₱20,000.00	\$357.14
	Capital Assets					
	IT and other equipment for PMU (Palawan and Zamboanga field offices operation)	PMU Field Office			₱1,150,000.00	\$20,535.71
	Solar drying facilities to be establish in Palawan and Zamboanga	PMU Field Office			₱2,000,000.00	\$35,714.29
	Component 2					
Output 2.1.1.	2.1.1.1 Project Execution Workshop for the finalization of the project implementation manual for region 4B and 9 (Roxas and Zamboanga)	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱635,000.00	\$11,339.29
	2.1.1.2 Facilitate planning processes and development of site-specific marine spatial plan for Roxas that incorporates regenerative seaweed and work for the PCSD approval and enactment of the Marine Spatial Management Plan Ordinance	COAST4C NPMU			₱2,395,000.00	\$42,767.86
	2.1.1.3 Hiring of staff for the operation of the National Project Management Unit (NPMU)	NPMU			₱945,000.00	\$16,875.00
	2.1.1.4 Conduct of annual project audit	NPMU			₱100,000.00	\$1,785.71
	2.1.1.6 Procurement of Office supplies and equipment for the setting-up and operation of the National Project Management Unit (NPMU)	NPMU			₱3,000,000.00	\$53,571.43
	2.1.1.7 Other operating expenses of the National Project Management Unit (office rental, communication and travelling expenses of NPMU personnel)	NPMU			₱1,500,000.00	\$26,785.71
Output 2.1.2.	2.1.2.2.1 Workshops to assess relevant recommendations of roadmap to their municipality and support implementation of the Final Draft of Seaweed Carrageenan Roadmap in Roxas, Palawan	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱380,000.00	\$6,785.71
	2.1.2.2.2 Workshops to assess relevant recommendations of roadmap to their municipality and support implementation of the Final Draft of Seaweed Carrageenan Roadmap in Zamboanga	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱320,000.00	\$5,714.29

	Activities	Responsible Entity	Timeline		Budget	
			Q1	Q2	PhP	USD
	Component 2					
Output 2.2.1.	2.2.1.1: Consultation workshops with local stakeholders on the Seaweed Roadmap to identify parts/portions/gaps applicable to project sites	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱330,000.00	\$5,892.86
	Component 3					
Output 3.1.1.	3.1.1.1. Four (4) workshop to undertake process to receive official approval for the farm site: Y1) a. Planning workshop to formulate the farm plan with stakeholder involvement and b. Consultation to set criteria/qualification for selection of 100 cooperators in Roxas and benefit sharing agreement based on existing cooperative laws; Y2) c. Workshop for seaweed farmer to orient/introduce improved technologies and testing for seaweed value chain; and Y3) d. Management and operation of the offshore farm and in the preparation, use and maintenance of the structures in Roxas, Palawan	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱275,000.00	\$4,910.71
	3.1.1.2. Hiring of technical staff for the production of high quality seaweed seedlings	UP-MSI NPMU			₱500,000.00	\$8,928.57
	3.1.1.3. Hiring of field staff for the initial test planting of seaweed for the off-the-coast farming in Green Island, Roxas and Buenavista, Zamboanga City	NPMU			₱1,320,000.00	\$23,571.43
	3.1.1.4. Procurement of 50 units non-motorized boats and 4 units motorized boats	NPMU			₱1,100,000.00	\$19,642.86
	3.1.1.5. Recruitment, screening, selection of cooperators for those who will be planting/ operating seaweed farm	NPMU			₱85,000.00	\$1,517.86
	3.1.1.7. Establishment of Demo Offshore Farm in Green Island, Roxas, Palawan and Buenavista, Zamboanga City - Procurement of farm materials for initial test planting	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱5,120,000.00	\$91,428.57
	2.1.1.7 Other operating expenses of the National Project Management Unit (office rental, communication and travelling expenses of NPMU personnel)	NPMU			₱1,500,000.00	\$26,785.71
Output 3.1.2.	3.1.2.1: Traceability (set-up of seaweed trace system; registration of 100 farmers; verification of farms and those that meet criteria for premium; implementation of farmgate application)	COAST4C NPMU			₱963,000.00	\$17,196.43

	Activities	Responsible Entity	Timeline		Budget	
			Q1	Q2	PhP	USD
	Component 3					
	3.1.2.3: Implementation of community-based value chain for end-of-life fishing nets that reduce marine plastic pollution and provides additional income (toolkit and training materials; training delivery; set-up of community infrastructure; monitoring & evaluation)	COAST4C NPMU			₱60,000.00	\$1,071.43
	3.1.2.5 Orientation on Value Chain initiatives	BFAR-NSTDC			₱500,000.00	\$8,928.57
Output 3.2.2.	3.2.2.2: Sustainability and quality requirements, (develop/adapt toolkit and training materials (MR2); training delivery; support community trading assets; implementation of community training model)	COAST4C, NPMU			₱802,000.00	\$14,321.43
Output 3.2.3.	3.2.3.1 Cooperative Orientation and Organizing Training Workshop for Roxas and Zamboanga	NPMU Stakeholders			₱200,000.00	\$3,571.43
	3.2.3.2 Pre Registration Seminar for Roxas and Zamboanga	NPMU Stakeholders			₱200,000.00	\$3,571.43
	3.2.3.3 Fundamentals of Cooperative for Roxas and Zamboanga	NPMU Stakeholders			₱200,000.00	\$3,571.43
	3.2.3.4 Training on Governance and Management for Roxas and Zamboanga	NPMU Stakeholders			₱250,000.00	\$4,464.29
	3.2.3.5 Training on Internal Control Systems and Procedures for Roxas and Zamboanga	NPMU Stakeholders			₱250,000.00	\$4,464.29
	3.1.1.7. Establishment of Demo Offshore Farm in Green Island, Roxas, Palawan and Buenavista, Zamboanga City - Procurement of farm materials for initial test planting	NPMU STAKEHOLDERS			₱5,120,000.00	\$91,428.57
Output 3.3.1.	3.3.1 Establishment of 2 value adding processing facility and/or bio-refinery solutions to deliver new seaweed products (Pre-construction of at least two (2) Seaweed Value Chain Initiatives)	BFAR-NSTDC			₱3,100,000.00	\$55,357.14
	3.3.2 Promotion of viable outcome with feasibility study of seaweed products	BFAR-NSTDC			₱2,275,000.00	\$40,625.00

	Activities	Responsible Entity	Timeline		Budget	
			Q1	Q2	PhP	USD
	Component 4					
Output 4.1.1.	4.1.1.1: Establish Technical Working Group (TWG) and National Project Coordinating Committee	EPSDP, SEAFDEC				\$0.00
	4.1.1.2: Inception workshop	NPMU, SEAFDEC				\$0.00
	4.1.1.3: Participation in M&E trainings	NPMU, SEAFDEC			₱500,000.00	\$8,928.57
Output 4.1.2.	4.1.2.1: Participation in Communication trainings	NPMU, SEAFDEC			₱500,000.00	\$8,928.57
Grand Total:					₱37,000,000.00	\$660,714.29

CO-FINANCING LETTER FOR THE BLUE HORIZON: OCEAN RELIEF THROUGH SEAWEED AQUACULTURE PROJECT



SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SEAFDEC Secretariat

P.O. Box 1046, Kasetsart Post Office, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10903, Thailand; Tel: +66 2940 6326; Fax: +66 2940 6336; www.seafdec.org

Training Department (TD)	Marine Fisheries Research Department (MFRD)	Aquaculture Department (AQD)	Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD)	Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (IFRDMD)
P.O. Box 97 Phrasamutchedi, Samut Prakan 10290, Thailand Tel: +66 2425 6100 Fax: +66 2425 6110 +66 2425 6111 www.seafdec.or.th	52, Jurong Gateway Road, #14-01, Singapore 608550 Tel: +65 9046 4787 Fax: +65 6334 1831 www.seafdec.org/mfrd	Buyu-an, Tigbauan, 5021 Iloilo, Philippines Tel: +63 33 330 7000 +63 33 511 9170 +63 33 330 7002 www.seafdec.org.ph	Taman Perikanan, Chendering, 21080 Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia Tel: +609 617 5940, 617 1543 Fax: +609 617 5136, 617 4042 www.seafdec.org.my	Jl. Gubernur, HA, Bastari No.08 RT.29 RW.07 Kel. Silaberanti Kec. Seberang Ulu I, Jakabaring, Palembang 30252 Sumatera Selatan, Indonesia Tel: +62 711 5649600; Fax: +62 711 5649601 www.seafdec.id

Our ref.: SOA220218

Ms. Renae Stenhouse
Executive Coordinator,
WWF GEF Agency World Wildlife Fund, Inc.
1250 24th Street NW
Washington, DC, 20037

18 February 2022

Dear Ms. Stenhouse,

Re: Co-financing Support for the Project
“Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture”
GEF ID: 10573

The letter is to confirm that the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) will provide the in-kind co-financing at the amount of 600,000 USD to support the project “Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture”, for the 4-year project implementation from 2022-2026.

Please accept, Madam, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Ms. Malinee Smithrithee
SEAFDEC Secretary-General



SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SEAFDEC Secretariat

P.O. Box 1046, Kasetsart Post Office, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10903, Thailand; Tel: +66 2940 6326 to 27; Fax: +66 2940 6336; www.seafdec.org

Training Department (TD) Phrasamutchedi, Samut Prakan 10290, Thailand Tel: +66 2425 6100 Fax: +66 2425 6110 +66 2425 6111 www.seafdec.or.th	Marine Fisheries Research Department (MFRD) c/o Singapore Food Agency 52, Jurong Gateway Road, #14-01, Singapore 608550 Tel: +65 9046 4787 Fax: +65 6334 1831 www.seafdec.org/mfrd	Aquaculture Department (AQD) Tigbauan, 5021 Iloilo, Philippines Tel: +63 33 330 7000 Fax: +63 33 330 7002 www.seafdec.org.ph	Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD) Fisheries Garden, Chendering, 21080 Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia Tel: +609 617 5940 Fax: +609 617 5136 www.seafdec.org.my	Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (IFRDMD) Jl. Gub. HA. Bastari No.08 Rt.29 RW.07 Kel. Silaberanti Kec. Seberang Ulu I, Jakabaring, Palembang 30252, South Sumatra, Indonesia Tel: +62 711 564 9600 Fax: +62 711 564 9601 www.seafdec.id
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Our ref.: SOW2507

Dr. Renae Stenhouse
Vice President
WWF GEF Agency
World Wildlife Fund, Inc.
1250 24 Street NW
Washington, DC, 20037

21 July 2025

**Re: Co-financing Report for WWF GEF Project, entitled
“Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture” GEF ID: 10573**

Dear Dr. Stenhouse,

I am pleased to inform you that SEAFDEC has committed a total co-financing contribution of USD 600,000 to the WWFGEF Project, entitled “Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture” over the full duration of the project.

In this regard, SEAFDEC has provided USD 120,000 in co-financing for the above-referenced project from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn
Secretary-General

cc: *Ms. Rachel Kaplan* WWF GEF Project Manager (E-mail: Rachel.Kaplan@wwfus.org)
Ms. Tracey Smith WWF GEF Financial Administrator (E-mail: tracey.smith@wwfus.org)
Mr. Muhamad Nour Project Manager/Technical Advisor (E-mail: muhamad@seafdec.org)

Require Consideration by PSC

- Adopt the co-finance letter of SEAFDEC
- Take note status of co-finance letter of BFAR and DFiS

Finance Progress

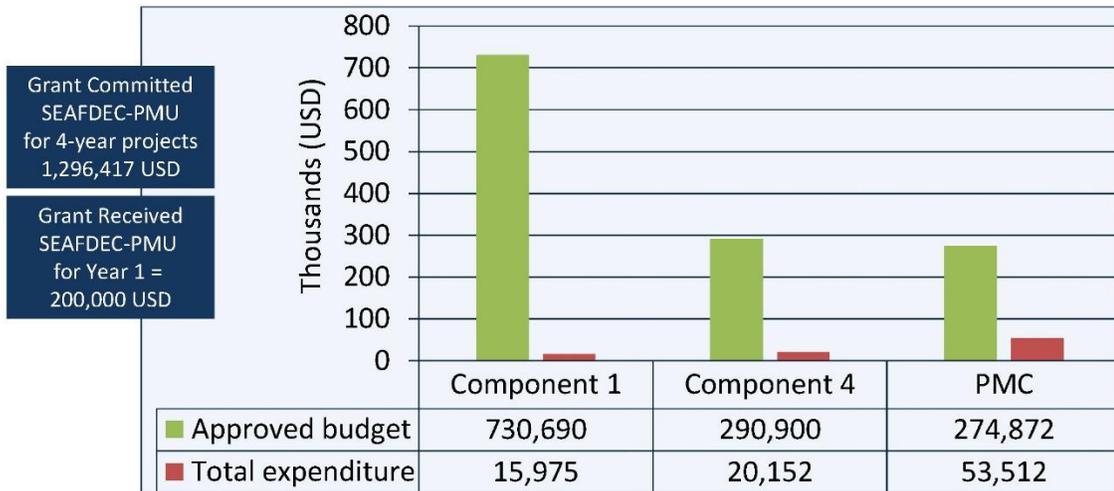
Deliverables: Financial report

Quarterly Financial Report	Timeline for Submit Report
1 Jan- 31 Mar	30 Apr
1 Apr- 31 Jun	31 Jul
1 Jul- 30 Sep	31 Oct
1 Oct- 31 Dec	31 Jan

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 27-28 November 2025 | Solitaire Hotel Bangkok, Thailand

Budget line	Component 1			Component 4			PMC		
	Approved	Expenditure	Balance	Approved	Expenditure	Balance	Approved	Expenditure	Balance
Contract services- Individual	10,000		10,000	14,000		14,000	-		
Contract services- company	-		-	400		400	26,000		26,000
International Consultants	326,400		326,400	102,000		102,000	-		
Salary and Benefits/ Staff cost	128,873.22	15,975	112,898.22	72,500	15,975	56,525	111,627	11,070.45	100,556.55
Training, Workshops, Meetings	121,417		121,417	36,000	51.33	35,948.67	-		
Travel	144,000		144,000	64,000	4126.21	59,873.79	-		
Offices Supplies	-		-	2,000		2,000	12,100	3,522.97	8,577.03
Other Operating Cost	-		-	-			125,100	38,919.37	86,180.63
Total	730,690.22	15,975	714,715.22	290,900	20,152.54	270,747.46	274,827	53,512.79	221,314.21

The overall budget of SEAFDEC-PMU



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Period of annual workplan and budget 1 July -30 June

Draft annual workplan, budget and procurement plan	Timeline submission
Year 1	30 June 2024
Year 2	30 April 2025
Year 3	30 April 2026
Year 4	30 April 2027

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The contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays



1st Meeting of Project Steering Committee
Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project

Agenda 11 : Discussion on the contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays

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Agenda Objective:

To identify, assess, and agree on contingency measures to mitigate project implementation delays and ensure timely delivery of project outputs and compliance with donor requirements.

Expected Outputs:



List of priority activities delayed and root causes identified.



Agreed contingency actions with timelines and responsible units.



Revised implementation and monitoring plan.



Communication plan to inform donors and partners.

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Situation Analysis

1. **Review** current implementation status (by component, activity, and country).
2. **Identify** activities at risk of delay: technical, administrative, or financial.
3. **Clarify** root causes of delays (e.g., recruitment delays, late nominations, or external dependencies, forced majeure, etc).
4. **Assess** the impact of delays on project timeline, budget, and deliverables.

Guiding Questions:

1 Which activities are behind schedule and why?

What are the implications for upcoming milestones or donor reporting?

2

3 Which areas need immediate management intervention?

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Mitigation and Contingency Strategies



Discuss short-term measures to accelerate implementation (e.g., fast-tracking procurement, virtual meetings, partial contracting)



Identify alternative implementation options (e.g., adjusting sequencing, reallocating resources, revising timelines)



Explore collaborative mechanisms with partners or consultants to maintain momentum.



Consider budget flexibility for reprogramming or timeline extensions.

1 What actions can be taken within the next 1–3 months to recover progress?

Guiding Questions:

Can some activities be implemented in parallel or virtually?

2

3 Are there any tasks that can be delegated or simplified without compromising quality?

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Communication and Coordination



Existing coordination mechanism: regular meeting, PSC, M&E system, Pause and Reflect Meeting



Strengthen communication channels between SEAFDEC PMU, national PMUs, and WWF-US



Ensure timely updates to stakeholders and donors regarding revised plans or adjustments



Define roles and responsibilities for follow-up and monitoring.

Guiding Questions:

1 How can coordination between PMUs be improved?

What reporting or meeting frequency is needed to monitor progress effectively?

2

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Revision of Workplan and Timelines



Review Yearly Work Plan and Budget (AWP/B) and adjust activity timelines where necessary.



Update the M&E matrix to reflect revised deliverables and indicators.



Prepare updated implementation schedules for approval by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) or donor agency

Guiding Questions:

1 Which milestones should be shifted, and what is the new target date?

How will progress be tracked and validated after adjustment?

2

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Agreement on Next Steps:

Summarize agreed contingency measures and responsible parties.

Set clear timelines and accountability for implementing corrective actions.

Schedule a follow-up review (e.g., in 4–6 weeks) to assess progress.

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Required Consideration by PSC

The meeting is requested to take note, provide comments and suggestion on Contingency plans for addressing project implementation delays

Project Steering Committee (PSC) | 27-28 November 2025 | Solitaire Hotel Bangkok, Thailand

PROJECT GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Introduction

SEAFDEC adopted Gender Strategy to facilitate gender mainstreaming at all levels of the organization, and serve as an organizational overarching framework to facilitate SEAFDEC’s efforts in integrating gender in its programs, projects, and activities. The SEAFDEC Gender Strategy is also intended to subsequently support the integration of gender perspectives in fisheries and aquaculture in the Member Countries of SEAFDEC. The SEAFDEC Council also adopted the Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC, including the Vision, Mission, and Strategies Towards 20305, specifically stating “Strategy 5: *Addressing cross-cutting issues, such as labor, gender and climate change, where related to international fisheries.*”

Therefore, Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth as essential strategy for achieving its environmental and socioeconomic goals. The project adopts a Gender Action Plan (GAP) that aligns with the GEF Policy and WWF GEF Agency on Gender Equality and is designed to ensure equal participation, benefit sharing, and decision-making power for women, men, and youth in seaweed aquaculture value chains in the Philippines and Viet Nam.

Women play key roles in seaweed cultivation, processing, and household management but face constraints in access to resources, technology, training, and decision-making. Young people and women often have limited influence in community management structures and cooperatives. Addressing these barriers will increase productivity, sustainability, and community resilience.

The Gender Action Plan will serve as a guideline for executing agencies such SEAFDEC Secretariat, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Fisheries (DOF) Viet Nam in the project implementation. This GAP refers to SEAFDEC Gender Strategy¹¹, Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs¹² and WWF Gender Policy¹³ which outlines the practical steps and necessary actions to apply the principles and mandatory requirements of gender-responsive planning, implementation, and monitoring of GEF programs and projects and WWF policy.

Address GAP in Project Cycle

The Blue Horizon Seaweed Aquaculture has clearly specified Gender Action Plan in the project implementation. Below please see the summary of Gender Action Plan for each executing agency to address gender mainstreaming in the project activities:

¹¹ <https://repository.seafdec.org/handle/20.500.12066/4861>

¹² <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/policies-guidelines>

¹³ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/wwf-gender-policy>

Output	Gender-Specific Activity	Indicator & Target	Responsible
Component 1: Regional approach and capacity for seaweed value chains in SEAsia			
1.1.1. Regional Seaweed Technical Working Group, constituted and formally mandated by SEAFDEC Governing Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will promote equitable participation of men and women in the working group • The ToR of the Seaweed Technical Working Group will include genderspecific considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50% of the Regional Seaweed Technical Working Group is women • The ToR includes specific gender sensitive consideration 	SEAFDEC PMU (and SEAFDEC AQD and TD)
1.1.2: Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry in the SEA Region, endorsed by the SEAFDEC Governing Council	Gender will be mainstreamed throughout the Guide, with recommendations and action items for mainstreaming gender in the SEA seaweed industry	Guide is developed with gender-sensitive considerations throughout.	SEAFDEC; consultant writing the guide (with the Gender focal points in AQD and TD).
1.1.3. Principles and toolkit for safe seaweed applicable to SEAsia, aligned to the Global Seaweed Coalition principles	Gender-responsive standards will be included, with the toolkit providing a guide for application of the principles.	Principles and toolkit are gender sensitive.	Focal points of AQD and TD, BFAR's GAD Committee, Gender officers of PH and VN N-PMU

Output	Gender-Specific Activity	Indicator & Target	Responsible
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1.1.4. Training modules and information packages to support a sustainable seaweed industry in the SEAsia	Training modules and information packages will include specific components on gender; this will support implementation of the actions above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 60 % of participants attending the trainings are women • Gender-responsive training module 	SEAFDEC PMU (and SEAFDEC AQD, facilitators develop and conduct the trainings)
Component 4: Knowledge Management, M&E, and IW Learn (regional)			
4.1.1: Participation in two IW:LEARN regional meetings and two IW Conferences, delivering IW:LEARN experience notes	Project lessons learned and best practice related to gender will be documented and disseminated in through IW: LEARN project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific lessons and best practices related to gender documented and included in at least 2 products • Communication platform and products are gender-sensitive 	SEAFDEC PMU (and through communications consultant), Philippines coordination unit, Viet Nam coordination unit
4.1.2 Knowledge management and communications products	The project will develop and publish communication products related to gender. This includes lessons learned, best practices, and other information gleaned from the project and that could support scaling up of gender equality and women's empowerment in the SEA seaweed industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is disseminated in an equitable way (to ensure women and men have equal access) 	

4.2.1: Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, terminal evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PMU and project partners will collect sex disaggregated data at regional and national level • Progress against the Gender Action Plan will be assessed through project reporting requirements (PPR, midterm and final evaluations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring against gender disaggregated or gender-specific indicators • Project reports include information on progress towards GAP goals 	SEAFDEC PMU, Philippines coordination unit, Viet Nam coordination unit
Output	Gender-Specific Activity	Indicator & Target	Responsible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will report against gender-specific indicators annually 		

Progress against the Gender Action Plan will be tracked through the following indicators:

- GEF Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment (11,000 women, 4,000 men)
- Women empowerment:
 - Increase in the number of women in leadership and management roles in farmers' associations/cooperatives
 - Number and type of value chain upgrading initiated and operated by women
 - Number of women participating actively in the development of management plans
- Access to equitable resources o Decrease in disparity of men and women's wages in the production and processing segments.
 - % of women across the whole project (compared to baseline data), who now have access to or acquire:
 - Financing, resources, opportunities, capacity building
 - Higher income from value adding enterprises
 - Skills in enterprise planning and management

To promote equal participation of women and youth in all project activities, the executing agencies will implement affirmative measures, including actively encouraging women's involvement in the provisional prospectus, terms of reference, and official invitations.

Monitoring & Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming

Progress of project's gender mainstreaming will be assessed through surveys, supported by qualitative assessments. The GAP will be tracked through sex-disaggregated indicators included in project reports as follows:

- a. Annual Project Progress Report
- b. 6-months PPR
- c. Term of references
- d. Provisional Prospectus
- e. Quarterly Financial Report
- f. Mid-term report
- g. Terminal Evaluation

Contact Person for Gender Mainstreaming

1. Muhamad Nour – Project Manager/Technical Advisor, muhamad@seafdec.org
2. Jariya Sornkliang – Gender Focal Point SEAFDEC, jariya@seafdec.org
3. Safeguard and Gender Specialist (SGS) National PMU Philippines
4. Safeguard and Gender Specialist (SGS) Viet Nam
5. Gender Specialist WWF US

CLOSING REMARKS

*By Koichi Tahara
SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General*

Distinguished representatives, partners, and colleagues,
As we conclude the First Meeting of the Project Steering Committee, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to all PSC members, observers, and partners for your active engagement and valuable contributions over the past two days.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your collective insights on the project implementation arrangements, workplan and budget, gender and stakeholder engagement strategies, and the contingency measures to address implementation delays have strengthened our shared direction and reaffirmed our commitment to delivering meaningful impact across the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
SEAFDEC, together with BFAR, DFiS, and WWF-US, looks forward to working closely with all of you as we carry forward the recommendations agreed upon in this meeting and move confidently into the next phase of the project.

Thank you once again for your dedication and collaboration. We wish everyone safe travels and look forward to reconvening at the next PSC meeting. I wish you all good health, continued success, and I hope you enjoy Bangkok and safe trip back home.

Thank you very much.