



Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture 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 Strategy¹, Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs² and

¹ <https://repository.seafdec.org/handle/20.500.12066/4861>

² <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/policies-guidelines>



WWF Gender Policy³ 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:

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	- The project will promote equitable participation of men and women in the working group - The ToR of the Seaweed Technical Working Group will include gender-specific considerations	- 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	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

³ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/wwf-gender-policy>



Output	Gender-Specific Activity	Indicator & Target	Responsible
Global Seaweed Coalition principles			PH and VN N-PMU
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	- 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	- Specific lessons and best practices related to gender documented and included in at least 2 products - Communication platform and products are gender-sensitive - Information is disseminated in an equitable way (to ensure women and men have equal access)	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.		



Output	Gender-Specific Activity	Indicator & Target	Responsible
4.2.1: Monitoring and Evaluation reports (including project progress reports, midterm evaluation, terminal evaluation)	- 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) - The project will report against gender-specific indicators annually	- 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

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