

MSC Improvement Program

Marine Stewardship Council

MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan

[*Fishery name*]

*Introduction and Instructions*

*This template details the information required from Improvement Program Project Managers when creating an MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan. The template is designed to be used by any fisheries engaged in a FIP, but in particular, fisheries in the MSC Improvement Program.*

*The purpose of this template is to ensure quality and consistency in Improvement Action Plans (IAPs) for fisheries working towards meeting the MSC Fisheries Standard and achieving MSC certification.*

*The Improvement Program Project Manager shall develop the IAP no later than 3 years after the fishery has undergone an MSC Pre-Assessment using the relevant version of the ‘MSC Pre-Assessment Reporting Template’, or within 3 years of the completion of any MSC “Full Assessment Report”, including: Announcement Comment Draft Report (ACDR); Client and Peer Review Draft Report (CPRDR); Public Comment Draft Report (PCDR); Final Draft Report (FDR); Public Certification Report (PCR), Surveillance Report or Expedited Audit Report.*

*The purpose of the IAP is to detail the actions and tasks which, when implemented, should improve the score of the UoA(s) against the requirements of the MSC Fisheries Standard to the point where it meets the scoring requirements for certification (FCP v2.3, 7.15.12 & 7.15.13, FCP v3.1, 7.15.13 and 7.15.14). To this end, the Improvement Program Project Manager shall include in the IAP actions and tasks for each Performance Indicator which did not achieve a draft scoring range of ≥80 in the Pre-Assessment Report or “Full Assessment Report”. The Improvement Program Project Manager shall ensure the actions and tasks will lead to increases in draft scoring ranges.*

*If the fishery is part of an existing Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) and has already started implementing improvement actions before entering the MSC Improvement Program, the Improvement Program Project Manager may include these actions in the MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan as long as any actions and tasks completed prior to the MSC Improvement Program start date are clearly stated.*

*The IAP provides information for completing ‘MSC’s Benchmarking and Tracking Tool’ (BMT) and ‘MSC Improvement Program Progress Reports’.*

*The IAP will be verified by a Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) prior to entering the MSC Improvement Program and at regular progress verifications throughout the MSC Improvement Program duration.*

*Please rename the document so that the file name includes the fishery name and any other relevant information e.g. Fishery Name\_Improvement Action Plan\_Date\_Version Number.*

*Please complete all unshaded fields where information is available. Please delete all instructions, notes and guidance text in italics, and replace with information specific to the fishery and UoA(s) where relevant. E.g. this ‘Introduction’ section.*

*For any queries relating to this template or its use please visit* [*msc.org*](https://www.msc.org/) *or contact us at:* *fisheries@msc.org*

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Glossary

*View the* [*MSC-MSCI Vocabulary*](https://www.msc.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/for-business/program-documents/chain-of-custody-supporting-documents/msc-msci-vocabulary-v1-3.pdf)*. Insert an optional glossary or list of acronyms used. Note that any terms defined here shall not contradict terms used in the MSC-MSCI Vocabulary.*

1. Improvement Action Plan Overview

Table 1. Improvement Action Plan overview

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fishery name** or Unit/s of Assessment (UoA/s): |  | **Fishery location:**  |  |
| **Fishing gear type(s):** |  | **Fishery in MSC Improvement Program?** (Applicant/Yes/No): |  |
| **Does the fishery client intend to enter the UoA(s) into MSC full assessment** (or in the case of a suspended MSC certificate enter the reinstatement process)? | *Yes/No* |
| **If yes, please indicate which version of the MSC Fisheries Standard will be used for Full Assessment** *(delete as appropriate).* | v2.01 / v3.1 |
| **IAP Start date** (expected): *DD/MM/YYYY* | **MSC Improvement Program Completion Date** (The expected date on which an Improvement Action Plan is completed, whereby the UoA(s) has/have achieved a draft scoring range equivalent to an MSC pass and a CAB has uploaded either an ACDR or a Surveillance Report to the MSC database as a means to ‘complete’ the MSC Improvement Program process) |
|  |  |
| **Project leaders** (organisation/individual responsible for IAP)**:** | **IAP and improvements supported by** (stakeholder groups, organisations, or meetings that supported the development of the IAP)**:** |
|  |  |
| **FIP Coordinator / Improvement Program Project Manager** (name, affiliation, and position if applicable): | **Improvement Program Project Manager commits to:** * Serve as the key contact between the CAB and the Applicant Fishery.
* Coordinate the implementation of the Improvement Action Plan.
* Collate all information necessary for Progress Verification, including compiling the Progress Reports and updating the IAP and BMT as relevant
 |
|  |  |
| **Improvement Action Plan developed by** (entity, consultant, or person): | **Date when this Improvement Action Plan was created**: |
|  |  |
| **Summary of the Improvement Action Plan** (*Provide an overview of the IAP including a summary of the improvements to be made under each Principle. If the IAP has been updated, highlight key changes here*.)*(Add/delete Principles as appropriate):* |
| *Principle 1**Principle 2**Principle 3**Traceability (optional)* |
| **Stakeholder inputs into the Improvement Action Plan** (Optional). If the IAP has been updated, include stakeholder updates if relevant.  |
| *Stakeholder description – stakeholder input – year* |
| **References** *(document/s on which the* ***IAP******is*** *based):* |
| Pre-Assessment Report / “Full Assessment Report” *(delete/amend as necessary).*BMT*Document 1**Document 2* |
| **Date/s of updated versions of this Improvement Action Plan**: |  |

* 1. Improvement Action Plan overview by Performance Indicator

*The Improvement Program Project Manager shall only include Improvement Actions for PIs that score <60 or 60-79. Please delete Performance Indicators (PIs) that score ≥80 and do not have any improvement actions associated with them. Please ensure each action has a unique ID, though note that one action could apply to multiple PIs. In this case, please ensure that any action that applies to multiple PIs has the same ID.*

*This template has two versions of the Improvement Action Plan Overview by Performance Indicator table: one for MSC Fisheries Standard v3.1 PIs and one for MSC Fisheries Standard v2.01 PIs. Please use the appropriate table and delete the one that is not applicable. If there are multiple UoAs, please specify which improvement actions and deadlines relate to which UoA.*

Table 2. Improvement Action Plan Overview by Performance Indicator – MSC Fisheries Standard v3.1 *(delete if not applicable)*

| Performance Indicator (PI) | Action ID and Name | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1.1 - Stock status | *A1 - Name**A2 - Name**A3 - Name* | *DD/MM/YYYY**DD/MM/YYYY**DD/MM/YYYY* |
| 1.1.2 - Stock rebuilding |  |  |
| 1.2.1 - Harvest Strategy |  |  |
| 1.2.2 - Harvest control rules and tools |  |  |
| 1.2.3 / 1.2.3R (*delete as appropriate*) - Information and monitoring1.2.3R is if Risk Based Framework (RBF) used to score this PI. |  |  |
| 1.2.4 - Assessment of stock status |  |  |
| 2.1.1 - In-scope species outcome  |  |  |
| 2.1.2 - In-scope species management strategy |  |  |
| 2.1.3 / 2.1.3R *(delete as appropriate) -* In-scope species information2.1.3R is if Risk Based Framework (RBF) used to score this PI. |  |  |
| 2.2.1 - ETP/OOS species outcome  |  |  |
| 2.2.2 - ETP/OOS species management strategy |  |  |
| 2.2.3 / 2.2.3R *(delete as appropriate) -* ETP/OOS species information2.2.3R is if Risk Based Framework (RBF) used to score this PI. |  |  |
| 2.3.1 - Habitats outcome  |  |  |
| 2.3.2 - Habitats management strategy |  |  |
| 2.3.3 / 2.3.3R *(delete as appropriate)* - Habitats information 2.3.3R is if Risk Based Framework (RBF) used to score this PI. |  |  |
| 2.4.1 - Ecosystem outcome  |  |  |
| 2.4.2 - Ecosystem management strategy |  |  |
| 2.4.3 - Ecosystem information  |  |  |
| 3.1.1 - Legal and/or customary framework |  |  |
| 3.1.2 - Consultation, roles & responsibilities |  |  |
| 3.1.3 - Long-term objectives |  |  |
| 3.2.1 - Fishery-specific objectives |  |  |
| 3.2.2 - Decision-making processes |  |  |
| 3.2.3 - Compliance & enforcement |  |  |
| 3.2.4 - Monitoring and management performance evaluation |  |  |

Table 3. Improvement Action Plan Overview by Performance Indicator – MSC Fisheries Standard v2.01 *(delete if not applicable)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Performance Indicator | Action ID and Name | Deadline |
| 1.1.1 – Stock status | *A1 - Name**A2 - Name**A3 - Name* | *DD/MM/YYYY**DD/MM/YYYY**DD/MM/YYYY* |
| 1.1.2 – Stock rebuilding |  |  |
| 1.2.1 – Harvest Strategy |  |  |
| 1.2.2 – Harvest control rules and tools |  |  |
| 1.2.3 – Information and monitoring |  |  |
| 1.2.4 – Assessment of stock status |  |  |
| 2.1.1 – Primary species outcome |  |  |
| 2.1.2 – Primary species management strategy |  |  |
| 2.1.3 – Primary species information |  |  |
| 2.2.1 – Secondary species outcome |  |  |
| 2.2.2 – Secondary species management strategy |  |  |
| 2.2.3 – Secondary species information |  |  |
| 2.3.1 – ETP species outcome |  |  |
| 2.3.2 – ETP species management strategy |  |  |
| 2.3.3 – ETP species information |  |  |
| 2.4.1 – Habitats outcome |  |  |
| 2.4.2 – Habitats management strategy |  |  |
| 2.4.3 – Habitats information |  |  |
| 2.5.1 – Ecosystems outcome |  |  |
| 2.5.2 – Ecosystems management strategy |  |  |
| 2.5.3 – Ecosystems information |  |  |
| 3.1.1 – Legal and customary framework |  |  |
| 3.1.2 – Consultation, roles and responsibilities |  |  |
| 3.1.3 – Long term objectives |  |  |
| 3.2.1 – Fishery specific objectives |  |  |
| 3.2.2 – Decision making processes |  |  |
| 3.2.3 – Compliance and enforcement |  |  |
| 3.2.4 – Monitoring and management performance evaluation |  |  |

1. Improvement actions and tasks at Performance Indicator and / or Scoring Issue level

*Complete a separate copy of the table for each Improvement Action. Where multiple UoAs are considered, please clearly specify which improvement actions and deadlines relate to which UoAs. Where the Improvement Action Plan is being revised as part of the MSC Improvement Program, update all relevant tables and specify the new deadlines, noting the changes and original deadlines under Section 3.*

Table 4. Performance Indicator Action Plan table for Action *XX (Replace with Action ID no., name and UoA(s))*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action ID no | *[Insert action ID no. e.g. A1]* |
| Action name  | *[Insert action name]*  |
| Action summary  | *[This should be a summary of the overall goal of achieving this Action and the Tasks that are listed below]* |
| Performance Indicator(s) and/or Scoring Issue(s) | *[Insert relevant PI and SI number(s) and text that action is aiming to improve e.g., PI 1.1.1(a) Stock status relative to recruitment impairment].*  |
| Deadline | *[Insert date that the action will be completed]*  |
| Task No. | Responsible – Action lead  | Responsible – Action partners | Resources – Cost | Resources - Time  | Deadline | Evidence of implementation |
| *[Insert a list of tasks that need to be undertaken to complete an action in order of priority. Add more rows as necessary]**e.g.* *A1-1* | *[Insert stakeholder(s) that are responsible for leading the implementation of the specific task]* | *[Insert stakeholder(s) that are responsible for the implementation of the specific task]* | *[Insert resources that are required to complete task, including total budget and items with cost breakdown and currency. This may be budget or resources in terms of people days – see next column]* | *[Time: XX days of staff time where applicable]* | *[Insert the date that the task will be implemented]* | *[Insert the means of evidence or metrics used to determine whether or not the task has been successfully implemented]* |
| *A1-2* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *A1-3**Etc.* |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Summary of changes to Improvement Action Plan deadlines

*This table should only be completed if revisions have been made to the original Improvement Action Plan. The table should only include improvement actions where the deadline has been revised.*

Table 5. Summary of Changes to Improvement Action Timelines

| Action ID, Name and UoA(s) | Original deadline | Revised deadline *(only to be completed if a revised IAP is produced and action deadlines change)*  | Justification for revised deadline*(only to be completed if deadline has been revised. If exceptional circumstances apply, please note these here)* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

1. Progress verification schedule

*The improvement Program Project Manager should complete this table to summarise the anticipated progress verification schedule. An Improvement Program fishery is subject to regular progress verification. The Improvement Program Project Manager should align progress verification dates with the deadlines of actions and ensure that the progress verification schedule is such that the duration between consecutive Progress Verification Reports being uploaded to the MSC database by the CAB does not exceed 2 years.*

*For each progress verification, please provide a list of the improvement actions that are due to be implemented by the date of the progress verification and provide a list of the Performance Indicators which are projected to have improved draft scoring ranges as a result of the completed improvement actions. Each progress verification should verify improvements on at least one Action.*

*For fisheries with an IAP longer than 2 years, the Improvement Program Project Manager should schedule a minimum of one onsite progress verification around the midway mark of the Improvement Program duration. The CAB may decide to conduct additional onsite progress verification site visits. This table should propose whether an onsite or offsite progress verification is needed and the CAB shall make the final decision on which is most appropriate.*

Table 6. Progress Verification Schedule

| Progress verification | Proposed date*(DD/MM/YYYY)* | Onsite or offsite? | Improvement actions to be verified (*List action IDs, name and UoAs)* | Performance Indicators with improved draft scoring range |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |  |  |

1. Performance Indicator draft score changes (Benchmarking and Tracking Tool)

*Please copy and paste the tables from the Benchmarking and Tracking Tool (BMT) here. Where multiple UoAs are considered please clearly specify how each BMT table relates to each UoA.*

1. Stakeholder Action Plans (optional)

*This section is* ***Optional****. The Improvement Program Project Manager may include a summary of stakeholder responsibilities for each stakeholder that is responsible for the implementation of actions and tasks. The Improvement Program Project Manager may also include signed agreements from the stakeholders that have been assigned a responsibility for a particular action.*

*Please complete a separate stakeholder responsibilities table for each stakeholder group.*

Table 7. Stakeholder responsibilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Stakeholder | *[Insert stakeholder name and contact information here]* |
| Responsibility | *[Insert type of responsibility / role e.g. Leading implementation / contributing to implementation]* |
| Actions  | *[Insert the Action IDs for which the stakeholder is responsible]*  |
| Tasks | *[Insert tasks for which the stakeholder is responsible]* |
| Date of completion | *[Insert date that the tasks should be completed by]* |

* 1. Stakeholder agreement or commitment to undertake Improvement Actions

*Include any supporting documents such as signed agreements, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in support of commitments made.*

1. Traceability Improvement Actions (optional)

*The use of the traceability improvement actions section is* ***optional*** *and traceability improvement actions will not be part of the MSC Improvement Program progress verification and progress determination.*

*For MSC Improvement Product Eligibility, and any future MSC full assessment, the fishery client is required to consider the tracking, tracing, and segregation systems within the fishery and how these systems will allow any products sold as “MSC Improvement Product” and eventually MSC certified, to be traced back to the individual Unit of Assessment (UoA) for the Improvement Program, or Unit of Certification (UoC) once the fishery is MSC certified. This includes a description of the factors that may lead to risks of non-Improvement Program/ non-certified seafood being mixed with “MSC Improvement products” prior to entering Chain of Custody as set out in the MSC Improvement Program Requirements and Guidance v3.0 Section 4) and the MSC Fisheries Certification Process (FCP v.2.3, 7.5.9, FCP v3.1, 7.5.10).*

*It is useful to consider the presence of potential traceability risks within the Unit of Assessment (UoA) in relation to other catches handled by the UoA, and what implications it might have for those fishers that are interested in gaining Improvement Program Chain of Custody eligibility and eventual MSC certification.*

*For each traceability risk factor, the Project Manager should provide a description of the relevant actions that could be taken to mitigate the risks identified. Some risk factors may link to actions identified against specific parts of the Fisheries Standard (e.g., P3 – Effective Management).*

Table 8. Overview of traceability improvement action plan

| Traceability risk/traceability gap | Action ID and Name | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Traceability systems do not track and trace to individual UoA. |  | *DD/MM/YYYY**DD/MM/YYYY**DD/MM/YYYY* |
| Appropriate records that demonstrate traceability are not maintained |  |  |
| Movement of fish and fish product between harvest and landing is not known. |  |  |
| Movement of fish and fish products between landing and the first sale/ change of product legal ownership is not known. |  |  |
| Process of segregation is not known / there is no segregation of fish and fish product at critical tracking events. |  |  |
| Lack of key data elements (the data or documents to identify the UoA such as species, catch area, gear, vessel, harvest date). |  |  |
| Missing information on traceability systems (Relevant monitoring, oversight or regulatory controls which assure the traceability to each individual UoA) |  |  |
| Fishery uses gears that are not part of the UoA. |  |  |
| Vessels in the UoA also fish outside the UoA geographic area. |  |  |
| Vessels from outside the UoA and/or client group member fish on the same stock. |  |  |
| Fishery (client group members) handles Improvement Program (non-certified) product at the same time as MSC certified and/ or other non-certified products during any of the activities covered by the UoA. |  |  |
| Transhipment occurs within the fishery. |  |  |
| Other risks of mixing or substitution between the Improvement Program UoA(s) and other MSC-certified and/or non-certified product. |  |  |

Table 9. Traceability improvement actions and tasks *(repeat table for each action)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action ID no | *[Insert action ID no. e.g. T1]* |
| Action name  | *[Insert action name]*  |
| Action summary  | *[This should be a summary of the overall goal of achieving this Action and the Tasks that are listed below]* |
| Traceability risk/gap | *[Insert traceability risk/gap that the action is aiming to address/mitigate]* |
| Deadline | *[Insert date that the final task that makes up an action will be completed]*  |
| Task No. | Responsible – Action lead  | Responsible – Action partners | Resources – Cost | Resources - Time  | Deadline | Evidence of implementation |
| *[Insert a list of tasks that need to be undertaken to complete an action in order of priority. Add more rows as necessary]**e.g.* *T1-1* | *[Insert stakeholder(s) that are responsible for leading the implementation of the specific task]* | *[Insert stakeholder(s) that are responsible for the implementation of the specific task]* | *[Insert resources that are required to complete task, including total budget and items with cost breakdown and currency. This may be budget or resources in terms of people days – see next column]* | *[Time: XX days of staff time where applicable]* | *[Insert the date that the task will be completed]* | *[Insert the means of evidence or metrics used to determine whether or not the task has been successfully implemented]* |
| *T1-2* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *T1-3**Etc.* |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Template information and copyright

The Marine Stewardship Council “MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan Reporting Template v4.0” and its content is copyright of “Marine Stewardship Council” - © “Marine Stewardship Council” 2024. All rights reserved.

*Delete the table below.*

Table 10. Template Version Control

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Date of publication | Document name | Description of amendment |
| 1.0 | 07/10/2009 | msc-fishery-improvement-action-plan-template.xlsx | * N/A – new document
 |
| 1.0 | 2013 | msc-fishery-improvement-action-plan-overview-template.docx | * N/A – new document
 |
| 1.0 | 22/11/2013 | Fisheries Improvement Action Plan Template.docx | * N/A – new document
 |
| 2.0 | 30/09/2019 | ITM Fisheries Improvement Action Plan Template.docx | * Combination of v1.0 overview and reporting templates in single document, specifically for ITM
 |
| 2.1 | 23/07/2020 | MSC Fisheries Improvement Action Plan Template.docx | * Template updated to be applicable to all FIPs not just ITM.
* Contact email changed from standards@msc.org to fisheries@msc.org
* BMT hyperlink updated.
* Introduction and Overview updated
* Version tracker added.
* Added additional scheme document table.
 |
| 2.2 | 25/02/2021 | msc-fishery-improvement-action-plan-template-v2.2-2021.docx | * Some edits to Introduction and modified guidance below.
* Added fields for Date of Action Plan creation and updates.
* Moved version tracker and scheme document table to end of document.
* Edit to note in Table 2 relating to PI 1.1.1(a)
* Added example draft scoring ranges with coloured fill to tables 4a, b, c.
* Other minor edits to stakeholder action plan section
* Added Traceability action plan section.
 |
| 3.0 | 01/05/2023 | MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan Reporting Template v3.0.docx | * Updated to align with MSC ITM Program Requirements and Guidance – Pilot v2.0 and Fisheries Certification Process 2.3/3.0. Performance indicators for MSC Fisheries Standard v3.0 added.
 |
| 4.0 | 29/10/2024 | MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan Reporting Template v4.0.docx | * Updated to align with MSC Improvement Program Requirements and Guidance v3.0, Fisheries Standard v3.1 and traceability has been added.
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