



MarinTrust Improver Programme

Annual FIP peer review template

Document TEM-027 - Version 2.0

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Reviewed by: Impacts Manager

Approved by: Assurance and Risk Manager

Overview

This section outlines how the peer review form should be completed by the peer reviewers and the use of this form within the MarinTrust Improver Programme Application Process.

Completion of the peer review document (for peer reviewers)

This form should be completed to the best of the peer reviewer's ability. Should they have any questions regarding the general information on the application they should consult with MarinTrust to resolve these prior to submitting the completed form. Should the applicant need to be consulted, in the first instance the MarinTrust Secretariat will be responsible for facilitating this communication.

Use of peer review document (for applicants)

This is an internal document used for the purpose of reviewing a FIP application to the MarinTrust Improver Programme. This document may be shared with Stakeholders involved in the FIP in order to implement improvements to the Fishery Action Plan (FAP) but may not be shared publicly. Information related to the FIP and its progress will be made public via other documents as outlined in the MarinTrust IP Application Mechanism (available on the [website here](#))

Objective of peer review

The purpose of the Improver Programme (IP) progress peer review is to review the evidence presented by an IP Accepted FIP to demonstrate progress made in line with the Fishery Action Plan (FAP). This includes ensuring that the information presented by the FIP is accurate, consistent, and supported by robust evidence. The progress peer review is conducted by an approved Certification Body representative with expertise covering the MarinTrust fishery assessment process, the Improver Programme, and fisheries management in general. The following elements form the basis of the IP peer review evaluation:

- A. Review of the FIP documentation to re-familiarise the reviewer with the fishery, including:
 - The initial MarinTrust fishery assessment;
 - The FAP timeline, in particular the scheduled actions;
 - Any previous progress reports and progress peer reviews.
- B. Review of the new information submitted by the FIP to demonstrate progress against the scheduled actions. This information may take the form of a full MarinTrust progress report, or it may be a progress report drafted by the FIP itself.
- C. For each Milestone scheduled for this surveillance date, the peer reviewer should check to ensure:

- The Milestone is referenced in the Milestone Report or progress report described above;
 - An indication is provided as to whether or not the progress has been met;
 - Where a Milestone is indicated as having been met, evidence is provided to support this.
 - Where a Milestone is indicated as having not been met, an explanation is provided as to why.
- D. Reach an overall conclusion as to whether the information provided by the FIP is adequate to justify the continuing inclusion of the FIP within the MarinTrust Improver Programme.

Overview

FIP name	Small pelagic purse seine fishery, Karnataka State FIP
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Outline here any important acronyms used in the peer review

AR: Annual Report; the document submitted by the FIP using the MT Annual Report template, which provides an indication of progress towards delivering the Actions of the FAP.

CMFRI: Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute

IOS: Indian Oil Sardine

PR: Peer Reviewer, i.e. the author of this document

Summary

Summary: in this section, provide any additional information about the FIP that the reviewers feel is significant to their decision

Background

The Karnataka State small pelagic purse seine fishery was accepted into the MT IP in March 2024. Since that time, it has submitted progress reports every six months (i.e. September 2024, March 2025, September 2025, March 2026). The last milestone peer review considered the March 2025 progress report, and has not been seen by the present PR. Shortly after the March 2025 peer review, the FIP submitted an updated FAP based on the outcomes of a full V3 fishery assessment, along with observations from the first year of the FIP. This document constitutes a review of the March 2026 progress report, which reports progress against this new Version 3 of the FAP.

Indicate here any conclusions or observations made during the process the reviewers feel should be discussed by the Improver Programme Application Committee (IPAC)

PR considers Version 3 of the FAP to be a significant upgrade, particularly in terms of organisation; the updated structure explicitly links Actions with specific MT fishery assessment clauses and makes the peer review process much more straightforward than is sometimes the case. PR also received a brief report summarising the differences between Version 2 and Version 3 of the FAP; this document was also appreciated.

As usual, this peer review considers every Action which was due to be completed during the period since the previous peer review, this being March 2025 – March 2026. The progress report submitted by the FIP also includes updates on some in-progress Actions not yet due for completion; the peer review also covers these.

Several Actions completed during the period under review involve the delivery of analytical reports – these are M2(2), E3(1) and E3(2). The FIP has completed these reports and submitted them as evidence, and so PR agrees that these Actions (and several dependent Actions) have been completed. However, it is beyond the scope of this peer review to determine whether the level of detail provided by these reports is sufficient to meet the requirements of the MT fishery assessment.

Fishery Action Plan review

This section is designed to allow the peer reviewer to comment on specific actions reported on by the applicants. The applicants have completed the reporting table as outlined in the example below and the reviewers are asked to use the below tables to note any specific comments about these. Rows can be added or removed as needed.

Example table

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	Delivery time	Action update	Progress against action	Outstanding actions and rationale	PR comment	PR status of action
M1.1	Information provided by applicant in annual reporting document.						For the PR to provide any specific comments on each action.	For the PR to indicate if they agree with the current status of the action identified by the applicant.
M1.2								
Add rows to each table as necessary								

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	PR comment	PR status of action
M2	M2(1)	Conduct gap analysis of existing enforcement tools	Due for completion June 2026. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed, and the FIP has provided a copy of the gap analysis report. PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	Complete
	M2(2)	Implement priority improvements based on GAP analysis	Due for start July 2026, completion June 2027. The conclusion of the gap analysis report is that enforcement in Karnataka is "comprehensive, effective and	Complete

			operational without gaps”; for this reason, the AR states that “no new priority improvements were required”. It is beyond the scope of this peer review to determine whether the fishery is now able to meet the requirements of M2 – which relies on the accuracy of the gap analysis - but the PR agrees that this FAP Action has been completed.	
	M2(3)	Expand voluntary vessel tracking system coverage	Due for completion June 2027. The AR states that this Action has been completed, explaining that “the enforcement framework...mandates 100% coverage of...transponders...As a result, voluntary expansion was not required”. This is evidenced via a letter from the DoF and a list of vessels on which a transponder has been installed. PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	Complete
	M2(4)	Develop and publish Sanction and Enforcement summary report	Due for completion December 2026. The AR states that this Action has been completed, with a summary report submitted as the main evidence. PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	Complete
	M2(5)	Support skill enhancement of DoF personnel	Due for completion June 2026. The AR states that this Action has been completed and provides a report describing a training session covering transponder use as evidence. The FAP lists training curriculum	Complete

			and post-training evaluation reports as outputs from this Action, evidence of which was not provided by the FIP (although presentations from the training session were provided). It is clear that this Action has been delivered to some extent, and the FAP is relatively vague about how much training would be delivered. On balance PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	
	M2(6)	Establish voluntary fishery compliance programme	Due for completion June 2026. The AR states that this Action has been completed and provides a copy of the Voluntary Compliance Agreement as evidence. The FIP has also provided copies of the agreement signed by vessel owners. PR considers this to be sufficient evidence to agree that this Action has been completed.	Complete
	M2(7)	Develop and implement fishing recording system for purse seiners	Due for completion December 2027. The AR indicates that this Action is ongoing, and it is not yet due for completion. However, the update provided by the FIP is appreciated, and evidence provided shows that work is underway.	Ongoing
	M2(8)	Establish stakeholder Monitoring Group for MCS review	Due for completion December 2028. The AR indicates that this Action is ongoing, and it is not yet due for completion. As with M2(8),	Ongoing

			the update provides evidence that work is underway.	
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M – Management framework and surveillance, control and enforcement

A – Category A: Data collection, stock assessment, harvest strategy and stock status

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	PR comment	PR status of action
No Category A Actions in this FAP ¹				

B – Category B Species

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	PR comment	PR status of action
B1	B1(1)	Establish landing monitoring system for target species.	Due for completion December 2026. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed. Evidence provided in support of this includes a detailed description of the landing monitoring system via a series of reports. PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	Complete
	B1(2)	Conduct biological sampling of key target species.	Due for completion December 2026. The AR indicates that this Action is ongoing; it is not due to have been completed at this time. The evidence provided shows that work is ongoing, and PR agrees with the Action status as described.	Ongoing

¹ Note that the absence of Cat A Actions is organisational; the Actions listed under Category B (develop stock assessments, FMPs, HCRs etc) are likely to lead to many if not all of the Type 1 species being able to be assessed under Category A. These Actions are listed in the FAP (and here) as being Category B Actions because that is the Category under which the species were assessed in the V3 fishery assessment.

C – Category C Species

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	PR comment	PR status of action
No Category C Actions in this FAP				

D – Category D Species

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	PR comment	PR status of action
No Category D Actions due to be completed by this date.				

E – Ecosystem requirements

MT clause	Action ref.	Action in plan	PR comment	PR status of action
E1	E1(1)	Develop a system to record ETP interactions	Due for completion December 2027. The AR indicates that this Action is ongoing and provides evidence of work that has been completed to date. PR agrees that the Action is in progress.	Ongoing
	E1(2)	Conduct ETP handling and ID training for crews	Due for completion March 2026. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed and provides several documents as evidence that training has been delivered. These include full details of the training delivered, slides and technical documents, and copies of the sign-in sheets from training sessions. PR considers this to constitute extremely	Complete

			thorough evidence of what appear by all accounts to be very well-attended training workshops, and very much appreciates the level of detail provided. PR also agrees that this Action has been completed.	
	E1(3)	Install ETP awareness posters and hotline numbers at landing centres	Due for completion December 2025. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed, and as evidence provides a copy of the poster and details of the launch event. PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	Complete
E2	E2(1)	Compile and review seafloor data	Due for completion December 2025. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed, and as evidence provides a report of the seabed interactions review. PR agrees that this Action has been completed.	Complete
	E2(2)	Analyse likelihood of gear/seafloor interactions	Due for completion March 2026. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed, primarily because the review from Action E2(1) confirmed that seabed interactions are very unlikely. PR agrees.	Complete
	E2(3)	Propose mitigation measures if interactions are found	Due for completion September 2026. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed,	Complete

			for the reasons described above (no interactions are likely). PR agrees.	
E3	E3(1)	Review ecosystem interactions and trophic structure	Due for completion December 2025. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed and provides a number of reports as evidence. Chief amongst these is an Ecosystem Baseline and Trophic Role Assessment report. Although brief, the report contains referenced information which covers the main areas listed in the FAP, and so on balance PR considers the Action to have been completed.	Complete
	E3(2)	Conduct Ecosystem Risk Assessment	Due for completion June 2026. The AR indicates that this Action has been completed and provides two summary ERA reports as the main evidence. As with M2(2), it is beyond the scope of this peer review to determine whether the contents of these reports include sufficient detail to ensure the fishery now meets the requirements of Section E3; however, the outputs listed in the FAP have been delivered and so PR agrees that the Action is complete.	Complete
	E3(3)	Propose precautionary management measures if	Due for completion December 2026.	Complete

		risks are identified	The AR indicates that this Action has been completed, citing the conclusions of the E3(2) reports as evidence that no precautionary management measures are required. As above, the extent to which this meets the MT fishery assessment requirements will be determined by an assessor at a later date, but in terms of the FAP, the Action has been completed as planned.	
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Summary of peer review outcomes

This section summarises the outcomes of the peer review process. Peer reviewers should review all of the progress documentation with the primary objective of answering the key questions listed in the table below. Reviewers should use their expert knowledge of the MarinTrust fishery assessment process and MarinTrust IP application process to determine whether the questions should be answered Yes or No. Where the situation is more complicated, reviewers may instead answer “See Notes”. Whichever of the three answers is chosen, additional information may be provided in the relevant section of this template.

	YES	NO	See Notes
A – Review of the FIP documentation			
No score required			
B – Review of the Milestone Report and/or fishery progress report			
Has the FIP submitted a full and detailed report explaining progress made along the FAP timeline since the time of the initial application or previous Milestone assessment?	X		
C – Milestone peer review			
Is every action scheduled in the FAP to be completed by the date of this progress assessment included in the progress report or fishery progress report?	X		
Does the progress report or fishery progress report indicate whether the Milestones have been completed?	X		
Is the evidence provided in support of the completed milestones adequate?	X		
Is an explanation provided against any actions which have not been met?	X		
D – Overall Review			
In the opinion of the peer reviewer, taking all aspects of the FIP application and action documentation into account, is the fishery progressing as planned along the FAP timeline, and therefore should it continue to be recognised by the MarinTrust Improver Programme?	X		

Detailed peer review responses

Peer reviewers may provide additional explanation as to review outcomes in this section of the report. Reviewers do not need to fill out every section of the detailed responses; if the answer to a Key Question is clear-cut, no additional detail may be necessary. However, where there is complexity, uncertainty, or any other information the Application Committee should be made aware of, the peer reviewer may enter it here.

Peer review section	Additional notes from the peer reviewer
	No further comments – the Annual Report has been completed in detail and with abundant documentary evidence to support the conclusions.

CONCLUSION: In the opinion of the peer reviewer, taking all aspects of the FIP application and Milestone documentation into account, is the fishery progressing as planned along the FAP timeline, and therefore should it continue to be recognised by the MarinTrust Improver Programme?

Taking all aspects of the AR into account, PR concludes that this FIP is progressing along the FAP timeline, and in many areas is ahead of the plan. PR particularly appreciates the detailed evidence provided in support of many of the Actions. Overall, PR believes it is appropriate for this fishery to remain recognised by the MarinTrust Improver Programme.