

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (EXPANDED)

What is the Fisheries Governance Tool (FGT)?

The Fisheries Governance Tool (FGT) is a neutral, indicator-based diagnostic tool that provides stakeholders with a comprehensive and reliable understanding of how a country's fisheries management system is performing and progressing over time.

Who is the FGT for?

The Fisheries Governance Tool (FGT) puts power in the hands of managing agencies, environmental non-governmental organizations, funders/investors, and other stakeholders. With the tool, users can assess status and progress against clear measures over time and identify gaps and other challenges that impede continued improvement. Importantly, the FGT offers a feature that allows stakeholders to identify the objectives set in their country's own policy and management plans and track progress in relation to those, rather than against an external standard that may not be relevant or that their country may never be able to meet.

Can people in any country use the FGT?

Yes, the Fisheries Governance Tool can be applied within any country, without providing an analysis between or among countries. It was designed to evaluate and self-check progress within a country, not provide an external judgement. The environmental, political, cultural and legal contexts under which each country operates and manages their fisheries—from the approach to law making and oversight, to the capacity and availability of resources to implement changes, to the species being fished—varies dramatically. Therefore, comparing countries is not very productive.

Why is the FGT needed?

As nations around the world consider changes to their policies and laws to advance sustainably-managed fisheries, they need to make informed decisions about what changes are needed—and possible. To do so, it is critical to have a comprehensive and reliable understanding of how a country's fisheries management system is performing. Yet, stakeholders have not had a means to gain this level of understanding. This makes it harder for them to advance, or sometimes even advocate for, the changes needed to enable and support a transition toward sustainably-managed fisheries. The Fisheries Governance Tool provides a consistent framework for assessing a country's performance and measuring progress over time—and illuminates a road map for how more progress can be made in the future.

Why was the FGT initially developed?

The tool was initially intended as a means to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the Walton Family Foundation in promoting ocean sustainability in five countries. However, as the tool was being developed, the Foundation recognized the potential benefit to those working in the field of a broader application of the framework.

What makes this tool different or unique?

The diagnostic framework at the core of the Fisheries Governance Tool (FGT) is unique in its comprehensiveness. It is established by three high-level pieces—Policy, Capacity (to implement the policy), and Performance (of the fisheries). This provides a layered approach to evaluating the fishery management system, which can be applied to both state and non-state governance. The FGT builds upon many of the credible and widely accepted assessment tools that are currently available, such as those used for certification to inform markets and indices that measure fishery performance outcomes.

What is the methodology behind the Fisheries Governance Tool? How does it work?

The Fisheries Governance Tool recognizes that the best measure of a country's performance can be found at the intersection of three components—Policy, Capacity (to implement the policy), and Performance (of the fisheries)—which provide a layered approach to evaluating the fishery management system that can be applied to state and non-state governance. Within each high-level Component, indicators of change are grouped within Performance Areas. More than 200 measures are evaluated to provide a picture of performance across the Indicators and Performance Areas. Each measure is assigned a score: Basic, Adequate, Good, or Better. Measures of Basic and Adequate are essential for establishing sound and durable fisheries management, while Good and Better measures will promote more sustainable management.