



MSEAS 2024

June 3 – 7, 2024
Yokohama, Japan



2021-2030 United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development
A UN Ocean Decade Event
#MSEAS2024

Marine Socio-Ecological Systems Symposium

*S7 - Co-production of knowledge,
participatory approaches and
engagement with stakeholders*

Tuesday June 4th S7-6

Stakeholder collaboration & communication as key outputs of MSC improvement initiatives in Mexico and South Africa

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The Marine Stewardship Council seafood ecolabeling program

● Approximate location of MSC certified fishing activity

Proportion of FAO Major Fishing Area catch that is MSC certified

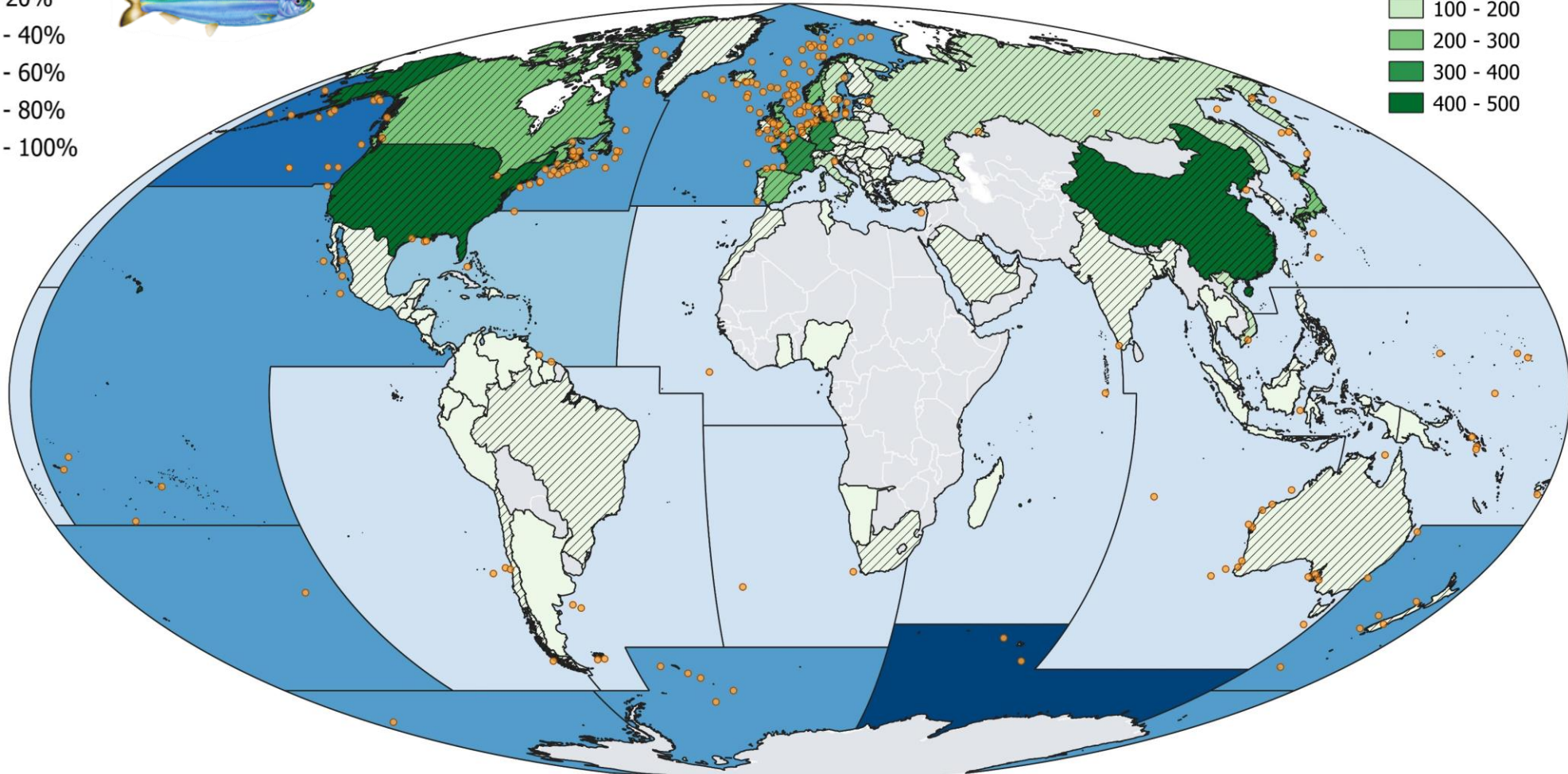
- 0%
- 0 - 20%
- 20 - 40%
- 40 - 60%
- 60 - 80%
- 80 - 100%



▨ ≥1 MSC Ecolabelled products sold

Count of CoC certificate holders

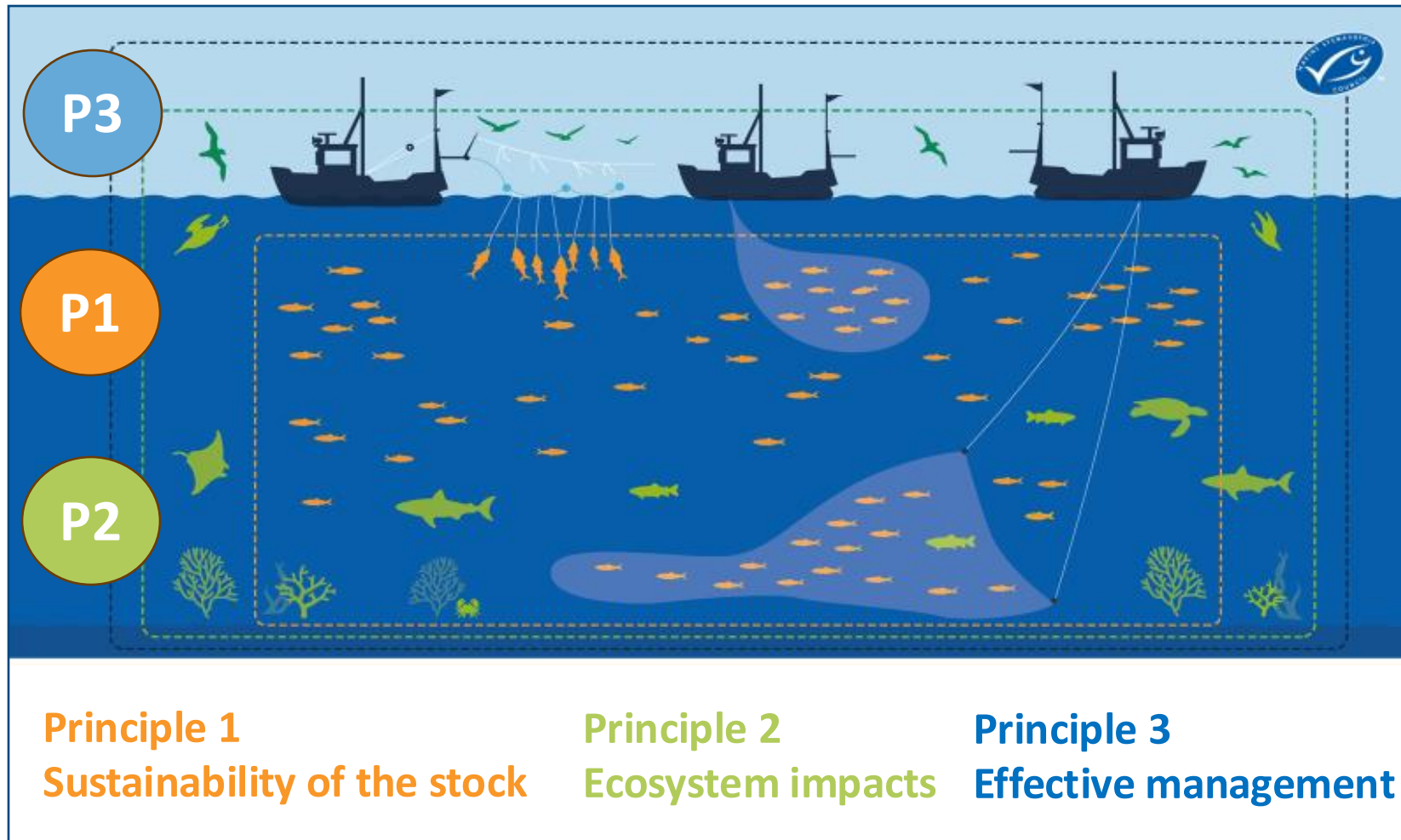
- 0
- 1 - 100
- 100 - 200
- 200 - 300
- 300 - 400
- 400 - 500



(Longo et al, 2021)

Data correct as of 31 March 2024. *engaged = certified, suspended, in assessment, and in transition to MSC; certified includes suspended fisheries; data: fishery data March 2023 and FAO 2022, improvement data as of March 2023

The MSC Fisheries Standard



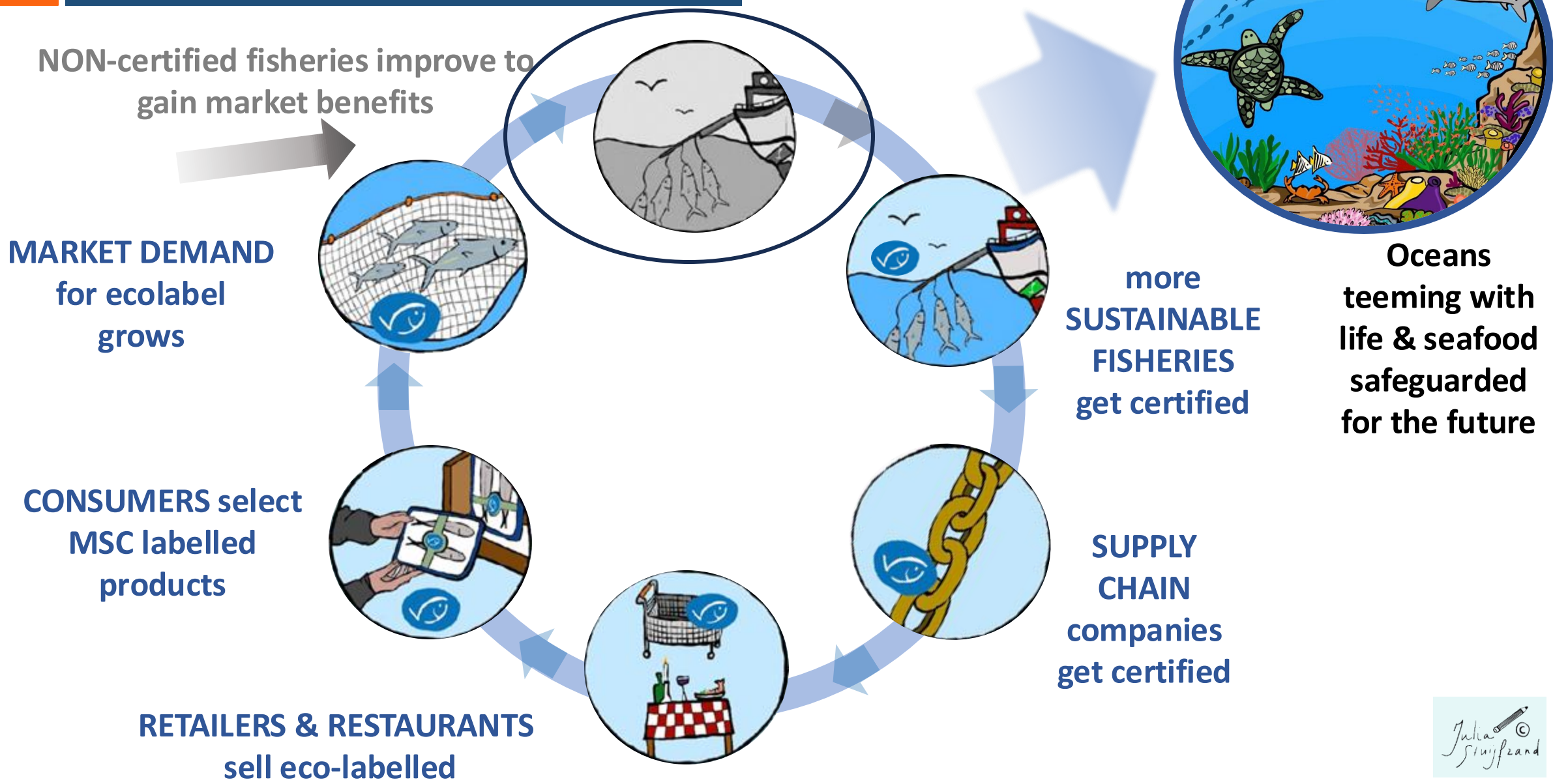
3 Environmental sustainability pillars based on:

FAO Code of Conduct for sustainable fisheries

Precautionary Ecosystem Approach
Best available science



MSC Theory of change



Fishery improvement initiatives



(i) Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs)

Multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at improving fisheries' environmental (and sometimes social) sustainability, through private sector engagement and lasting policy change¹.

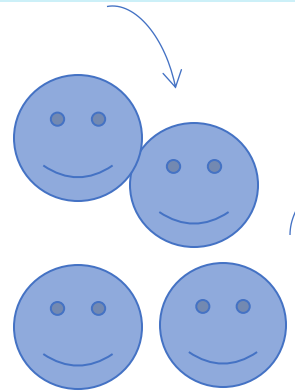
- the **Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Fisheries Standard** is often used to measure the environmental performance of fisheries in a FIP (e.g. fisheryprogress.org)

(ii) MSC Pathway projects

Multi-fishery, multi-stakeholder improvement initiatives, using MSC Fisheries Standard

¹ Conservation Alliance for Sustainable Seafood (CASS) guidelines for supporting FIPs – 2023 - solutionsforseafood.org

MSC multi-fishery 'Pathway Projects'

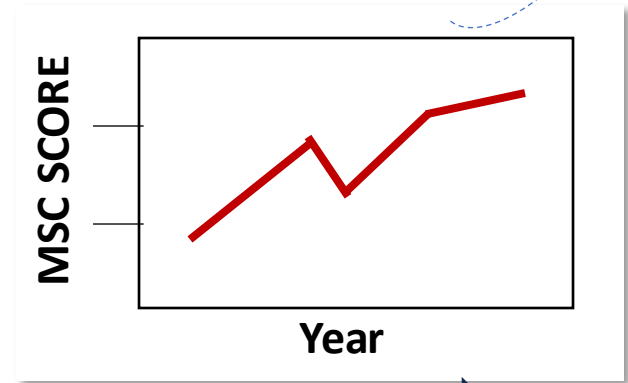


PRE-ASSESSMENT
(rapid audit
against MSC
Fishery Standard)



TRAINING ON
MSC STANDARD

SCORES	Fishery 1	Fishery 2	Fishery 3
Stock status	Green	Red	Yellow
Harvest Strategy	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Bycatch	Yellow	Green	Green
Decomposition	Yellow	Green	Green



MSC multi-fishery 'Pathway Projects'



Stage 1

Stage 2

Stage 3

Stage 4

Stage 5

Mapping,
Steering
Committee

Preassessment,
Capacity building

Action plan
development

Action plan
implementation

MSC
certification
(optional)

Intermediate outcomes

KEY ACTORS ARE
BROUGHT INTO THE
PROJECT

IMPROVED
COLLABORATION

INCREASED
SUSTAINABILITY
AWARENESS

ACTION PLANS
ADDRESS KEY GAPS
WITH VERIFIABLE
MILESTONES

KEY STAKEHOLDERS
ENGAGED

STAKEHOLDERS BUY INTO THE FIP

WELL-DESIGNED FIP
ACTION PLANS

SCIENCE-BASED, EFFECTIVE FISHERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (FIPS)

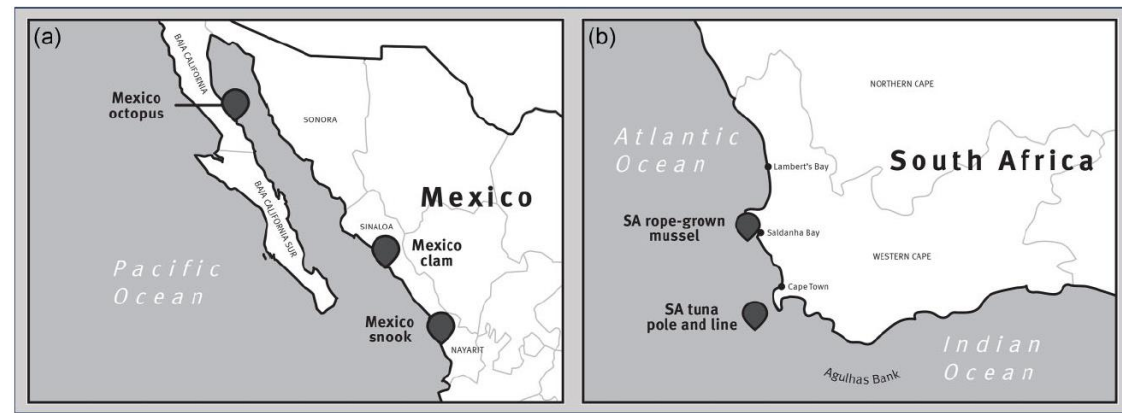
How to track progress? Key informant surveys

- Survey instrument on intermediate (non-monetary) outcomes in pathway projects
- Tested in ‘FishForGood’ pathway projects in Mexico & South Africa

- **72 Questions about:**
 - Benefits/risks of engagement
 - Knowledge of sustainability
 - Collaboration/conflicts
 - Compliance with rules

Mexico fishery	N Respondents	S Africa fishery	N Respondents
Octopus - Bahia de Los Angeles	10 (NGO-2; producers-6; government-2)	Albacore pole & line	12 (NGO-4; scientist-4; producers-2; government-2)
White snook	9 (NGO-1; producers-5; government-3)	Rope-grown mussels	8 (NGO-1; producers-4; government-3)
Chocolate clam	9 (NGO-3; producers-4; government-2)		

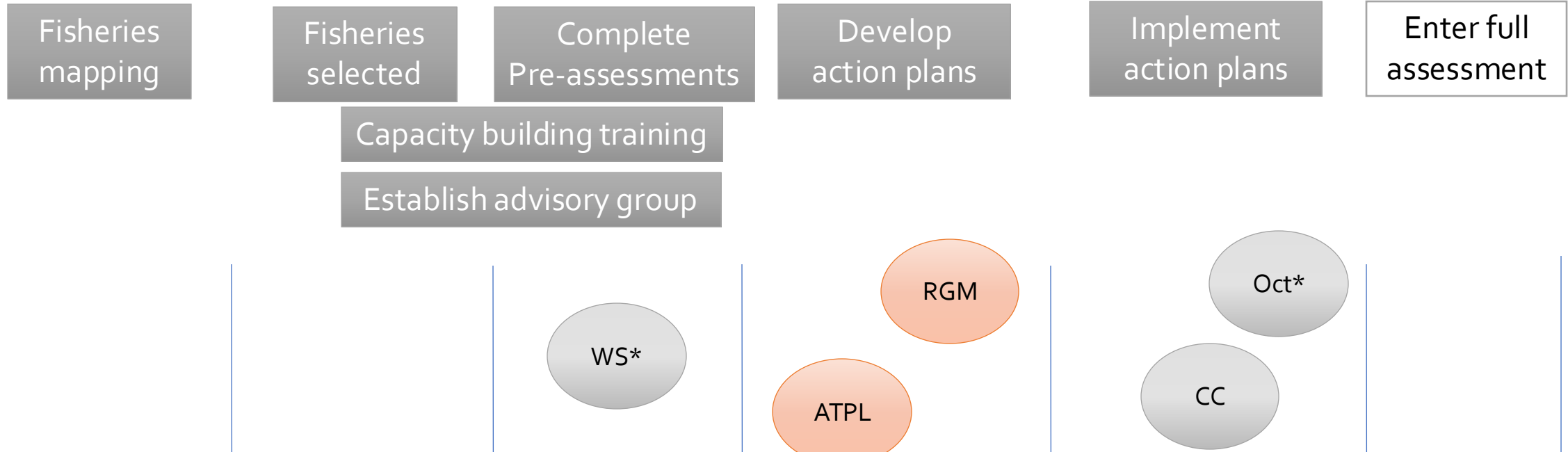
Fisheries surveyed (stage at time of interviews - 2018)



Fish for Good project

Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs)

○ = Mexico
● = SA



* = pre-existing FIP

Perceived benefits for participants

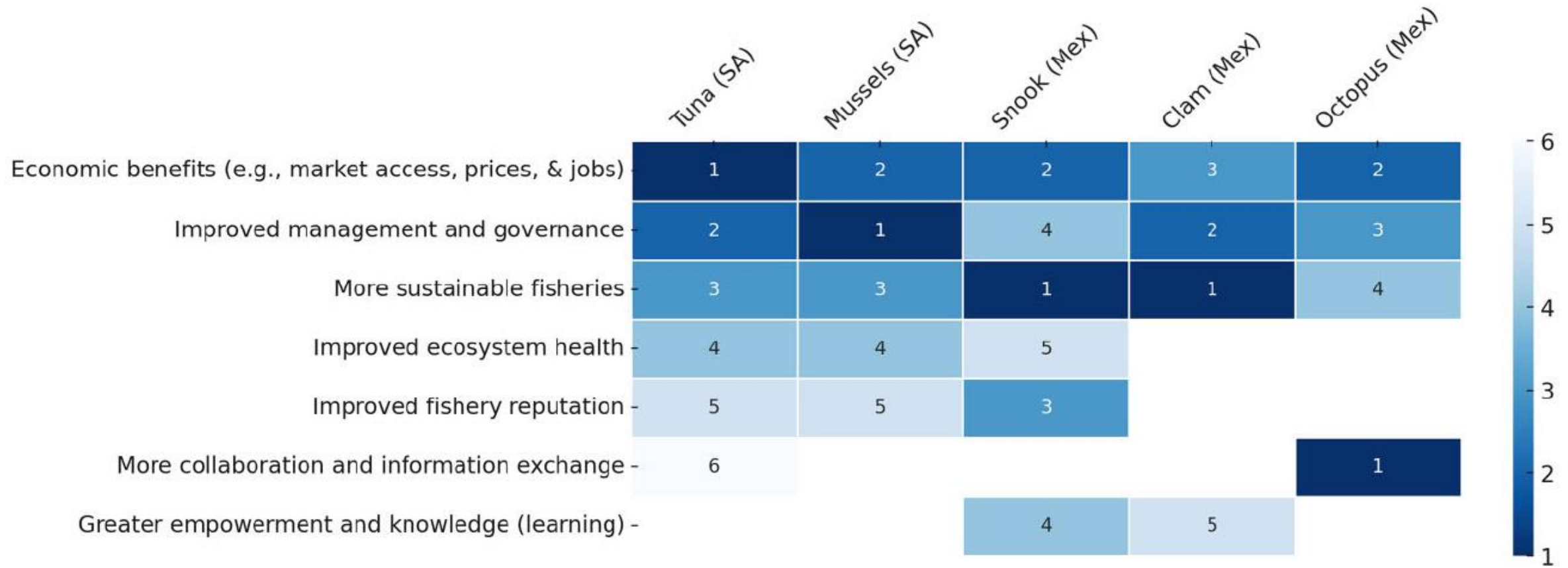


Figure 5. Perceived benefits in order of relevance across all five case studies (with one being the most mentioned) from participating in a pathway project or FIP.

From: Gammage et al 2024 IJMS



The emergent theme of collaboration



Collaboration emerged across respondents as a key enabler for more transparency, information exchange, trust, collaboration, empowerment:

- *“Strengthen the participation and collaboration of fishermen with the government and civil society organisations”* (Mexican fisher)
- *“Get information you wouldn’t normally get”. “Resolve issues of mistrust –leads to open and transparent communication and exchange of information”* (SA respondent)
- The project was perceived as providing a common purpose and helped stakeholders, who often had competing interests, work closer together than before.



Lessons learned



- Monitoring engagement and collaboration in improvement initiatives is important due diligence because FIPs can take many years before delivering tangible improvements on the water
- But it is also valuable to the participants themselves as they have a lot at stake!
- The robustness of the approach relies on
 - Clear assumptions/expectations to be tested
 - Selection of appropriate key informants and independent expert interviewer

A fisherman wearing a blue jacket and a beanie is smiling and holding a large, fresh fish. He is standing in a harbor with fishing boats and equipment in the background.

Thank you!




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The power of collaboration in multifishery improvement initiatives

April 2024 · [ICES Journal of Marine Science](#)

DOI: [10.1093/icesjms/fsae038](https://doi.org/10.1093/icesjms/fsae038)

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