



MarinTrust Improver Programme

FIP annual report: Oman small pelagics

Prepared by: Impacts Manager

Reviewed by: Impacts Manager

Approved by: Assurance and Risk Manager

Overview

In this document the applicant should outline progress made towards the actions listed in the Fishery Action Plan (FAP) as part of the Fishery Improvement Project (FIP). This should be aligned with the MarinTrust Assessment criteria where possible. The progress actions should be updated in the following tables, and the relevant evidence linked to. It is important that evidence documents are publicly available. This will then be verified by the peer reviewers based on evidence submitted by the applicant.

This report should include an update on all actions outlined in the Fishery Action Plan, even if no demonstrable progress has been made since the last report.

FIP name	Oman small pelagics
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Template guidelines

To help ensure the review process can be carried out effectively and efficiently:

- Include specific citations to the evidence that substantiates it. This should include the exact page numbers and paragraph references where the evidence can be found.
- Where possible, include a hyperlink to any evidence referenced.
- Ensure that the supporting evidence documents are easily accessible and well-organised. They should be available in a format that allows for easy navigation, such as a table of contents, bookmarks, or an index.
- Use clear and concise language when referring to evidence to make it easy for readers to grasp why a particular piece of evidence supports a specific progress claim.
- If evidence documents have been submitted during previous reports, this should be clearly identified.
- Each activity being reported on should be clearly linked to the relevant MarinTrust clause and FAP.

Note: MarinTrust will host all evidence documents on the MarinTrust FIP profiles. If there are any confidential and or draft documents that the applicant does not want made public, this should be made clear in the report.

IP Milestone report

Note: This report is based on the FIP workplan and whole fish assessment versions which were updated in December 2025

M – Management framework and surveillance, control and enforcement

MT clause	Action	Delivery time	Action update	Progress against action	Outstanding actions and rationale	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
M1.1.3 M1.2.3 M1.2.4 M1.4.1 M1.5.3	Action 1 Legal and policy framework for fisheries management	10/27	At the time of the whole fish assessment we lacked information to evaluate the fishery management framework, so this Action is initially focused on obtaining information and updating the gap analysis. The Ministry attended the FIP meeting in Muscat on Feb. 8 2026, and expressed their support for the project, but did not present. So far we have established the following: M1.1.3: Fishers reportedly have access to information and training via fishermen's associations in each Governorate, and directly from the Ministry using an organisation called Advanced Fishing Boat. It is a requirement under the Living Aquatic Resources Law (LAR Law) (20/2019) that		The review and gap analysis are still ongoing, although due to be finished 10/25. This is because we are still not certain that we have all the relevant legislation and documents, and they are not publicly available. The LAR Law was received in Arabic, in a version where AI translation tools gave us gibberish, so it had to be translated the old-fashioned way (external contractor).	Living Aquatic Resources Law (20/2019) Analysis of legislation Updated whole fish assessment	Ongoing	

			training is provided So it seems that this is met, but we have not yet been able to fully verify it. M1.2.3: Dispute resolution - The LAR Law Article 61 seems to cover this – see Analysis of legislation M1.2.4: Respect for legal rights of people dependent on fishing – LAR Law Article 19 M1.4.1: Principles of sustainable fishing and a precautionary approach. The Ministry states that they are committed to these principles but we have found nothing in writing as yet. The Fishmeal Association has taken some concrete measures; in 2025 they agreed together not to start the new season until October (as opposed to August or September), resulting in better fish size and yields. This will continue in 2026. M1.5.3: Review – the LAR Law is quite new (2019) and the Royal Decree 92/2020 revised the organisation and responsibilities of the Ministry – so there	Conversely, the information we have received has allowed us to close out several clauses already – see updated fishery assessment (version Dec. 2025)			
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			has been recent review and revision of the management system. It is not clear if this happens regularly.				
M1.5.1 M1.5.2	Action 2 Decision-making frame- work	4/27	Same situation as for Action 1 – we are in the process of trying to establish the situation. We sent a list of questions to the Ministry (via our designated liaison person) and received some responses. Regarding M1.5.1 (participation, consultation), the Ministry say that there is a process for consultation, through workshops and meetings, as well as something called ‘labs’ (closed discussions) (I don’t know what this entails). There are also reportedly multiple mechanisms by which the Ministry engages with fishers, including via fishermen’s associations (in each governorate) and via social media. We have not yet been able to engage with fishermen’s associations or independently verify any of this. Regarding M1.5.2 (transparent decision making) – no progress.	Regarding M1.5.2 (transparent decision making) – it is clear that this question of transparency is likely to be our main issue. Very little information is publicly available – not scientific advice or stock assessments, nor meeting agendas, summaries or minutes, nor other explanations of decision-making, nor even apparently the decisions themselves, or regulations or legislation or policy documents. Obtaining information on these questions is harder than we expected. There is also the question of the	Oman small pelagic FIP questions and responses document	Ongoing	

				language barrier (information only in Arabic and not susceptible to AI translation).			
M1.2.3 M2.2.2 M2.3.1 M2.3.2 M2.3.3 E2.1.2	Action 3 Surveillance and enforcement	12/27 3.1 – 6/26	Same situation – data gathering and gap analysis (Action 3.1 due to be completed 6/26) M1.2.3 (dispute resolution). LAR Law Article 61 (see Analysis of legislation) M2.2.2 Evidence of systematic non-compliance - no information as yet M2.3.1 (compliance documented and analysed) – see comment above re transparency and publicly-available data M2.3.2 (fishers provide information) – in relation to fishers, this remains unclear. However it is useful to note that the factories are much more aware of this as a result of signing up to the MT factory standard; and have also provided data to the FIP – details below.	Same issue as above, particularly in relation to reporting of non-compliance. The deadline for Action 3.1 is not realistic; it will take additional time to complete. We need to continue to build trust and relationships with the Ministry before progress can be made.	Living Aquatic Resources Law (20/2019) Analysis of legislation Fishery Statistical Bulletin 2023 Updated whole fish assessment	Ongoing	

			M2.3.3 (catch reporting and traceability) – traceability at the level of the factories is sufficient for them to pass MarinTrust factory audits; quite detailed catch data are available in the annual Statistical Bulletin. The factories have provided data to the FIP as summarised below.				
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A – Category A: Data collection, stock assessment, harvest strategy and stock status

MT clause	Action	Delivery time	Action update	Progress against action				Outstanding actions and rationale	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
A, B, C and D	Action 0 – define UoA	3/26	The FIP designed a questionnaire which was provided to all FIP participating factories, in order to get clarity on their raw material sourcing and species composition. This information has allowed us to properly define the UoA in terms of species and vessels:		raw material (tonnes)			These data were received during March and April, so we have not yet revised the MT v3	Factory raw material questionnaire Raw material data (anonymised)	Complete	
					2023-4	2024-5	2025-6	%			

			oil sardine	161,532	152,817	191,702	87	Type 1	B	fishery assessment nor the workplan – this work is underway but not yet completed			
			Indian mackerel	7,173	4,439	564	2.1	Type 1	B				
			goldstripe sardine	4,334	3,870	6,261	2.5	Type 1	B				
			catfish	2,511	521		0.5	Type 2	D				
			horse mackerel	1,160	853		0.3	Type 2	D				
			saddle grunt	10,468	5,071		2.7	Type 2	D				
			hilsa	314	1,019		0.2	Type 2	D				
			sindh sardine		29,196	431	5.1	Type 1	B				
A1.1 A1.2 B M2.3.3 E2.1.2	Action 4 - Data collection for small pelagics (target stocks and bycatch)	3/28	Note: I realise now that oil sardine should have been Category B, not Category A, since management measures are not species-specific. The workplan will be revised and updated based on Action 0 (which was always the intention). Regarding A1.1 – the raw material data received from the factories identified the three species of sardine (<i>Sardinella longiceps</i> , <i>S. gibbosa</i> , <i>S. sindensis</i>). Therefore, this clause no longer needs addressing in the workplan.							There was agreement to work with Dr Dutta at the FIP meeting in February, but the details of his proposal, payment schedule etc. are still	Fishery Statistical Bulletin 2023 Updated whole fish assessment Proposal from Dr Dutta, Sultan Qaboos University	Ongoing	
		4.1 – 9/26											
			A1.2 (sufficient information for stock assessment): The FIP is planning to work with Dr Sachinandan Dutta of										

			Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) on stock assessments for the species identified under Action 0 – see attached proposal from Dr Dutta. At the same time, the RV Fridtjof Nansen was due in Omani waters in February to start an acoustic survey of small pelagic resources. Unfortunately, due to the US-Israeli war on Iran the survey has been interrupted for the moment.	being worked out	Factory raw material questionnaire Raw material data (anonymised)		
A2.1 A2.2 A2.3 A2.4 A2.5 B M1.3.2 M1.3.3	Action 5 – stock assessments	3/29	Action 5.1.1 Review existing process / expertise / timetable available for stock assessment of small pelagics – due to be completed 3/26 See above – we have concluded that the most efficient method of progressing Actions 4 and 5 for the moment is to work with SQU, but we will continue to engage with the Ministry at the same time, hoping to have input into their data collection, stock assessment and research activities. Regarding A2.1 and A2.2, according to Dr Dutta, he does provide stock assessments to the Ministry periodically, although it is not clear what they do with that information. He uses a variety of methods appropriate for data limited stocks – see his presentation to the FIP meeting, Feb. 2026, and updated whole fish assessment	See above	See above	Ongoing	

A3.1 A3.2 A3.3 A4.1 B	Action 6 - management	3/30	Nothing due yet			Not started	
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B – Category B Species

MT clause	Actions	Delivery time	Action update	Progress against action	Outstanding actions and rationale	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
B	See Actions 4, 5 and 6 above Note: Category B species added in Dec. 2025 versions of whole fish assessment and workplan, and also following completion of Action 0, but the workplan has not yet been updated – see comments above.					See above	Ongoing	

C – Category C Species

No category C species

D – Category D Species

Category D species initially identified were a pass so there are no actions in the workplan for Category D species at present. However, some new species have been identified under Action 0, and these remain to be evaluated. They will be added to the workplan if necessary.

E – Ecosystem requirements

MT clause	Action	Delivery time	Action update	Progress against action	Outstanding actions and rationale	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
E1.1.1 E1.1.2 E1.1.3 E2.1.2 E2.2.1 E3.1.1 E3.1.3	Action 7 Data collection for ecosystem	3/28	We have contracted OneOcean (Oman-based marine biology consultants) to conduct a study to compile all the available information on interactions of the small pelagic fishery with ETP species in Oman, and to provide a list of species of potential concern. The draft report was provided in the last few days and discussions are underway on revisions.			OneOcean proposal OneOcean draft report*	Ongoing	
E1.2.1 E1.3.1 E1.3.2 E3.3.1 E3.3.2	Action 8 Ecosystem management	3/30	Nothing due yet				Not started	

* Please do not publish as this is a first draft for internal discussion. The final version will be provided at the next update.

Additional information

The following section is for any information provided by the fishery in support of this progress report which does not relate directly to any of the actions above, but which is relevant to the ongoing monitoring of fishery management status.

Amended timeline

The following section allows the applicant to explain if there are any amendments to the improvement timelines and provide the reasons and evidence for this. This should reference the specific actions as outlined in the progress report.

Index for evidence documents

MT clause	Action in plan	Evidence document	Link
A in general, also B, C and D, M1.3.2, M2.3.3, E2.1.2	Action 0, Action 4, Action 5	Evidence 1: factory raw material questionnaire; Evidence 2: raw material data (anonymised)	
M1.1.3, M1.2.3, M1.2.4, M1.4.1, M1.5.3, M1.2.3, M2.2.2, M2.3.1, M2.3.2, M2.3.3, E2.1.2	Action 1, Action 3	Evidence 3: Living Aquatic Resources Law (20/2019) (translation)	
M1.1.3, M1.2.3, M1.2.4, M1.4.1, M1.5.3, M1.2.3, M2.2.2, M2.3.1, M2.3.2, M2.3.3, E2.1.2	Action 1, Action 3	Evidence 4: Analysis of legislation	
M1.1.3, M1.2.3, M1.2.4, M1.3.2, M1.3.3 M1.4.1, M1.5.3, M1.2.3, M2.2.2, M2.3.3, M2.3.1, M2.3.2, M2.3.3, A1.1, A1.2, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4, A2.5, B, E2.1.2	Action 1, Action 3, Action 4, Action 5	Evidence 5: Updated whole fish assessment (Dec. 2025)	

M1.5.1, M1.5.2	Action 2	Evidence 6: Oman small pelagic FIP questions and responses document	
M1.2.3, M1.3.2, M1.3.3, M2.2.2, M2.3.1, M2.3.2, M2.3.3, A1.1, A1.2, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4, A2.5, B, E2.1.2	Action 3, Action 4, Action 5	Evidence 7: Fishery Statistical Bulletin 2023	
A1.1, A1.2, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4, A2.5, B, M1.3.2, M1.3.3, M2.3.3, E2.1.2	Action 4, Action 5	Evidence 8: Proposal from Dr Dutta, SQU	
E1.1.1, E1.1.2, E1.1.3, E2.1.2, E2.2.1, E3.1.1, E3.1.3	Action 7	Evidence 9: OneOcean proposal; Evidence 10: OneOcean draft	

