

# SUMMARY REPORT: EBCD WORKSHOP ON FISHERIES-OECMS

*Identifying OECMs to achieve the EU Biodiversity Strategy 30 by 30 target*

EBCD organised a **Workshop on Fisheries-OECMs on 29 September 2023** in Brussels (Belgium) to help Member States identifying Fisheries-OECMs to achieve the **EU Biodiversity 30 by 30 target**. This Workshop was funded by and organised in the framework of the **Biogeographical Process for Marine Regions**. The experts invited were from FAO, IUCN Fisheries Expert Group (FEG) and the European Commission. The following document provides a **practical summary of the discussions** to accompany the full report. To be noted that the Workshop mainly focused on the first part of the OECM implementation cycle: the initial identification process with different case studies analysed. More information is available [here](#) (agenda, report, presentations).

## What are OECMs?

Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures

## OECMS & CBD

[Decision 14/8](#) of the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) sets criteria to fulfil in order for an area to be recognised as an OECM.

## OECMS & the EU

OECMs can be counted towards the 30 by 30 target in the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

*“Geographically defined area other than a protected area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve **positive and sustained long-term** outcomes for the **in-situ conservation of biodiversity**, with associated ecosystem functions and services and, where applicable, **cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic, and other locally relevant values.**”*

## EU BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY & FISHERIES-OECMS

The **EU Biodiversity Strategy** sets a target to legally protect at least 30% of the European Union’s sea area and strictly protect at least a third of the EU’s marine protected areas. In a [guidance document](#), the Commission explains what can be counted against these targets and **OECMs are eligible upon 3 conditions**:

1. The area is covered by a **national or international legislative or administrative act** or a contractual arrangement aiming to achieve long-term conservation outcomes;
2. **Conservation objectives and measures** are in place;
3. **Effective management and monitoring** of the biodiversity in the area is in place.

To be noted that the **IUCN FEG** produced **guidance** on the complete implementation cycle of OECMs in the marine Fisheries Sector ([available here](#)).

**BUT** first, it is up to the Member States to **recognise and report OECMs**.



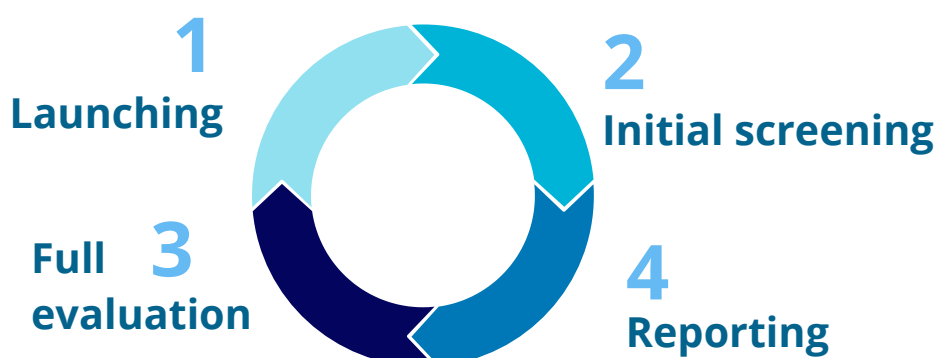
To be recognised as **OECM**, the **aera-based management tool** has to fulfil **CBD criteria** - [Decision 14/8](#). The CBD decision concerns all OECMs but for the purpose of the Workshop we will only focus on Fisheries-OECMs, usually existing closures in which fishery objectives need to be met together with conservation ones.

OECMs CBD CRITERIA		
<b>Criterion A</b>	The area is not currently recognised as a protected area	
<b>Criterion B</b>	The area is governed and managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area is a geographically defined space</li> <li>• The area has legitimate governance authorities</li> <li>• The area is managed</li> </ul>
<b>Criterion C</b>	Achieves sustained and effective contribution to in situ conservation of biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area is effective</li> <li>• Sustained over long term</li> <li>• In situ conservation of biodiversity</li> <li>• Information and monitoring</li> </ul>
<b>Criterion D</b>	Associated ecosystem functions and services and cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other locally relevant values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystem functions and services</li> <li>• Cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other locally relevant values</li> </ul>

Table based on Amber Himes-Cornell (FAO) presentation on EBCD Workshop 29.09.2023

These criteria are generic and guidance was developed by **IUCN-WCPA** ([link here](#)). They need to be translated for application in each relevant economic sector, as provided by the Decision. The full OECM implementation cycle in marine fisheries has been addressed by **EBCD/IUCN-CEM-FEG** ([Link here](#))".

**FAO** developed a **handbook** addressing the identification phase of the implementation cycle ([link here](#)). The handbook describes **four phases for Identifying, Evaluating, and Reporting Fisheries-OECMs**.



**1 Launching** = Establish a simple evaluation pathway that fits with the governing authority of the area.

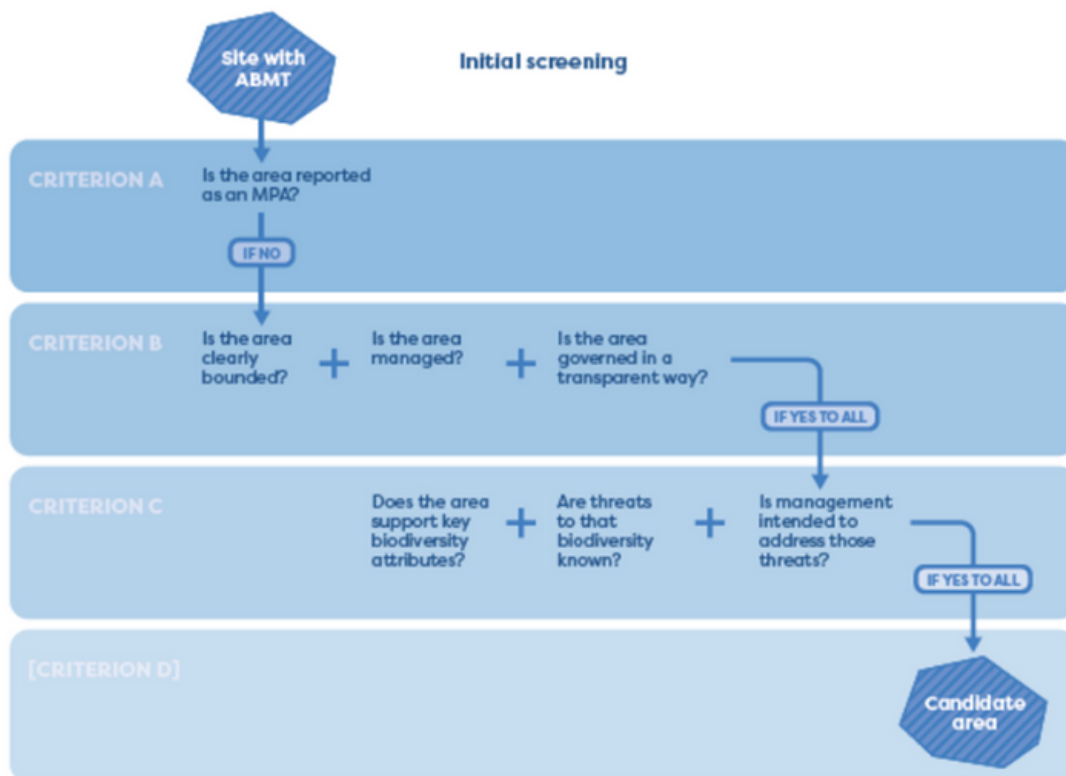
To be noted:

- For Fisheries OECMs, the governance and oversight process will likely be initiated by fisheries management agencies working with stakeholders, but it can also be initiated by a devolved authority such as local communities.
- It is essential to consult relevant governance authorities and stakeholders
- Recognition of OECMs should be supported by measures to enhance their efficiency and their governance capacity to ensure positive outcomes for biodiversity

**2 Initial Screening or quick-screening** = Determine whether fisheries Area-Based Fisheries Management Measures (ABFMs) are likely to meet the criteria and deserve a fuller consideration. Those passing initial screening can be identified as candidate OECMs. This process will enable to create a pool of OECMs candidates, at a low cost, without going too much into details. It is deemed to apprise the likelihood that an ABFM is worth the full assessment, identifying priorities and “low hanging fruits” for the more complete assessment.

To be noted:

- A simplified scoring grid can be made to streamline the initial/quick screening.
- In the Workshop, case studies were examined using the initial/quick screening. On this occasion, as set of guiding questions were put together in order to help the process (available [here](#))



FAO -Handbook for identifying, evaluating and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures in marine fisheries, 2022

### Simplified Scoring Grid

CRITERIA	SUB-CRITERIA	
<b>A: Not a protected area</b>	Not in WDPA. Not accounted in 30x30	Green
<b>B: The area is governed and managed</b>	The area is geographically defined (B1)	Green
	There is a Legitimate governance (B2)	Yellow
	There is a management system in place (B3)	Green
<b>C: Governance and management are effective</b>	Outcomes are likely to be achieved (C1)	Yellow
	Outcomes are likely to be long-term (C2)	Green
	Biodiversity values and ecosystem services are known (C3)	Green
	Information is managed (monitoring) (C4)	Green
<b>D: Ecosystem services &amp; locally relevant values</b>	Ecosystem functions & services; trade-offs, equity (D1)	Yellow
	Other Locally relevant values (D2)	Grey

<span style="color: green;">■</span> YES	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Some, sometimes, may be improved	<span style="color: red;">■</span> NO	<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Not relevant
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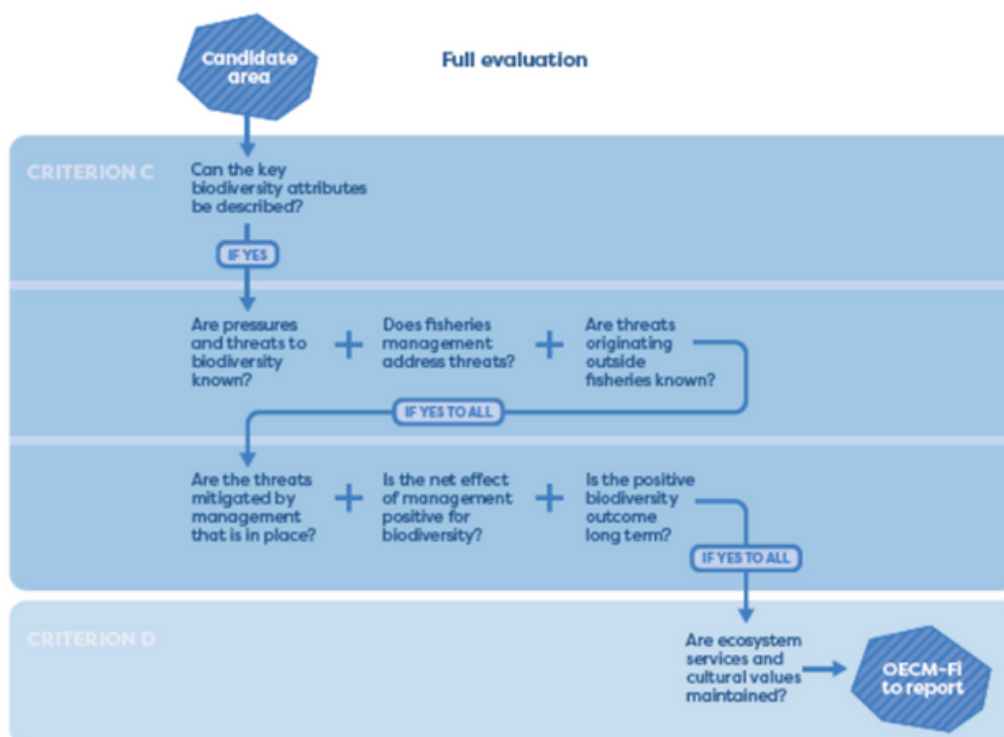
Overall score

Table from Serge Garcia (IUCN - FEG) presentation at EBCD Workshop 29.09.2023

## 3 Full Evaluation = For those ABFM sites that emerge as candidate OECM, full evaluation can support countries to determine which areas can be recognised and reported as OECMs.

To be noted:

- The number and categories of people involved in the full process should be expand.
- More detailed information on biodiversity, ecosystem services, local relevant values, etc... is needed.
- Stakeholders engagement is essential.



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## 4 Reporting = Fisheries ABFMs determined to align with the CBD definition and criteria can be reported to the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and to the CBD and counted toward global spatial conservation targets. To be part of the EU 30 by 30 target, it should also be reported to the Commission.

To be noted: OECMs can be reported to national and global data bases but cannot counted both as MPAs and OECMs.

OECMs may be reported on the following data base [www.protectedplanet.net](http://www.protectedplanet.net)