

June 2019

Monitoring and Evaluation System Report

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Disclaimer: This system report was prepared by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in December 2013 and updated June 2019.

The report prepared and submitted to the ISEAL Secretariat by the MSC to show MSC's compliance with the [ISEAL code of good practice](#) for assessing the impacts of social and environmental standards systems ("Impacts code"). This report represents the present state of development of the MSC Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) program.

1. Introduction to scope of Monitoring and Evaluation program

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) program aims to monitor and evaluate global wild capture fisheries and chain of custody that have been certified against the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Standards. The main goal is to increase the understanding of the environmental and organisational impacts of the MSC certification and ecolabel program, and provide the scientific foundation for a transparent, impartial, consistent and inclusive MSC program.

Monitoring and evaluation overarching objectives

- Promote accountability for the achievement of MSC objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness and processes of the organisation and performance of the fisheries involved in the MSC program
- Promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned from MSC certification program as a basis for decision making on policies, strategies, program management, and projects
- Improve management effectiveness and accountability by defining realistic results and targets, monitoring progress toward the achievement of expected results and targets, integrating lessons learned into management decisions, and reporting on performance.

The M&E framework reflects a commitment to technically rigorous, systematic and transparent methods of tracking and evaluating the impacts of the MSC program. Coupled with transparency, this approach is a cornerstone of MSC's commitment to accountability, effectiveness and learning.

For full details of the M&E objectives see the M&E Framework

For full detail of the MSC theory of change see [section 3](#) which links the stated scope and the standard strategies, and desired expected outcomes of the program.

2. Institutional structure of M&E program

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3. Defining the intended change

Summary of the MSC theory of change

The MSC's vision is for the world's oceans to be teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations. The mission of the organisation is to use its certification and ecolabel program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis. We work collaboratively with the fishing industry, seafood business sector, governments, scientific community, environmental groups and others to give retailers, restaurants and consumers an opportunity to choose and reward sustainable fishing through their seafood purchasing choices.

The MSC program is designed to create market incentives to reward sustainable fishing practices. When any buyer chooses to purchase MSC certified fish, certified fisheries are rewarded for their sustainable practices through that market preference. MSC and its partners encourage processors, suppliers, retailers and consumers to give priority to purchasing seafood from MSC certified fisheries and to demonstrate this through use of the MSC logo. Globally, buyers in major markets have made strong commitments to purchase up to

100 per cent of their wild-capture fish products from MSC certified fisheries, and these commitments are increasing.

These purchasing preferences increase the global demand and market access for certified sustainable seafood and provide the critical incentives needed for fisheries to undergo the rigorous and transparent assessments required in the MSC program. The same incentives also provide a significant influence on many fisheries that are operating below the MSC Standards. If such fisheries want to benefit from these market rewards, they will need to reduce their environmental impact and improve their management practices to become eligible for certification. This “pull” for certification and the improved performance required in many cases in turn improves the stewardship of the world’s oceans and enables many fisheries to better compete in a global marketplace that increasingly demands proof of sustainability. This virtuous cycle is shown below in MSC’s theory of change graphic.



The [MSC theory of Change](#) and [MSC vision and mission](#) is available online

Long-term goals

MSC mission

Our mission is to use our ecolabel and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis.

This statement gives us the basis for MSC's long-term goals:

- Healthy oceans-
- Seafood market transformed to a sustainable basis

Sustainability issues

- Poor natural resource management (fisheries)
- Declining ecosystem productivity and habitats' health caused by fishing
- Seafood supply chains and markets using unsustainable products

Sustainability impacts

Desired long-term impacts arising from the sustainability issues listed above:

- Ecologically sustainable global fish stocks (healthy fish stocks)
- Fisheries impacts controlled to allow ecologically sound habitats and ecosystems
- Transformed seafood markets supplying sustainably produced seafood products.

MSC sustainability and strategy outcome objectives

The MSC theory of change is reflected in the MSC sustainability and strategy outcome objectives.

Sustainability outcome objectives – based on fishery health and the MSC's core aim:

- 1.1- MSC program should encourage fisheries to make such improvements as necessary to meet the MSC's sustainability standard.
- 1.2- The MSC system should be accessible to all fisheries worldwide.

Sustainability outcomes

The short and medium-term outcomes we expect to see in MSC certified fisheries as a result of compliance with the MSC Standard.

- More fish stocks (retained and bycatch) considered to be at sustainable levels
- More fish habitats and ecosystems considered to be in a sustainable state
- More fisheries management entities using principles of fisheries management designed to achieve sustainable fisheries and fishery ecosystems
- Increased supply and demand of sustainably produced and traceable seafood products
- More engagement (awareness, involvement and commitment) by fishing communities and the fishing sector in the pursuit of ecologically sustainable fisheries
- Increased public awareness of, involvement in, and commitment to seafood sustainability issues.

Strategy outcome objectives – *how the program is working to deliver the sustainability outcome objectives:*

- **2.1-** The MSC program should be rigorous, credible, effective and efficient and the supply chain has high integrity.
- **2.2-** The MSC program should grow the demand for and supply of MSC certified fish to reward sustainable fishing practices

Strategy outcomes

Fishery outcomes

- A greater number and diversity of certified fisheries and supply chain organisations
- A greater number of fisheries undergoing pre- and full assessment
- Greater accessibility of the program to fisheries, regardless of their size, scale, intensity or geographical region.

Product & Market outcomes

- A greater number of seafood products from certified fisheries available in the market
- Greater volume and diversity of MSC ecolabelled seafood product sales.

Systemic outcomes

- Greater catch sector and supply chain involvement in, and commitment to sustainable seafood and the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program
- Greater stakeholder involvement in, and long-term engagement with, the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program
- Maintenance of consistency with and influence on international best practice in certification and effective ecolabelling program delivery
- Wider public awareness of, involvement in and commitment to seafood sustainability issues and the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.

Supporting strategies

The strategies the MSC employs to increase the use of standards-compliant practices include:

- Providing fisheries and chain of custody Standards, as well as supporting verification (certification) systems to assess compliance with those Standards
- Providing incentives for stakeholders in the value chain to comply with the Standards by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices and traceability systems through the use of the MSC ecolabel
- Conducting outreach and communication activities to promote the MSC program to potential users within the fisheries supply chain (from capture to plate), governments, broader stakeholder community and the public
- Developing and conducting online and face-to-face training for CABs.
- Developing and delivering capacity building tools through our technical and developing world fisheries programs
- Building organisational capacity, including funding, to support all the above activities
- Collaborating with stakeholders to support the above activities.

Influencing factors

External factors that may influence the success or otherwise from the MSC achieving the desired outcomes and impacts are already articulated by Board level approved risk register and through the strategic planning process in the MSC's logical framework:

- Environmental factors outside the influence of fisheries management
- Perceived credibility of the MSC program
- Lack of consumer engagement
- Market forces changing the nature of fish product supply chains (lack of market interest)

Development of the Theory of Change

An M&E work plan was established in January 2009, which included consultation within the development of the 2012-2017 MSC integrated strategic plan which was signed off by the MSC Board. Initially the stakeholder workshop in 2006 helped to develop the M&E framework with feedback from 19 stakeholders, after that point an internal working group was created. The M&E internal working group includes representatives from all departments to ensure a whole organisation and system-wide perspective and buy-in. This working group met regularly to complete defining the MSC's theory of change from its long-term objectives to supporting strategies. The results were then reviewed by the MSC Technical advisory board 2010 meeting which then led to public consultation in 2011. Feedback was reviewed and adjustments made signed off by the standards director which produced the above theory of change.

The details of the intended changes are shown in Figure 1 which indicates the proposed causal pathway from the MSC implemented supporting strategy inputs to the immediate outcomes of these strategies. These lead to the sustainability outcomes from which the long-term impacts arise, ultimately achieving the long-term goals on which the mission of the MSC is based.

Unintended effects

The MSC standard system operates within a complex world with positive and negative unintended results occurring due to the MSC's activities; these results are neither expected nor planned. Many stakeholders are interested and have discussed within the Technical Advisory Board and Stakeholder Council the unintended effects of the MSC standard (listed in Table 2 broken down by areas of impact). Projects have been developed to investigate the unintended effects, which have been incorporated into the MSC's integrated strategic plan. We are therefore working on ways to monitor and evaluate the unintended effects through these projects to produce M&E program indicators on unintended effects.

Table 2. MSC Unintended effects

Social Development		MSC context
Labour Rights	The range of rights enshrined in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles & Rights at Work	Not applicable
Gender Equity	Access to opportunities and empowerment of girls and women, as well as the reduction of discrimination and inequalities based on gender	Not applicable
Access to Education	Access to, engagement in and attainment through education	MSC consumer facing campaign promotes public awareness and education on sustainability issues (positive)

		Improved infrastructure due to MSC certification of fisheries could enable better accessibility and availability of education to local communities. (positive)
Access to Health and Sanitation	Access to medical treatment and improved sanitation, notably through access to clean water and the availability of sewage treatment, for the benefit of human health	Achieving MSC certification often creates a sense of pride by government and central institutions resulting in infrastructure improvements at the local fishing community levels (for example, MSC certification of the Baja California, Mexico lobster resulted in several infrastructure improvements such as schools, electricity and sanitary improvements). (positive)
Cultural Identity	Respect for self-determination, intellectual property, benefit sharing and religious tolerance	MSC certification generates a sense of pride, stewardship and ownership promoting respect and self-empowerment (positive)
Environmental Integrity		MSC context
Water	Water conservation and quality, for both fresh- and marine waters	Not applicable
Integrity for Biodiversity	Diversity of life at the level of species, genetic diversity and ecosystems	Minimizing environmental impacts of fishing promotes biodiversity integrity (positive).
Soil Fertility	Maintenance of organic matter, as well as conserving soil from all forms of erosion	Not applicable
Climate Change	Mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening the resilience and adaptation capacity of people, their livelihoods and ecosystems to climatic change	Not applicable
Natural Resource Management	Management of resources from production to post-consumption, by supporting the integrity of ecosystem services, maintaining harvesting levels that ensure regeneration, and the reduction and effective management of waste	Direct (intended) impacts
Economic Resilience		MSC context
Secure Livelihoods	Understood as an economic concept incorporating income, wealth, poverty and employment, whether paid, voluntary, formal or informal	<p>MSC certification improves fishers' incomes, and contributes to the sustainability and economic viability of livelihoods (positive)</p> <p>MSC certification may create negative impacts for those fisheries that can't reach the sustainability standards, closing certain markets (negative).</p> <p>Cost of certification restrict small scale and/or developing world fisheries from accessing the benefits of MSC certification (negative)</p>
Social Capital	<i>Social capital refers to connections among individuals –</i>	MSC certification creates a sense of ownership and pride, resulting in more cohesive communities

	<i>social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them</i> ¹ . It includes the concepts of knowledge sharing and social safety nets	/ groups working together for a common outcome (positive)
Resilience to Economic Risk	First and foremost the assurance of self-reliance, and secondly the ability to counter risk through economic diversification and access to finance	MSC certification creates new international market access and/or secures existent ones creating more economic stability and resilience compared to local/domestic markets (positive)
Inclusive Value Chains	Fairness and responsibility for all those involved in a value chain, so that they operate as one step within a longer chain	MSC certification may create more transparent and fair value chains (positive) MSC certification may require effort and commitment at certain steps of the value chain without direct benefits to that particular step (negative)

¹ Social Capital as defined by Robert Putnam www.infed.org/thinkers/putnam.htm#_Social_capital



Figure 1. Schematic diagram of causal pathways for MSC intended changes in accordance with the ISEAL Impact Code requirements which leads to the development of the MSC sustainability and strategy outcome evaluation indicator

4. Ongoing monitoring program

MSC's M&E indicators were developed through internal working groups and external consultation. A list of indicators developed is included in the M&E Framework. The M&E indicators are listed in Table 1, with the sustainability and strategy outcome and related objectives that they hope to address. These indicators were tracked and published in the Global Impact Reports 2013-2015. In these impact reports, each indicator is described and how it was constructed, what the data source is and its relevance to the MSC objectives are explained. The indicators continue to be tracked and published, however they are no longer published in their entirety in the Global Impact Reports (GIR) as they were judged to be too technical for the audience of the GIRs. They are now available in internal reports, internal dashboards, public reports and peer-reviewed papers.

Table 1. MSC M&E indicators

Indicator Number	Indicator title	Sustainability and/or Strategy Outcome Objectives	Strategy and/or Sustainability outcome
1	Average principle scores of MSC fisheries	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fisheries management entities using principles of fisheries management designed to achieve sustainable fisheries and fishery ecosystems
2	Action plans for improvement	1.1	
3	Annual improvements through completed action plans	1.1	
4	Target stock status	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fish stocks (retained and bycatch) considered to be at sustainable levels.
5	Target stock management	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fisheries management entities using principles of fisheries management designed to achieve sustainable fisheries and fishery ecosystems
6	Information on the target stock	1.1	
7	Status of non-target species	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fish stocks (retained and bycatch) considered to be at sustainable levels.
8	Status of Endangered, Threatened and Protected species	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fisheries management entities using principles of fisheries management designed to achieve sustainable fisheries and fishery ecosystems
9	Status of habitats and ecosystems	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fish habitats and ecosystems considered to be in a sustainable state.
10	Management of non-target and Endangered, Threatened and Protected species, habitat and ecosystem impacts	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fisheries management entities using principles of fisheries management designed to achieve sustainable fisheries and fishery ecosystems
11	Information on non-target and Endangered, Threatened and Protected species, habitat and ecosystem	1.1	
12	Governance and policy	1.1	
13	Fishery specific management	1.1	
14	Number and landings of MSC fisheries	1.2 & 2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More engagement (awareness, involvement and commitment) by fishing communities and the fishing sector in the pursuit of ecologically sustainable fisheries. A greater number and diversity of certified fisheries and supply chain organisations. A greater number of fisheries undergoing pre- and full assessment.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater stakeholder involvement in, and long-term engagement with, the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.
15	Program uptake in developing country fisheries	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater accessibility of the program to fisheries, regardless of their size, scale, intensity or geographical region. A greater number and diversity of certified fisheries and supply chain organisations.
16	DNA testing of MSC certified fish	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A greater number and diversity of certified fisheries and supply chain organisations. Greater catch sector and supply chain involvement in, and commitment to sustainable seafood and the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program. Maintenance of consistency with and influence on international best practice in certification and effective ecolabelling program delivery.
17	Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) involved in MSC fishery assessments	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater accessibility of the program to fisheries, regardless of their size, scale, intensity or geographical region. Greater stakeholder involvement in, and long-term engagement with, the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.
18	Objections to MSC certification	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of consistency with and influence on international best practice in certification and effective ecolabelling program delivery. Greater stakeholder involvement in, and long-term engagement with, the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.
19	Extent of the chain of custody program	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A greater number and diversity of certified fisheries and supply chain organisations. Greater catch sector and supply chain involvement in, and commitment to sustainable seafood and the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.
20	MSC ecolabelled products in the market	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A greater number of seafood products from certified fisheries available in the market. Greater volume and diversity of MSC ecolabelled seafood product sales.
21	Consumer recognition and recall of the MSC ecolabel	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider public awareness of, involvement in and commitment to seafood sustainability issues and the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program. Greater stakeholder involvement in, and long-term engagement with, the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.
22	Consumer purchasing of MSC ecolabelled product	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider public awareness of, involvement in and commitment to seafood sustainability issues and the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program. Greater stakeholder involvement in, and long-term engagement with, the MSC's certification and ecolabelling program.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater volume and diversity of MSC labelled seafood product sales.
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Data Collection

All data needed for the M&E indicators have been collected and analysed and will continue to be collected into the future.

Scoring data (Indicator 4-13,17): Data collection of the performance indicator scores started in July 2012. As fishery certification assessment reports produced by CABs are PDF reports the scores had to be manually input in the MSC scoring database to allow for further analysis. All past scores and additional information such fishery action plans were extracted by December 2013 and were internally cross-validated. This information was then analysed and presented using Access/Excel/R (for full methodology see pg. 48-50 in the [Global Impacts Report 2013](#)). To allow historical scores to be included in this analysis, performance indicators prior to the v1.2 MSC certification requirements were mapped by matching up previous performance indicators to the new requirements to allow time series analyses (for more details see pg. 48 in the [Global Impacts Report 2013](#)). Scores and fishery action plans continue to be collected within the MSC scoring database. Additional information on number of CABs engaged with the MSC is also extracted from the scoring database.

MSC data (Indicator 14-15 & 18-20): Data collected by eCert (MSC internal reporting system) include certified fishery numbers, developing world fisheries, tonnages, chain of custody certificates and ecolabelled products are reported by CABs and are internally checked by MSC staff. Additional data on Objection Procedures is collected by MSC Standards staff.

Consumer Survey data (Indicator 21-22): Independent seafood consumer surveys were conducted to assess the attitudes and awareness of seafood consumers towards MSC ecolabel in selected countries. These are conducted by GlobeScan and commissioned on a bi-annual basis. The data was analysed to create two MSC indicators including consumer recognition and recall of the MSC ecolabel and other of consumer purchasing of the MSC ecolabelled products.

For more details on the Indicator construction see the Indicators technical construction section for each indicator in the [Global Impacts Report 2013](#).

Data sources

The information to support the M&E can be classified as: (1) internal, comprised of data from all departments at the MSC as well as key reports produced by CABs under contract with fishery and supply chain clients, which are publicly available on the MSC website and; (2) external or ancillary including technical reports from management agencies, global datasets on fisheries landings and stock assessments and scientific literature published in peer-reviewed journals, and including data from confidential pre-assessments as become available to the MSC.

These data sources are being used to develop, update and/or link specific databases for fisheries, chain of custody (CoC) and logo licensing (LL).

Example internal databases

eCert

eCert is the certificate management software developed by Intact GmbH currently in use by the MSC across multiple platforms which have become integral to the MSC's ability to record and display accurate sets of data relating to fisheries certification, CoC and LL. This information can then be displayed to all interested stakeholders via the MSC website especially the MSC Supplier Directory.

Fishery scoring database

The MSC assessment scoring database has been created with the aim of capturing the outcomes of all fishery assessments since the inception of the MSC (1999 to present) by extracting scores for all

Performance Indicators. This is achieved through the generation of different scoring trees unique to many fisheries and creating applied trees based on units of certification (UoC) scored to collect the correct performance indicators, scoring guideposts and Indicators whilst tracking conditions on fisheries.

Table 2. A summary of all databases, data collection methods and frequency and current status of the database.

	Stores	Data collection methods	Frequency	Current Status of database
Fishery scoring database	A collection of all historical MSC fishery assessment reports containing scores, rationales, conditions, risk-based framework (RBF) scores and stakeholder comments. These are taken from all PCDR, PCR and surveillance reports	Information from publicly available PCDR, PCR, surveillance reports and expedited audits are entered into the fishery scoring database by staff	Monthly-input into database when new report is publicly announced	Complete-on-going data collection and validation
eCert (managed outside team)	Stores client, CAB, fishery, CoC, and stock details entered by CAB	Entered by CAB and MSC	Daily-updated regularly	On-going data collection
Stock database	Stores linked RAM database and additional MSC stocks created by using ASFIS (for species names) otherwise not defined by RAM	Stocks are updated from the RAM database and manually entered MSC stocks when PCDR reports are produced for certified fisheries	Annually- Inputted into database when new PCDR report is publicly announced	Done
Fishery improvement project & pre-assessment database	Planned to store fishery improvement project (FIP) and pre-assessment data from all MSC certified fisheries using a standardized proportional scoring technique	Publicly available FIP data and all MSC certified fisheries pre-assessment reports	Monthly-inputted when new reports from certified fisheries are received	In development
Stakeholder engagement database	Stakeholder comments taken from fishery assessments. Comments by organisation and individuals are collected against reports, as stored in the scoring database	All feedback on policy development process and policies from 2011 onwards and stakeholder survey satisfaction since 2013 <u>comments made by stakeholders in fishery assessments, including verbal submissions at site visits – as recorded in assessment reports. Includes the impact the comment had on the assessment.</u>	Annually <u>Ad-Hoc</u>	Complete-on-going data collection

Additional analytical databases	Addition analytical databases have been created to store indicator queries feeding from different MSC data sources	Indicators stored for dashboard development and analytical analysis	Automatic for dashboard/portal in development	On-going monitoring
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External databases

RAM Legacy database

The RAM Legacy is the largest database of marine fish assessments (stock assessments) inspired by the original Myers Stock-Recruit database built by Ransom Myers and collaborators in the mid-1990s. It is still in development phase, actively adding new assessments, quality-controlling the data, and writing structured query language (SQL) scripts for using the database. It is a user-built database, in that scientists interested in using it while it is still developing will first make a significant investment in contributing new assessments or ancillary data. For each stock, the database contains data from the most recent stock assessment, including biomass estimates, landings, and biological reference points.

Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) database

This database contains the volume of aquatic species caught by country or area, by species items, by FAO major fishing areas, and year, for all commercial, industrial, recreational and subsistence purposes. It contains the annual series of global fishery production (capture and aquaculture) since 1950. At present separate data sets for global capture production and global aquaculture production are available from 1950. Catch data and other fishery statistics are generally submitted to FAO by national correspondents in the appropriate ministry or institution. Statistics made available by national authorities are complemented or replaced if better data of other origins are available. FAO also regards as the most reliable data those held by the Regional Fishery Body (RFB) with assessment responsibility for a given stock (e.g. ICCAT, CCAMLR) which are supposed to be the best scientific estimate. Catch statistics should be collected for all industrial, artisanal and subsistence fisheries, excluding aquaculture practices. Data on discarded catches are not included in the FAO database as it covers only retained catches.

Management agencies

Many fisheries management agencies (e.g. NOAA, NAFO) around the world report stock biomass estimates, landings and other biological information on the target stocks (see Annex 2 for a list of relevant websites). This information is used by the MER to validate the information in the internal databases or to gather additional biological, environmental and management information.

ICES database

Annual nominal catches of more than 200 species of fish and shellfish in the Northeast Atlantic region are officially submitted by 20 ICES member countries. ICES has been gathering and publishing fisheries statistics since 1904. The data for 1950-2010 are available on the web site and includes total and spawning biomass estimates, landings, recruitment and fishing mortality estimates. The geographical breakdown is according to the ICES system of subareas, divisions and subdivisions. Data presented in the datasets are not corrected for non-reported landings where such may have occurred.

Future data collection and monitoring

M&E projects and databases in development include:-

- Anecdotal data
- Stock assessments, certified fishery improvements, bycatch and habitat impact databases.

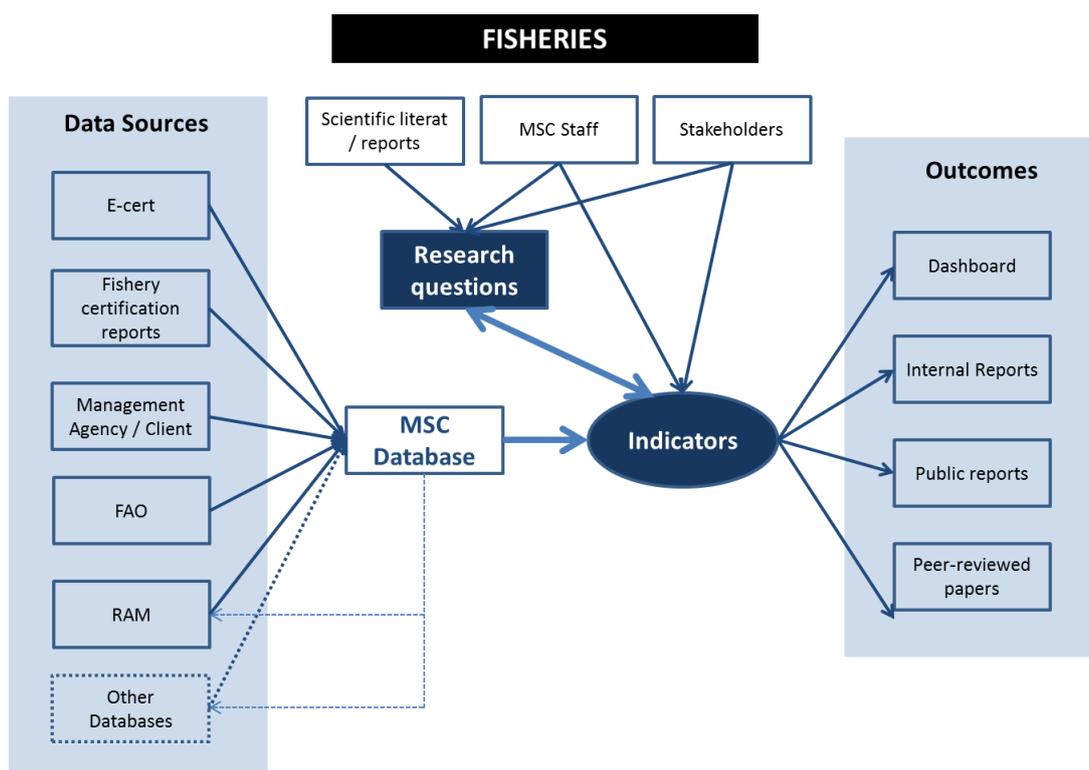


Figure 2. Schematic diagram of the processes and outcomes of the M&E fishery module.

5. Outcome and impact evaluation

Outcome and impact evaluation is a vital part of the MSC's M&E program aimed at measuring how MSC is making an impact on oceans' health and transformation of the seafood market to a sustainable basis. The role of the outcome and impact evaluation is to increase the understanding of the environmental and organisational impacts of the MSC program, and provide the scientific foundation for a transparent, impartial and consistent evaluation of the MSC's effectiveness in delivering its mission.

Strategy for conducting/ commissioning/undergoing research

The MSC collaborates with multiple research institutes and external researchers and intends to strengthen these relationships with joint and independent peer-reviewed publications using the M&E data and research. Some examples of collaborations (e.g. joint research, participation in Working Groups) are as follow:

Collaboration: Marine Research and Assessment Group (MRAG)- MSC

Objective: External Independent Report: *Environments Benefits resulting from certification against the MSC Standard for sustainable fishing* (2006); *Researching the environmental impacts of the MSC certification program* (2011);

Martin et al. (2011) *An Evaluation of Environmental Changes Within Fisheries Involved in the Marine Stewardship Council Certification Scheme. Reviews in Fisheries Science* Volume 20, Issue 2, 2012

Output: Peer-review paper:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10641262.2011.654287#.UoTOhG2QP7U>

Collaboration: National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS)- MSC

Objective: Assess the effects of MSC certification in the biological status of certified stocks globally and compared this status with fisheries targeting non-certified stocks

Output: peer-review paper: Gutiérrez et al. 2012. Eco-Label Conveys Reliable Information on Fish Stock Health to Seafood Consumers. Plos One. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0043765
<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0043765>

Collaboration: Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) - Conservation International – MSC

Objective: Assessment of data-poor methods and their relevance for MSC certification.

Output: FAO Technical Paper: Developing new approaches to global stock status assessment
<http://www.fao.org/3/i3491e/i3491e00.htm>

MSC Report on applicability of methods for fisheries assessment.

Collaboration: PECS - Programme on Ecosystem Change and Society (Stockholm Resilience Alliance) –

Objective: Effects of MSC certification in globalization of seafood markets

Output: Website:

<http://pecs.sv.internetborder.se/research/workinggroups/marinestewardship.4.3d3ce2cd13b1d7c7d91121.html>

Collaboration: Biodiversity Indicators Partnership – UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre –

Objective: Communicating progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Output: 1x indicator for Aichi Target 6 and 2x Indicators for Aichi Target 4. Website:
<http://www.bipindicators.net/>

Table 3 highlights the Outcome and Impact Evaluation reports that have been produced by the MSC and by independent external researcher on the MSC.

Table 3. MSC's Outcome/Impact evaluation past reports

Outcome or impact evaluation (Publication Date)	Hyperlink to full report	Hyperlink to report Summary
External Independent Report: Environments Benefits resulting from certification against the MSC Standard for sustainable fishing (2006)	http://www.msc.org/documents/environmental-benefits/MSC_Environmental_Benefits_Report_Phase1_FINA_L_4Ma.pdf	http://www.msc.org/documents/environmental-benefits/MSC_EnvBenefits_Phase1_Executive_Summary_4May2006.pdf
External Independent Report: Researching the environmental impacts of the MSC certification program (2011)	http://www.msc.org/documents/environmental-benefits/measuring-environmental-impacts-report-2011/environmental-impacts-of-the-msc-programme-full-report	http://www.msc.org/business-support/environmental-improvements/MSC_EnvironmentallImpacts_April2012.pdf
Peer reviewed MSC paper: An Evaluation of Environmental Changes Within Fisheries Involved in the Marine Stewardship Council Certification Scheme		http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10641262.2011.654287#.UqHXYG2CQZA
Peer reviewed MSC paper : The MSC experience: developing an operational certification Standard and a market incentive to improve fishery sustainability		http://icesjms.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/07/27/icesjms.fs.t091.abstract
Peer reviewed MSC paper: Eco-Label Conveys Reliable Information on Fish Stock Health to Seafood Consumers (2012)	http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0043765	http://www.msc.org/business-support/environmental-improvements/fish-stocks-healthy-and-well-managed

MSC Public Report: Global Impacts Report 2013 (2013)	http://www.msc.org/documents/environmental-benefits/global-impacts/msc-global-impacts-report-2013/	http://www.msc.org/business-support/global-impacts/key-facts-and-findings
MSC Public Report: Global Impacts Report 2013 (2014)		
MSC Public Report: Global Impacts Report 2013 (2015)		
MSC Public Report: Global Impacts Report 2013 (2016)		
MSC Public Report: Global Impacts Report 2013 (2017)		
MSC Public Report: Global Impacts Report 2019		
Peer reviewed MSC paper: DNA barcoding validates species labelling of certified seafood	https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0960982219301538	

All [MSC M&E research reports](#) are available online.

6. Use of results for internal discussion and learning

Distribution of on-going evaluation

Raw data are analysed by the M&E and MSC Standards team. Metadata and research such as trends in number of ecolabelled products are distributed throughout the organisation by excel/access exports linked to the server (with future development plans of dashboard/portal of all MSC data). Internal reporting to the Technical Advisory Board, Senior Management Team, Outreach, Communications and Fundraising is also carried out on specific projects. In addition ad hoc requests are undertaken as and when needed to help provide evidence and understanding of the MSC's program through outcome and impact evaluations.

Examples of the use of M&E results for internal discussion and learning:

Monitoring

- Policy development: Data collected of MSC certified fishery scores have been used to inform impacts assessment and policy development. Examination of all performance indicators through correlation analysis allowed the MSC to highlight redundant performance indicators to inform the Fishery Standard Review.
- Fundraising & Outreach: Updated tracking tool export is available for current certified fisheries and tonnages in the program, which is being used by outreach, fundraising and other staff to report accurate fishery numbers.

Evaluation

- MSC first Global Impacts Report 2013 was produced by the M&E team in July 2013 and has been launched in many of the MSC regions. This impact evaluation highlights MSC's impact of nearly 100 fisheries with more than 400 fishery improvement due to MSC certification since its inception, as well as specific case studies highlighting stories behind the certification. The evaluation has helped MSC outreach, communications and fundraising to demonstrate the impact that the MSC is having and has helped inform their work in achieving the MSC outcomes and objectives.

7. Transparency and stakeholder involvement

MSC makes all outcome and impact reports available online. See Table 3 for more details of past reports and a dedicated online [research webpage](#) which will be kept updated with new reports. Monitoring reports are currently for internal reporting only.

The M&E framework was initially developed with stakeholders through an [M&E workshop](#) in September 2006. The framework was then developed and went out for public consultation as part of the MSC policy cycle on 1st April-3rd May 2011 to seek stakeholder' views about the core elements of the proposed M&E framework for assessing the impacts of the MSC certification program. We received feedback from a range of stakeholders from academics to NGO's and the input from stakeholders during this consultation was used to help finalize the evaluation indicators that were proposed in the [consultation document](#). MSC provided specific responses via email to consultees on comments received.

A number of internationally based stakeholders are involved in MSC M&E activities. Stakeholders are individuals, groups, or institutions that have an interest or stake in the outcome of the MSC program, including those potentially affected by a project. Stakeholders may include recipient country governments, implementing agencies, project executing agencies, groups contracted to conduct project activities at various stages of the project, and other groups in the civil society that may have an interest in the project.

Consistent with provisions in the MSC instrument, there should be transparency in the preparation, conduct, reporting, and evaluation of MSC activities in all projects, including M&E activities. This ensures full disclosure of all non-confidential information, and consultation with major groups and local communities in M&E.

Results of stakeholder consultations are available online on our program improvements microsite <http://improvements.msc.org>. Previous consultations including the [M&E framework consultation](#) are available online.

There are a variety of ways the M&E team receives feedback and details are available on the M&E webpages. Stakeholders can send comments directly to [M&E staff](#) via email, fill in our [online form](#), which is overlooked by M&E staff, or answer surveys designed to get feedback on specific reports. Communication staff sends updates on the M&E report feedback to M&E staff.

Case study of MSC transparency and stakeholder involvement: Peer reviewed papers

In order to highlight the scientific profile of the MSC as well as to expose the science behind our assessment process, monitoring and evaluation and impact assessments, the MSC is committed to produce and publish scientific papers in peer-reviewed literature. This allows not only scrutiny within the scientific community during the peer-review and editorial process, but also substantial exposure allowing all stakeholders to analyse the data and analyses performed. Additionally, stakeholders are encouraged to provide comments directly to the MSC or through letters to the Editors or rebuttals. Finally, scientific articles also allow the MSC to partner with other Academic institutions around the world to produce objective and robust research on a broad range of impacts and issues around fisheries certification (example, [Gutierrez et al. 2012, Plos One](#))

Case study of MSC transparency and stakeholder involvement: Global Impacts report 2013

During the development stages, the Global Impacts Report indicators were presented at several external and public events, including:

1. Stakeholders meetings in regional offices (Paris, Seattle).
2. Stakeholders meetings in London (eNGOs, fishery clients, scientists, and certifiers).

The Global Impacts Report 2013 was launched in July 2013 in the UK with a wide range of MSC stakeholders and Press. MSC staff presented the results of the evaluation and stakeholder had a chance to discuss the evaluation. All the [metadata](#) and detailed methodology of the report is available online and the principle scores for all fisheries will be made available in January 2013 to add transparency to the program. The Global Impact Report 2013 survey was sent out to M&E stakeholders and the feedback was analysed and a [summary of responses](#) are available online to help shape the next Global Impacts Report. The survey was communicated to MSC communications teams by two webinars for Asia-Pacific and Europe-America teams. In addition it was posted on the MSC intranet to get stakeholder feedback from all regions.

In addition, the MSC M&E program and Global Impacts Report were presented to peers at ISEAL Effectiveness Days October 2013 with the aim of obtaining feedback for improvements. Synopses of the [results of the stakeholder feedback consultation](#) are available online.