



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS | SDG 14

Protecting oceans and life below water



Without the oceans, life on our planet would be impossible. They are a key element of the global ecosystem and cover around 71 per cent of the Earth's surface. The sustainable use and conservation of marine resources are among the core concerns of development cooperation. Fishery yields must be distributed fairly, as around twelve per cent of the world's population depend on them for their livelihoods. Plastic waste and increasing nutrient discharge from agriculture cause huge problems. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can develop different solutions to address these concerns.

Safeguarding life below water is one of the main priorities of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14. Yet worldwide, one third of all commercial fish stocks are already over-fished. Illegal or unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices must be replaced by sustainable management methods following the guidelines issued by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

In order to promote sustainable artisanal fishing and aquaculture, international rules and regulations must be applied rigorously and the number and size of marine protected areas must be increased. Another priority is the conservation of coastal ecosystems such as mangrove forests. Developing strategic partnerships with participants from agriculture, sustainable tourism and waste management is essential for achieving this.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships

It is evident that we need to act fast. However, successfully changing fishing methods and consumer behaviour is only possible if key stakeholders such as fishers, the fish processing industry and fish retailers, governments and consumer organisations work together. Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSP) can improve procedures and methods, draw up rules and regulations and set a good example.

An MSP can be initiated by companies, associations, academic and civil society organisations and public sector institutions. The added value is obtained from the partners pooling core competencies, experience and resources and thereby achieving greater impact.



Partnerships2030 – the MSP platform

On behalf of the **German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**, the Partnerships2030 project promotes multistakeholder partnerships and thus contributes to implementing the 2030 Agenda. BMZ now promotes around 80 MSPs through the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH** and **Engagement Global – bengo**. GIZ implements the Partnerships2030 project, supports MSPs and stakeholders in many different ways, creates networks to link them to partners and provides information.



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The MSP methodology

MSPs are a form of cooperation in which stakeholders from at least three sectors among civil society, the public sector, the private sector and academia join forces as equals in order to contribute to the common good. An MSP can generate a transformative impact through cooperation geared to the long term.

Protecting tuna stocks, improving lives for the fishing community

Tuna is one of the world's most economically significant species of seafood, with the Philippines being the third largest tuna exporter. Tuna stocks are overfished. In order to protect these resources WWF launched the Fishery Improvement Projects partnership, an example of how MSPs can contribute to achieving SDG 14.

The many threats to tuna stocks include unregulated and illegal fishing and industrial fishing methods using giant fishing nets and lines that are tens of kilometres long and fitted with thousands of hooks.

WWF aims to counter this situation through its Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). On its initiative, more than 5,000 fishers in over 100 villages situated along the Lagonoy Gulf and the Mindoro Strait came together in 2011 to form a partnership with the aim of promoting environmentally sound fishing methods and introducing quotas to ensure that tuna stocks can recover. The seafood caught by the members of the partnership has since been awarded the MSC label, an ecolabel that is recognised around the world and also gives the fisheries access to the lucrative European markets.



The WWF project encouraged fishers to form associations so that they can negotiate with retail companies and governments on a more equal basis. The project also strengthened institutional dialogue platforms where fishers can present their views. Retailers such as Coop, Bell Seafood, Seafresh and Marks and Spencer joined the project, as well as development banks and partners at government level, including the German Federal Government.

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“GLOBAL OVERFISHING IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE GREATEST THREATS TO THE HEALTH OF THE OCEANS AND THE SURVIVAL OF ITS INHABITANTS“

WWF



Eventually the project led to the Philippines drawing up a sustainable management plan for tuna fishing – a pilot project for other countries involved in commercial tuna fishing (about 90 around the world).

Activities include establishing advice centres offering training courses and networking. Expert staff are taken on to offer instruction on how to maintain the quality of the tuna catch. This enables fishers to obtain higher prices so



they do not need to increase their catch quota to improve their incomes.

Special cooling boxes have been introduced to safeguard the quality of the catch. The fishers are also supported by community credit unions set up by the project. They provide interest-free loans that enable their members to start their own businesses. The overall outcome is that the lives of fishing families have significantly improved, and tuna fishing has become more sustainable, thus protecting this precious resource.

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