



## MAVA Foundation Review 2018



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## Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	p.3
<b>I. FEEDBACK from PARTNERS</b>	
1. MAVA STRATEGY and OUTCOME ACTION PLANS	p. 7
2. WORKING with MAVA	p. 17
3. MAVA COMMUNICATIONS	p. 21
4. ENDING of MAVA FUNDING	p. 24
<b>II. FEEDBACK from PAST GRANTEES</b>	p. 28
<b>CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	p. 32

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One third into its final strategy period (2016 -2022) before it closes its operations, the MAVA Foundation decided to solicit feedback from its partners regarding its new way of working around Outcome Action Plans (OAPs), the interaction with its staff, its communications and the ending of its funding. The present findings and recommendations are based on responses to online surveys from 72 partners -- of which 40 OAP participants, 12 previous grantees, and interviews with 21 current partners.

### On MAVA STRATEGY and OUTCOME ACTION PLANS

The MAVA 2016-2022 strategy is generally well understood by OAP partners, who are by now, with few exceptions, very clear about their role within the strategy.

The OAP bottom-up collaborative approach is highly praised. It is expected to reinforce capacity of individual members (81% of respondents *agree or strongly agree*), to contribute to strengthening communities (83%), and help build a stronger voice for their common work (85%). Furthermore, there is strong consensus that, as a methodology, it enables greater focus on strategic priorities (95%), permits more robust conservation approaches (71%), which will allow for stronger more sustainable conservation impacts (80%).

The process of elaborating OAPs has been widely regarded as a learning experience, positively perceived by a large majority. It is viewed as inclusive (87%), empowering (80%), exciting (75%) and powerful (63%). It was, however, also experienced as resource-intensive by most (73%) and confusing by nearly half of the respondents, though that feeling eased with time. A small third, mostly in light of their limited time-availability working within resource-constrained organizations, also experienced it as somewhat stressful.

Moving forward, as partners proceed with implementation, it will be critical to sustain the positive dynamic created and ensure follow-through.

### On WORKING with MAVA

The relationship to MAVA is treasured and the quality of interaction with its staff greatly appreciated. Grantees equally respect MAVA's insights and reflections on the field at large and its staff's contributions as sparring partner to their own strategic reflections (70%). Close to half of the respondents additionally value the access to peer networks and the support to organizational development, followed closely by staff training and capacity-building. Many would appreciate the opportunity the access other funders through MAVA.

The relationship to MAVA is largely perceived (75%) as quite different from that to other donors. In particular, grantees praise MAVA's strategic vision and commitment to build a community; its flexibility, openness and adaptive management, rooted in in-depth understanding of conservation; and its role, well beyond funding, as a partner with a long-term perspective.

### **On MAVA COMMUNICATIONS**

Recent intensification of MAVA communications is well regarded and there is a strong appetite for more. Respondents expressed a keen interest to learn more re.

- Progress of other OAPs, including related lessons-learnt and dynamics unleashed;
- Thought-leadership and strategic thinking on key conservation topics;
- Conservation finance, funders landscape and funding opportunities.

### **On the ENDING of MAVA FUNDING**

The vast majority of grantees are clear about the ending of MAVA's funding and are acting in consequence. Eighty percent of them have already undertaken or plan to undertake remedial actions, from *strategic adjustment of their organization to a more diversified funding strategy, stronger "Theory of Change", as well as monitoring and evaluation systems*. Respondents are also relatively confident in their organization's capacity to carry on the work currently funded by MAVA, beyond its exit.

When asked what would be most helpful to them in preparing for this exit, grantees focus predominantly on capacity building in fundraising (mapping of donor landscape, supporting the development of fundraising strategies or skills) and support to accessing other funders and funds (organizing funder roundtables, opening doors, setting up reserve funds and matching grants). A few respondents mentioned the importance of sustaining strong collaboration across peers, focusing on delivering demonstrable results and strengthening related communication.

This is echoed by past grantees (12) who agreed on the clarity in the communication of the ending of MAVA funding with enough time given, on average, to adapt. The impact of the decision was nevertheless felt as quite severe for most organizations, at the time. The decision negatively impacted the program of work in a majority of cases. That said, past grantees are, in general, extremely grateful to MAVA's support in its duration. Furthermore, MAVA staff was perceived by most as very supportive.

For grantees about to undergo the same process, their recommendations can be summarized as follows: (i) face reality, (ii) plan ahead and (iii) diversify funding. They are mirrored in the few suggestions to MAVA: (i) discuss openly different exit strategies, (ii) lengthen as much as possible the transition period, (iii) invest more on increasing fundraising capacity of the partners and facilitate access to potential new funders.

## **SUGGESTIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD**

Building on the survey results and discussions led with 21 grantees, a few suggestions may be formulated for consideration, to further strengthen MAVA's approach and legacy, succinctly summarized as follows:

- **On the OAP methodology**

Ensure OAP frameworks and theories of change are turned into live management tools with the required flexibility to adapt to changing conditions (and streamline reporting requirements as much as possible).

- **On sustaining the momentum and strengthening collaboration**

Continue to support a strong coordination and orchestration of OAP implementation, to secure follow-through, remaining equally demanding with all partners (and attentive to the risk of perceived unfairness when weaker partners are supported more than better performing ones).

- **On knowledge sharing**

Beyond strengthening communications on OAP activities and progress, invest in facilitating the capturing and sharing of lessons learnt and best practices among partners, across themes and regions (and potentially beyond, as part of MAVA's legacy to the sector).

- **On funding, preparing for and beyond MAVA's exit**

Pursue support to growing single-entity as well as collective fundraising capabilities through a range of interventions, including: (i) existing capacity building measures (particularly for indirect or local partners), (ii) facilitating exchanges of knowledge across peers (sharing of methods and tools but also of donor knowledge) and encouraging joint proposals, (iii) continue to share "the donor's perspective" with grantees (possibly providing communication tools on Luc Hoffmann's commitment and legacy to help partners inspire other donors) and, (iv) facilitate exposure to potential new funders.

- **On targeted advocacy towards the funders community**

The strong benefits of the OAP approach, highlighted in this review, call for a larger use of inclusive bottom-up methodologies by funders. Once the 2019 review has captured the early programmatic results of its strategy, the MAVA Foundation will be in a strong position to advocate for such ways of working. Hence the importance to formalize the OAP methodology, capture the learning and stabilize the related tools, and possibly consider a change of name to something more marketable. This will be of value to the philanthropic field at large, but also deserves a more targeted presentation to select public funders of critical importance to sustain MAVA's legacy. (e.g. Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Union vis-à-vis the Mediterranean regional grantees "dependent" on the same regional grantees for the implementation of their strategies).

**Recommendations in short**

1. Continue to support teams in turning OAP frameworks and theories of change into live management tools
2. Simplify and stabilize reporting tools
3. Keep monitoring the “pulse” of each OAP and be ready to intervene if implementation challenges are perceived, to avoid unnecessary implementation delays
4. Amplify communications to the community of partners on OAP progress
5. Consider investing in active facilitation of knowledge sharing within the MAVA community of partners
6. Pursue efforts to grow single-entity as well as collective fundraising capabilities in view of MAVA’s exit
7. Consider formalizing the OAP methodology and sharing it with the funders field at large
8. Engage in targeted and discrete advocacy towards select funders of critical importance to sustain MAVA’s legacy

## I. FEEDBACK from PARTNERS

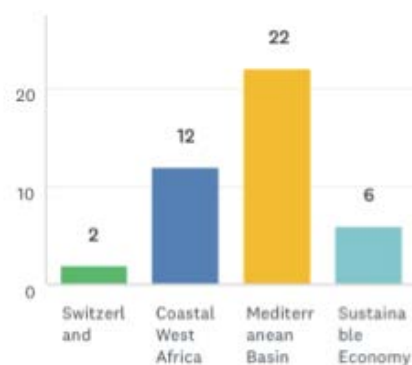
Feedback was solicited from the MAVA current partners via an on-line survey on 4 themes: (1) latest MAVA strategy and Outcome Action Plan approach (for those concerned only), (2) working with MAVA, (3) MAVA communications and (4) the ending of the MAVA funding.

The analysis is based on 72 responses received. 32 respondents are active in the Mediterranean Basin, 15 in Coastal West Africa, 8 in Switzerland, 14 as part of the Sustainable Economy program and 9 as part of the Global program. 40 of them are involved in OAPs. When quoted, their comments are presented in *italic*.

### I.1 MAVA STRATEGY and OUTCOME ACTION PLANS (OAP)

Sample of 40 respondents: 22 from the Mediterranean program, 12 from Coastal West Africa, 6 from the Sustainable Economy program and 2 from Switzerland.

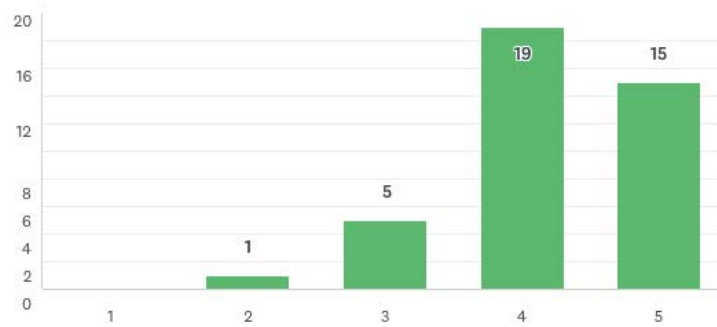
#### 40 OAP participants



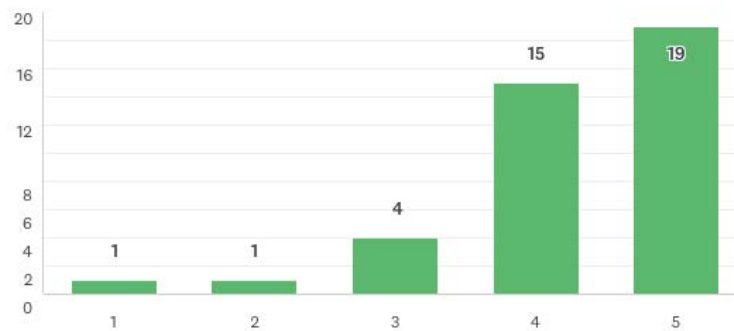
- **The MAVA 2016-2022 strategy is generally well understood by OAP partners, who are by now, with a few exceptions, very clear about where their organization fits within the strategy**

On a 5-star scale, the 40 OAP-participants gave on average a 4.2 rating to their understanding of the latest MAVA strategy and to how clear they felt about where their organization/program fitted in.

Answers to the question “How would you rate your understanding of MAVA’s 2016-2022 strategy?”



Answers to the question “Are you clear about how and where your program/organisation fits within the MAVA new strategy?”



*Au clair, oui, mais cela a pris du temps et notre contribution attendue à certains plans d'action n'est toujours pas claire.*

*Some OAPs are working more smoothly than others depending on the difficulty of the subject and the willingness of partners to work together and make some concessions.*

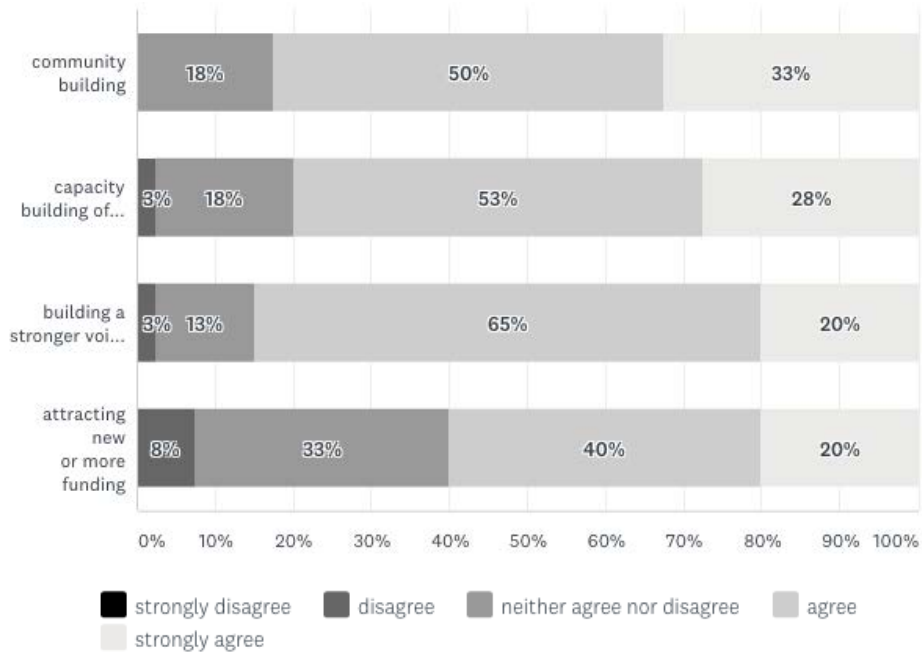
Note: The 1-star rating about one’s own role is justified in a later comment by a lack of clarity regarding institutional coordination at country level. The 2-star ratings on both dimensions are to a respondent confused about participating OAPs.

- **The OAP approach is highly rated, with over 80% of the 40 respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that it contributes to**
  - **strengthening communities,**
  - **reinforcing capacity of individual members**
  - **and building a stronger voice for the common work.**

Fewer, though still a large majority (60%), believe that it will **help attract more or new funding**, with 3 respondents doubting that it would.

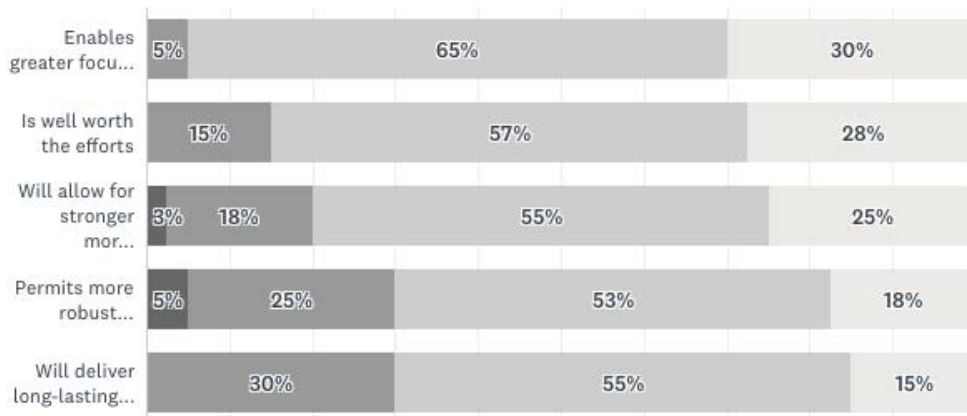


On a range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, ratings of the statements  
 “The OAP approach contributes to...”



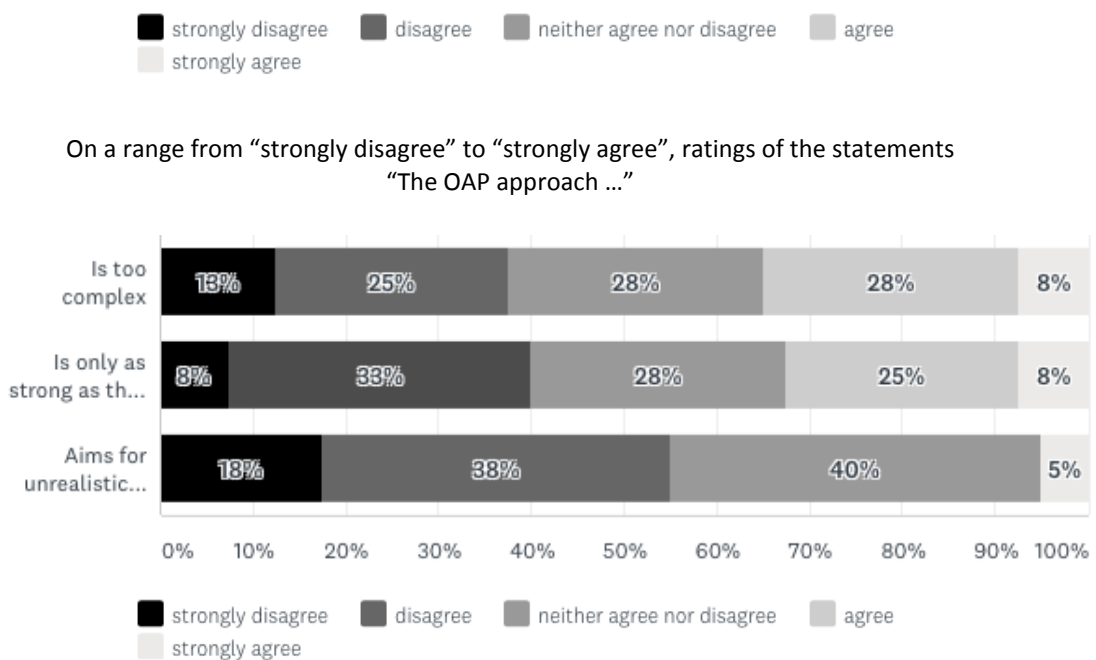
➤ There is **strong consensus** that the OAP approach **enables greater focus on strategic priorities** (95% of respondents agree or strongly agree).  
 Additionally participants are dominantly convinced that OAPs  
 ○ allow for **stronger more sustainable conservation impacts** (80%),  
 ○ permit **more robust conservation approaches** (71%)  
 ○ and will deliver **long-lasting results** (70%).

On a range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, ratings of the statements  
 “The OAP approach ...”



- That explains why 85% believe that it is **well worth the efforts**, despite the process being largely rated as **resource-intensive** (73%) (see page 12) and experienced as **too complex** by over a third of respondents (36%).

While **only a few** (5%) believe that it is **aiming for unrealistic objectives**, a **third** fear that the OAP approach is **only as strong as its weakest partner**, which underlines the importance of capacity building and talent development.



- To the open question “in your view, what are the **benefits** of the OAP approach?”, respondents **overwhelmingly** answered along two axes
  - Greater **alignment, focus and clarity of goals** across region or community of actors
  - **Partnership building** and **synergistic, coordinated actions** among partners

*It has given us time-bound goals to work towards as a regional team. It has created, strengthened or cemented relationships that would otherwise not exist or not be so robust. The partnership framework has allowed us to develop collaborative approaches meaning that the results of our work will be amplified, i.e. we'll end up with more than the sum of the individual parts.*

*Les 2 bénéfices principaux sont : Evite la dispersion et le saupoudrage ;  
Promeut la collaboration entre bénéficiaires*

*Integration, information and experience sharing, synthesis of different views and ideas,  
establishment of links between different actors, wide spectrum of interventions  
It enlarges the network and gives opportunity to cooperate with organisations  
and people for the first time. - It opens the opportunity to join forces.  
Different organisations are bringing their strength.*

*It has attracted partners to new dimensions of conservation needs  
It has promoted joint work more systematically*

*Forming strong and diverse partners' networks and providing opportunities  
to contact regional and/or international networks, initiatives and/or fora,  
is perhaps the biggest positive outcome for all partners.*

- Other benefits noted include the **innovativeness** of the approach and its contribution to **transparency** and **organizational building**

- To an open question regarding **downsides or risks** of the OAP approach, respondents underlined
  - **Concerns regarding implementation in view of the weaknesses of some partners**

*Most of the long-term results and impacts are not so much dependent on the design of the OAP but rather on the efforts and capabilities of partners (both individually and as networks)*

*Ce focus sur un nombre limité de site est très pertinent pour optimiser l'impact et servir de modèles à terme. Cependant, le résultat du processus d'élaboration de ces plans est parfois déroutant et je ne suis pas très optimiste quant aux réalisations sur certains sites du fait de la faiblesse de certains acteurs ou de stratégies d'actions peu réalistes ou opérationnelles.*

*It indeed aims for closer integration between programs and projects,  
maximum impact and maximisation of synergies of the different organisations,  
but this would require that all are playing along the same rules.  
It also requires a high-level of coordination and communication.*

*The OAP approach is quite demanding and resource intensive,  
this should be taken into account by all those involved (MAVA and partners) to ensure a  
smooth delivery of the main expected results - and key conservation actions in general*

○ **The importance of maintaining the dynamic and ensuring follow-through**

*Using the OAP approach is a brilliant idea.  
Following through to achieve desired results is a different ball game,  
and there is where attention should be focused*

*There is a risk for the outcomes not to be achieved  
if there is no dynamic planning throughout OAP's implementation*

*Si les synergies ne sont bien perçues et exploitées,  
cela peut handicaper l'atteinte de l'objectif recherché*

*Le suivi sera très important pour tracer les progrès  
vers l'atteinte des résultats et les cibles à atteindre.*

*Going forward, it is critically important to have a strategic framework that guides  
implementation of the FPPs towards set targets of the OAPs (this calls for a robust M&E  
plan) and ensure synergistic implementation of the FPPs*

○ **The risk of inflexibility, if too rigid a focus on the theories of change**

*There is the risk that the method itself overshadows  
the objectives we want to reach, which are the important thing*

*Once the OAP is set up it is difficult to adjust  
in case something turns out to be not so well developed*

*Strict focus on the theory of change is counter-productive*

*Actions and plans in sustainable economy always need at least  
30% adaptability and flexibility to new political opportunities*

*Strict reliance on theory of change produces some process-based approaches  
that are not related to solving problems on the ground.*

*Potential that we feel tied to it and  
unable to adapt adequately to unforeseen opportunities*

○ **As well as concerns regarding sustainability beyond 2022**

*Sustainability can be a challenge*

*Il faudra s'assurer que la même dynamique soit conservée après 2022*

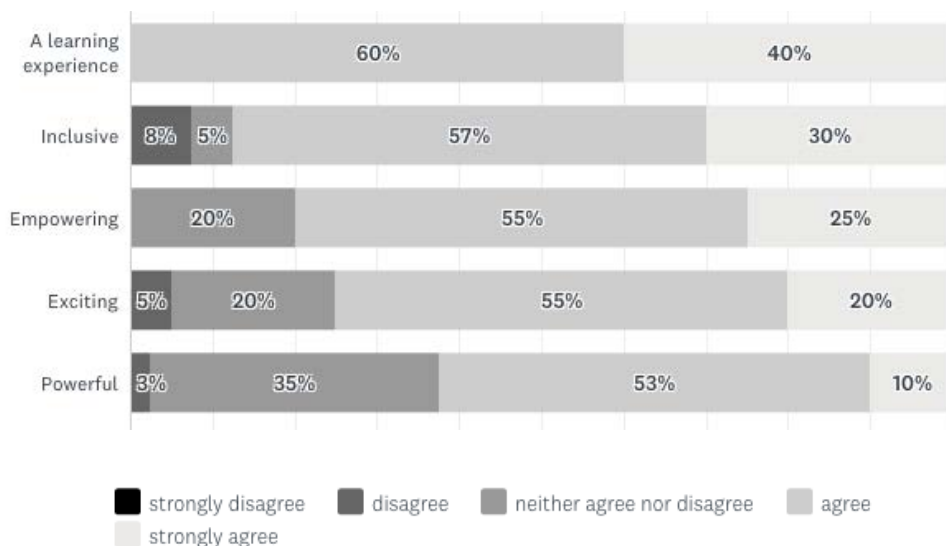
*La durée est assez courte pour pérenniser les acquis*

*After 2022 ?? Local partners' capacity to leverage funding to carry on the fight for conservation in the region*

➤ **Other comments concerning the process of developing OAPs echoed the forced ranking of proposed statements:**

- Developing OAPs is unanimously regarded as a **learning experience**, with perceptions improving as teams were gaining experience.
- It was positively perceived by a large majority and specifically viewed as **inclusive (87%), empowering (80%), exciting (75%) and powerful (63%)**.

On a range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, ratings of the statements “The process of developing the OAP was ...”



- It was, however, also experienced as **resource-intensive** by most (73%), **confusing** by nearly half of the respondents (46%) and **stressful** by nearly a third (31%). That feeling, though, eased with time, as learning progressed and the methodology stabilized.

*Difficult first, because it was confusing at the beginning to understand the whole concept of the new MAVA’s plan structure but gradually better*

*Note that OAP development process was not the same for all OAP. As a new experience it was difficult in the first ones but clearly improved for the following meeting where learning from previous experience was apparently included*

*The development of the OAP was poorly approached at the beginning, perhaps, due to limited knowledge of developing such outcomes in a participatory manner.*

*L'approche est assez complexe à saisir puis à transmettre aussi à l'extérieur, mais elle garantit une bonne priorisation*

*Très positif sur la dynamique engendrée.  
Parfois désorientant sur la façon de construire le plan d'action et sur le rôle que nous devrions y jouer.*

*Partners were not operating at the same speed and that was a bit stressful*

*Intensive (time available vs time needed to fully contribute)*

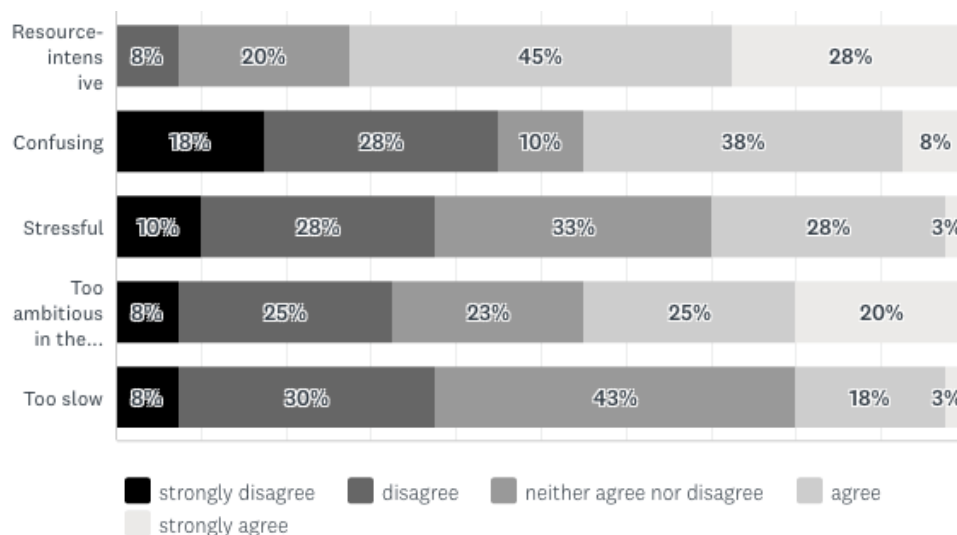
*It was interesting and positive, but rather frustrating and confusing at times, as goalposts and processes were changing. It was also extremely time-consuming.*

*The feeling was that we were all - MAVA and coordinating organisations – "discovering" as we went along. The timetables were also sometimes unrealistic.*

- Additionally, it was rated as **"too ambitious in the timeframe allowed"** by 45% of respondents while also viewed as **"too slow"** by a fifth (21%).

*It is positively ambitious. It is the right approach but very ambitious if considered the effective time available for each partner.*

On a range from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", ratings of the statements "The process of developing the OAP was ..."



- Finally, several comments referred to a regrettable **heaviness of the process** in light of respective organization’s capacities

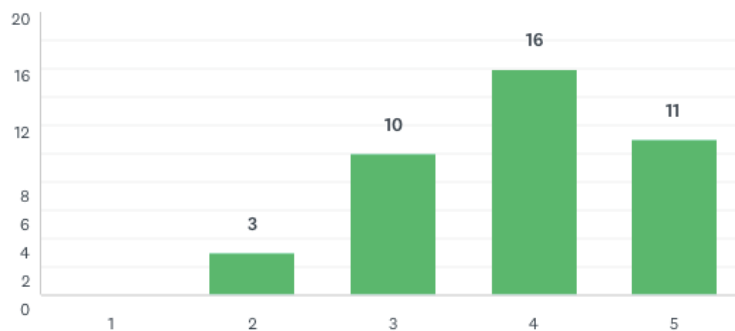
*Cette expérience est très riche (...) Mais il est vrai que désormais mon travail se trouve vraiment impacté dans le négatif, à force de reporting, documents, stratégies, indicateurs, et moins de temps pour l'essentiel. J'ai du mal à mettre en place tout le travail que je souhaite faire, car mon temps est divisé et redivisé entre les stratégies, les projets, et les actions de mon organisation. Il manque aussi beaucoup de synergies entre les stratégies elles mêmes.*

*Too much time spent on process and project reporting - heavy servicing of the grant.*

*There are problems with the coordination between all partners, and integration between MAVA institutional partners and other partners. Further, the process is not finished - we are still discussing indicators. The financial reporting templates are cumbersome and very difficult to fill also.*

- Overall, these **nuanced views** are **reflected** in the **quite satisfactory** (though not excellent) **ratings** given to the **experience of contributing to the development of an OAP** and **of working within an OAP**, respectively **3.9 or 3.8 out of 5**

Answers to the question “How would you rate your experience participating in the development of Outcome Action Plans?”



A comparative view per program shows few differences from one group to the other. The Switzerland program is not represented, as only 2 respondents contributed. Samples remain relatively small (and are hence not statistically representative) for the other programs as well. 12 respondents for Coastal West Africa gave it an average rating of 3.83, 22 for Mediterranean Basin gave it an average rating of 3.91 and 6 for the Sustainable Economy program, an average rating of 4.



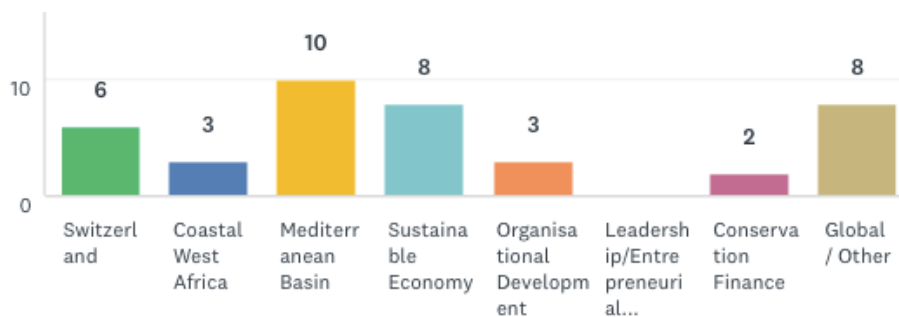


## I.2. WORKING WITH MAVA

### Sample of 72 responses:

- The same 40 OAP participants
- And 32 non-OAP partners: 10 from the Mediterranean program, 8 from Coastal West Africa, 6 from Switzerland, 8 from the Sustainable Economy program and 8 from the global program

Distribution of the 32 non-OAP participants across programmes and ISU projects (more than one answer possible)



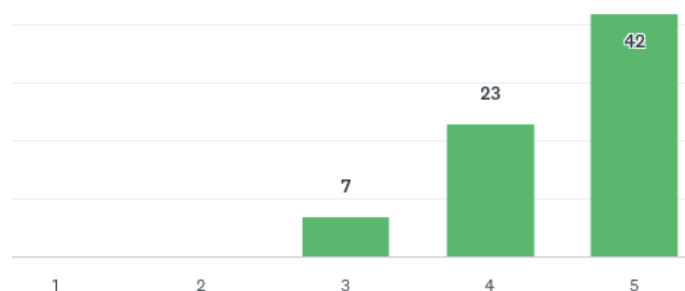
- **Frequency of interactions with MAVA counterparts is nearly unanimously (95%) felt adequate for grantees needs**

*We found the MAVA Foundation a very hands on and engaged donor. We appreciate the opportunity to work closely with the Foundation and be transparent about what has worked well and where and why progress has been slow.*

- **The quality of interaction with MAVA staff is praised by respondents**

The average mark given is 4.5 out of 5 with more than half (58%) of the respondents given it the highest mark, and none under 3.

Answers to the question “How would you rate the quality of your interactions with your MAVA counterpart(s)?”

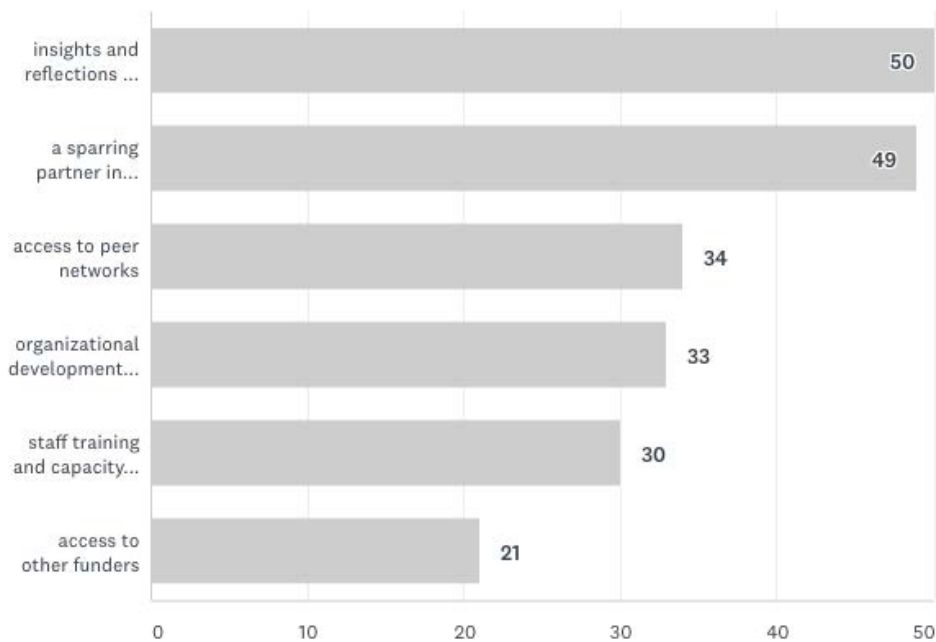


- **Grantees appreciate MAVA’s value added in several ways:**
  - **more than 2/3** particularly value the **insights and reflections** provided on the field at large as well MAVA’s role as **sparring partner in strategic thinking**
  - **close to half** value the **access to peer networks** and the **support to organizational development**, closely followed by **staff training and capacity building**
  - **less than a third** have benefitted from **access to other funders**, though many commented that they would appreciate such opportunity

Staff training and capacity building is particularly valued by grantees from Coastal West Africa (60% of them) and the Mediterranean (50%) and so is organizational development support (by 53% and 63% respectively). Access to peer networks is most valued by the Sustainable Economy program grantees (79% of them).

Answers to the question “Beyond funding, what do you particularly value in the partnership with MAVA?”

Total respondents: 72, several choices possible



➤ **The relationship to MAVA is perceived by three quarters** of the respondents (53 of 71 answers) as **quite different** from that to other funders. In particular, **grantees praise:**

- **MAVA's strategic vision and commitment to build a community,**

*La spécificité la plus remarquable de la MAVA est son engagement à développer une communauté de la conservation.*

*Long term engagement on key conservation strategies  
- not giving up on difficult outcomes*

- **its flexibility, openness and adaptive management, rooted in in-depth understanding of conservation**

*We value the opportunity to develop work together,  
to share the good and the bad news and plan from there on.*

*Openness in approaching and financing more controversial ideas,  
with positive constructive feedback*

*I value its flexibility and openness to our project proposals which shows great respect  
and value for partners experience and knowledge on our field of work.*

*Much more intensive - more private, and in some ways more flexible.*

*Going on the change journey together,  
and therefore bringing real smart adaptation to the program*

*MAVA understands the realities on the ground,  
thus accepts adaptive management during implementation*

*Always available, easy to work with, flexible, efficient  
and provide a strategic thinking environment*

*Une concertation à tous les niveaux, grande flexibilité*

*Très différente du fait de la proximité, la facilité de dialogue,  
la réflexivité, la légèreté et souplesse relative des procédures*

*La MAVA offre une souplesse très importante,  
apporte conseil et dédie un temps de dialogue/écoute très grand*

- **its role (well beyond funding) as a partner with a long-term perspective**

*Long term engagement on key conservation strategies  
- not giving up on difficult outcomes*

*We also massively value the long term support that MAVA provides. It enables us to also plan longer term and more into much more strategic and challenging work.*

*I feel more free to propose activities/objectives, because MAVA requirements aren't that rigid, which make possible to design much more interesting proposal, better adapted to the reality*

*a) MAVA clear focus on nature conservation is unique; b) the unusual duration of the relationship and long term support for specific conservation objectives (sometime over 6 years on individual projects); c) MAVA direct engagement with partners in strategy development; d) MAVA desire to bring partners together on selected strategies; e) dedication to partners*

*As a programmatic partner we have enjoyed a relationship that is rare. MAVA has always gone beyond been a funder and has acted as a true partner, responding to the real challenges of our work with valuable advice, operational and networking support and willingness to adapt its support to changing circumstances*

*It feels like a real partnership, with different strengths, that add up to ambition, pragmatism, flexibility and power to make change happen*

### I.3. MAVA COMMUNICATIONS

Note: answers in this section were not compulsory. Samples hence vary per question from 63 to 72, with anywhere between 9 and 30 respondents, who choose “not applicable” as their answer. Fifty nine (59) provided suggestions for the newsletter.

➤ **MAVA publications are the communication tools most often resorted to and are dominantly very much appreciated for their usefulness**

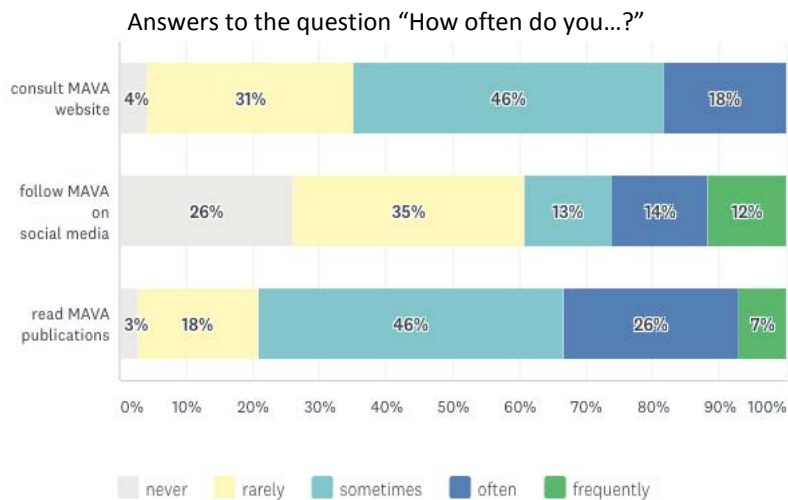
➤ **MAVA’s website in the second most used source of information and generally well appreciated**

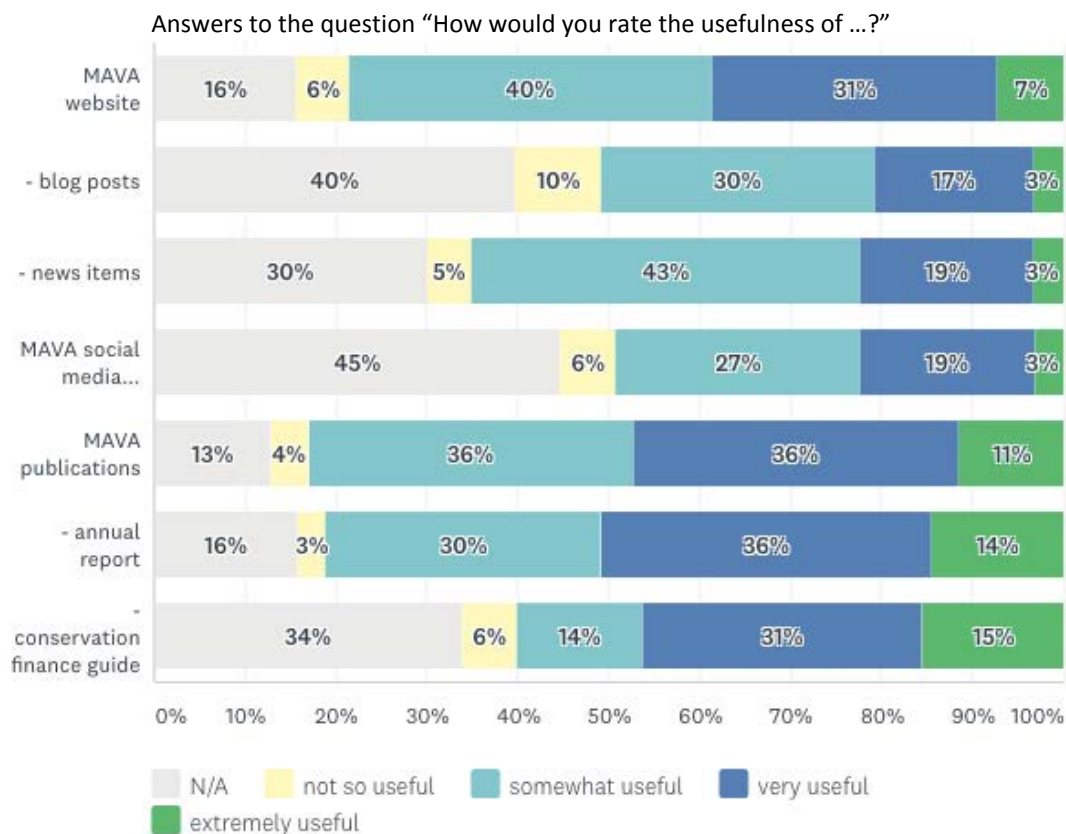
A third of the respondents read MAVA publications often or frequently, a fifth rarely to never. More than half of the readers rate them as very useful to extremely useful. This is particularly true for the innovation in conservation guide, for those (3/4 of the audience) who use it.

Close to two-thirds of respondents consult the website “sometimes” to “often”, with its content generally well appreciated, followed by news items and finally blog posts, though those later items seem unknown to a significant part of the audience (30 to 40% of N/A).

➤ **MAVA social media presence is the least followed, though it is valued by its followers**

While a quarter of the sample does not follow MAVA on social media at all, another quarter does so often or frequently – probably a reflection of the more general habits of respondents, active or not on social media.





➤ **As for the announced MAVA newsletter, respondents expressed a keen interest to learn more about...**

**1. Progress of other OAPs, including related lessons-learnt and dynamics unleashed**

*Project updates (the good, the challenging, and the ugly - not just the good).  
Let's learn from each other.*

*Highlights of the FPPs and their key results*

*Learn what others are doing - maybe one organisation per month?  
Mapping of the work of the grantees.*

*Des retours d'expériences sur les réussites clés, mais également des échecs éventuels dont on peut tirer des leçons. Des témoignages de bénéficiaires. Un baromètre synthétique de la mise en œuvre des divers plans d'actions.*

*Des nouvelles des autres OAP pour renforcer le sentiment de communauté au-delà de notre seul OAP*

*Les résultats des activités réalisées par les différents OAPs, la dynamique de changement induite par le programme MAVA Afrique de l'Ouest et l'impact sur la durabilité*

*Les constructions de l'héritage MAVA dans les différentes régions qu'elle soutient*

## **2. Thought-leadership and strategic thinking on key conservation topics**

*Thought leadership on the topics that you invest in.*

*People's stories, Policy updates, Facts and figures from recent studies and reports. Activists approach towards nature conservation. Engaging with a ever more "environmentally-ignorant" media*

*Comment former les futurs leaders dans le domaine de la conservation*

*Benefits from conservation - conservation in development agenda*

*Coastal erosion, blue economy, MPAs, Invasive species, marine wildlife, ocean governance*

*Landscape approach paradigms, Resilience issues, Sustainable financing, Wetland and integrated river basin management*

## **3. Conservation finance, funders landscape and funding opportunities**

*Conservation Finance Guidelines and opportunities in other parts of the world  
Conservation opportunities in the international arena (meetings; funding; etc.)*

*Info on upcoming calls for proposals*

## 1.4. ENDING of MAVA FUNDING

Sample of 72 responses:

- **Communications regarding the ending of MAVA funding is perceived as clear to very clear by the vast majority of grantees**

On a scale of 1 to 5, from “not clear” to “very clear”, the average rating by the 72 respondents is 4.4. The less positive ratings are justified by a lack of clarity, not on the sunset date itself, but on *how things will work out until then*.

Answers to “Please rate the clarity of communication regarding the ending of MAVA funding to your organisation/program and its timeframe”



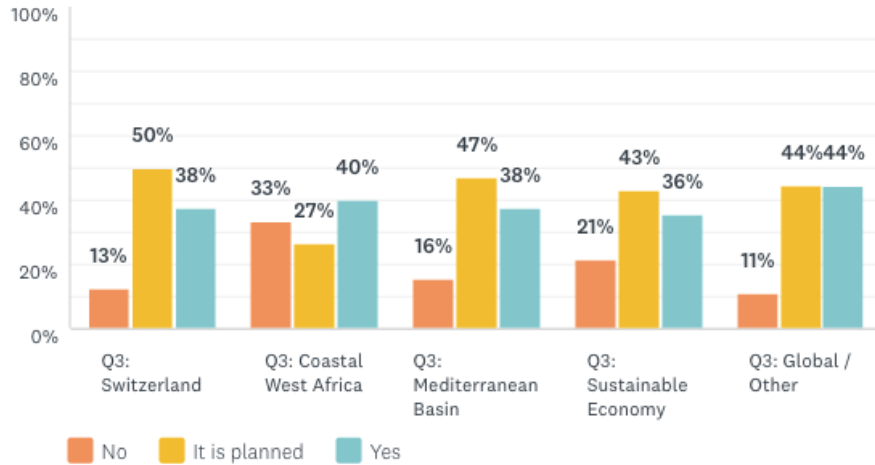
- **Grantees are acting in consequence**

- **85% have already assessed or are planning to assess related impacts**
- **85% at least have informed their board** (in 4% of the cases, respondents didn't know whether or not the board had been informed)
- **In 80% of the cases, remedial actions are being undertaken (35%) or are planned (45%)** from *strategic adjustment of organization to a more diversified funding strategy and capacity, stronger Theory of Change and monitoring and evaluation systems*. Grantees from Coastal West Africa seem somewhat less advanced in that respect, with a third not having acted on the issue yet.

Answers to the question “Has your organization undertaken mitigation or remedial actions?”

Sample size	8	15	32	14	9
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➤ **Respondents are also relatively confident in their organization’s capacity to carry on the work currently funded by MAVA, beyond MAVA’s exit.**

While replacing MAVA funding is clearly identified as a major challenge, over half of the respondents rate their confidence in their organization’s capacity to carry on the work at a 4 or more, on a 5-star scale. Only 15% of the grantees rate their level of confidence as a 1 or 2. The mean rating is 3.5.

Answers to the question “How confident are you in your organization’s ability to carry on the work currently funded by MAVA, without MAVA funding in the future?”



It is somewhat astonishingly rated lowest in the Switzerland program (2.88 on average), followed by the Mediterranean Basin (3.34), Sustainable Economy (3.50), Coastal West Africa (3.98) and Global program (4).

Added comments though nuance the overall quite positive rating and indicate doubts and concerns.

*A major point to achieve this goal is MAVA's pledged support in providing liaisons to other donors; further than that, I think the key to attract wider interest and uptake lies in our ability to achieve solid project results in the years to come, providing answers and solutions that are useful for local communities and stakeholders.*

*We believe that we are in a position to substitute most -if not all- funds provided by MAVA by other donors/income streams. The level to which the sources of these funds will allow us the flexibility that MAVA programmatic support does, remains questionable.*

*It could be though, that activities have to be downsized*

*Il va falloir se serrer les coudes, et ça va faire mal...*

*We are working to replace our MAVA dependency now*

*We will apply for funding from other sources  
using data gathered from the MAVA project to illustrate our knowledge and experience*

*We are rather confident, but we can't be sure. We would appreciate  
if MAVA could approach together with its partners potential future donors.*

- **To the question, what would be most helpful to you in preparing for MAVA's exit, grantees focus predominantly on capacity building in fundraising (mapping of donor landscape, supporting the development of fundraising strategies or skills) and support to accessing other funders and funds (organizing funder roundtables, opening doors, setting up reserve funds and matching grants).**

A few respondents mentioned the importance of **sustaining strong collaboration across peers** and focusing on **delivering demonstrable results** and **strengthening the related communication**.

*Des pistes d'autres financeurs et éventuellement offre de formation en demandes de fonds!*

*If MAVA would connect us with potential future donors.*

*Que la MAVA travaille pour établir des ponts entre les organisations bénéficiaires de son financement et d'autres bailleurs pour assurer la relève après le retrait de la MAVA*

*Organizational Development support. Other funding opportunities.*

*To get in contact with new and willing donors and funding entities.*

*Help to identify other funders in our sector of interest*

*De disposer de fonds particuliers nous permettant de mettre en place  
une structure plus étoffée pour la recherche financière*

*Clear information about possibilities and timelines and for MAVA to introduce us to new donors that we don't yet know. If MAVA could use its experience and contacts to help map the funding community and connect us to them would be most useful.*

*MAVA's pledged support in reaching out to other donors would be most helpful for us in view of the post-2022 period. Capacity building and networking that take place (and will continue so) in the framework of current OAP's and projects are also very important factors to empower all organizations for successfully dealing with future challenges*

*Developing program portfolio and continuous cooperation between OAP partners  
that could guarantee sustainability*

- **To the final open question “any other remarks you would like to share at this stage”, many respondents took the opportunity to express their gratefulness for being invited to share feedback and for MAVA’s immense contributions overall**

*Engaging closely with the MAVA network  
Un très grand merci à la MAVA!*

*Thank you for supporting us for so many years.  
We will endeavour to carry on with the work you have so generously funded*

*We are tremendously grateful for MAVA's commitment and support, their open feedback  
and genuine interest in the success of the programmes.*

*We are deeply grateful for the crucial support of MAVA,  
not only in financial but also in strategic terms.*

*We appreciate the support provided by MAVA.  
We could not have delivered our project without MAVA's support*

*To thanks MAVA for all these years of support and that it has left a very positive legacy for us  
all. In any case it won't be the same without MAVA.*

*I really appreciate working with MAVA and refer to their exemplary approaches often.  
I will use it as an example in future work.*

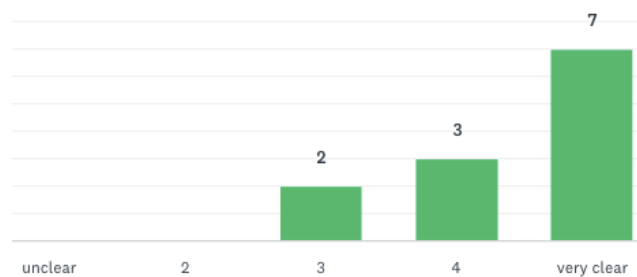
*MAVA has made a big difference to the field.  
Thank you for your generosity and willingness to be partners.*

## II. FEEDBACK from PAST GRANTEES

Twelve (12) past grantees participated in the survey: 5 from the Mediterranean program, 4 from the Alpine Arc and Switzerland program, 3 from the Global program, 1 from Coastal West Africa program and 1 from the Sustainable Economy program.

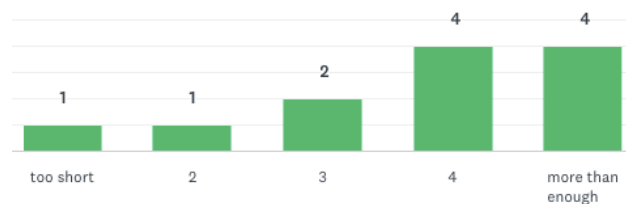
### ➤ There was great clarity in the communication of the ending of MAVA funding

To the question “Was the ending of MAVA funding and its related timeline clearly communicated to you?”, respondents gave an average mark of 4.42 over 5, with more than half rating the communication as very clear (5), none of them rating it below 3/5.



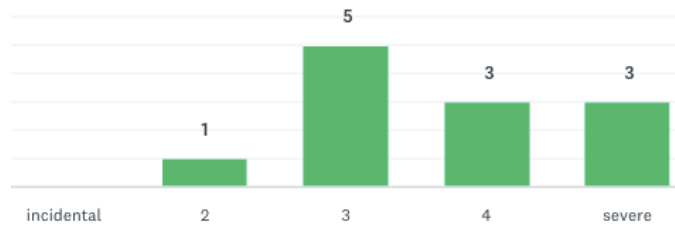
### ➤ With enough time giving to adapt on average

To the question “Do you believe you had sufficient time to adapt?”, the average mark was 3.75/5, with more than half of the respondents rating it as more than enough (5) or enough (4). A recent grantee (1 year program) with high hopes of building the relationship further rated it as too short.



### ➤ The impact of the decision was nevertheless felt as quite severe for most organizations at the time

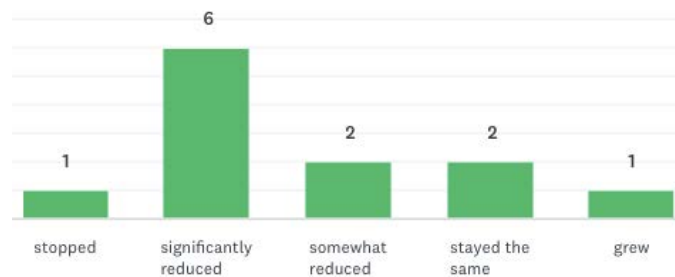
From a range from incidental (1) to severe (5), the average mark was 3.67 and the median 3.5 to the question “How would you rate the impact of this decision on your organization at the time?”



➤ **The decision did negatively impact the program of work in a majority of cases**

For half of the organizations, the work was significantly reduced, and even stopped in one case. In 2 cases, it remained unchanged and only in 1 case, did it grow.

Answers to the question “What has happened to the work after MAVA support ended?”



Difficulties encountered are mostly related to the challenge of finding alternative funding sources, especially of a long-term nature. MAVA will be missed as a partner.

➤ **That said, past grantees are mostly extremely grateful to MAVA’s support as long as it lasted**

*It was a great time to have been (co-)funded by MAVA! Thank you very much.  
The Exit of MAVA is a great pity for Nature Conservation activities...*

*Thank you very much for all your support so far!!*

*C’était une belle aventure....*

*I think the MAVA team did a great job organising this funeral  
- but it still a sad event for conservation.*

*As much we regret the end of MAVA,  
as much I would like to express my gratitude for the long-term support.*

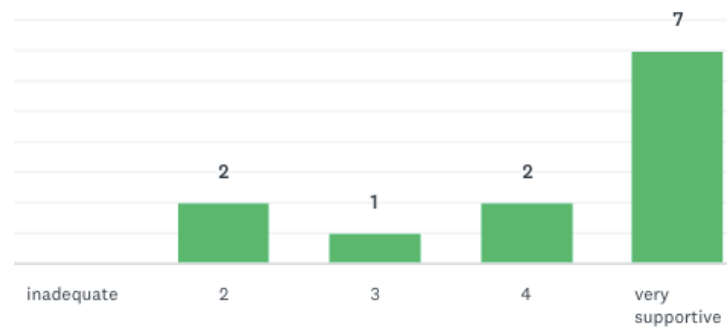
*I just wish there was some sort of continuation for MAVA to honour  
the memory and the legacy of one of the most visionary persons in our Planet,  
the very well respected Dr. Luc Hoffmann.*

➤ **and MAVA staff was perceived in most cases as very supportive**

On average the quality of the support of MAVA staff was rated 4.17 out of 5, with three quarters of the grantees judging staff's attitude as supportive or very supportive.

One 2-star rating is justified by the fact that *no discussion about future collaboration was possible* and *no professional feedback to the end of Project Report* had been received so far. In the other case, no explanation was provided and the program of work did grow after MAVA's exit.

Answers to the question "How would you rate the supportiveness and understanding of MAVA staff throughout the process?"



Openness and flexibility were particularly appreciated, including *flexibility for fixing the end of the project as long as the initial budget was not exceeded*, as well direct and clear communications about expectations and end of funding.

- **For grantees about to undergo the same process, the recommendations of past grantees can be summarized as follows:**
- **face reality,**
  - **plan ahead,**
  - **diversify funding.**

*Prendre en compte la réalité..*

*To be drastically realistic and understand that once the grant finishes there is a cliff,  
with no further possibility and no dialogue to explore future alternatives.  
To be grateful for the good old times.*

*Plan ahead as much as possible*

*Prepare the financial transition more than 1 year in advance.*

*Try to achieve an as high funding source diversity as possible.*

*This minimises the risk of losing one funder, but it of course increases substantially the work for fund-raising, and many potential funding organizations do not like to provide co-funding.*

- **They are mirrored in the few suggestions to MAVA:**
  - **lengthen as much as possible the transition period,**
  - **discuss frankly different exit strategies,**
  - **invest more on increasing fundraising capacity of the partners and facilitate access to potential new funders.**

*To inform well in advance the beneficiary. To discuss together possible exit strategies*

*Soutenir une periode de transition la plus longue possible, pour permettre de trouver une solution de financement à long terme*

*Compléter les projets qui requièrent une étape de finalisation ou de transition*

*To give more time, and invest more on increasing fund raising capacity of the partners.*

*When project funding ends, it would be valuable if MAVA could help identify or connect to potential new funders in their network or even provide a recommendation to other funders.*

Finally one respondent noted:

***I find it admirable that MAVA is going through this effort to do all that is possible to reduce the potentially negative impact of its decision to stop.***

## CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

A much appreciated partner for its understanding of conservation, its long-term perspective and its flexibility, the MAVA Foundation has, with its final 2016-2022 strategy, undoubtedly unleashed new excitement and possibilities. Its recently adopted Outcome Action Plan approach has been strategic in providing focus and moving peers to work as partners, while empowering them to come up, as a group, with the appropriate strategies and plans.

Developing OAPs was an intense and at times protracted process, which involved significant learning and adapting on the go. While the relative strenuousness involved might have been avoided by some more thinking and planning in advance, the benefits of the process are certainly manifold to participants. It enriched their views through discussion and debate and equipped them with new tools and thinking. It also enlarged and deepened their networks of potential resource persons to turn to and strengthened their sense of belonging to a community, and hopefully of mutual accountability.

This transformative approach has the potential to deliver stronger, more sustainable and demonstrable conservation impacts, as well as to inspire beyond MAVA's exit. A few recommendations may be formulated, for consideration, to further strengthen MAVA's approach and legacy.

- **On the OAP methodology**

Ensure OAP frameworks and theories of change are turned into live management tools with the required flexibility to adapt to changing conditions.

While adaptation is at the core of the Open Standards methodology adopted, some participants still fear a certain rigidity in the implementation phase, which will probably be overcome with practice. Additionally, framework partners welcome support in transforming results action chains and related indicators into implementation steering tools. Finally, efforts should be pursued to equip teams with common efficient and user-friendly tools, while streamlining reporting requirements to lighten the "burden" of servicing the grant.

- **Reco 1: Continue to support teams in turning OAP frameworks and theories of change into live management tools**

- **Reco 2: Simplify and stabilize reporting tools**

- **On sustaining the momentum and strengthening collaboration**

Continue to support a strong coordination and orchestration of OAP implementation to secure follow-through, help participants evolve from *a shared narrative and participation to meetings to genuine collaboration*. This will require MAVA to remain equally demanding with all partners and attentive to the risk of perceived unfairness when weaker partners are supported more than better performing ones.



Given the relative short timelines within which OAP are expected to deliver, smooth and efficient teamwork will be essential. In that respect, MAVA staff will play a crucial role in the early identification of hurdles or difficulties and the facilitation of their rapid resolution, building on the palette of interventions available, from individual feedback and coaching to collective issue-resolution.

➤ **Reco 3: Keep monitoring the “pulse” of each OAP and be ready to intervene if implementation challenges linked to team dynamics are perceived, to avoid unnecessary implementation delays**

● **On knowledge sharing**

Consider investing in active facilitation of knowledge sharing, beyond strengthening communications on OAP activities and progress, which participants are very keen to learn more about.

There is a considerable amount of implicit knowledge and experience within the MAVA collectivity of partners. A lot of trust has been built through the recent OAP processes, a critical element for the transfer of knowledge. MAVA could build upon this intangible asset and add significant value to the different communities of practice it is involved with, by enabling the capturing and sharing of lessons learnt and best practices among partners, across themes and regions. Such knowledge platform (light, networked, strongly anchored in people) could potentially be made available also beyond the MAVA community, as part of its legacy to the sector.

Developing a knowledge management approach would entail organizing a consistent knowledge architecture, clarifying knowledge roles within the network, purposefully creating a supportive environment (a learning culture) and leveraging technology to facilitate the knowledge transfer process.

Getting started would involve the following steps:

- Categorize a first set of thematic/technical and transversal subjects of keen interest to partners (for example, how to create repository of data for a given geography; how to engage local communities; how to develop an advocacy strategy or a strong grant proposal, etc.);
- Identify experienced colleagues or reference persons for each of these subjects and ensuring their commitment to contribute time to) answer requests (possibly using soft incentives) – i.e. create a knowledge resource directory;
- At minimum, play a match-making role (“you face an issue – s/he has the experience”); at the next stage, capture relevant high-level messages in a synthetic form (1-pager, video teaser, etc.) and start systemically integrating a knowledge sharing element to existing and upcoming gatherings & meetings.

➤ **Reco 4: Amplify communications to the community of partners on OAP progress**

- **Reco 5: Consider investing in active facilitation of knowledge sharing within the MAVA community of partners, as a way to strengthen single participants as well as the collectivity of peers**

- **On funding, preparing for and beyond MAVA's exit**

Pursue support to growing single-entity as well as collective fundraising capabilities through a range of interventions, including:

- (i) existing capacity building measures (particularly for indirect or local partners),
- (ii) facilitating exchanges of knowledge across peers (sharing of methods and tools but also of donor knowledge) and encouraging joint proposals,
- (iii) continue to share “the donor’s perspective” with grantees (possibly providing communication tools on Luc Hoffmann’s commitment and legacy to help partners inspire other donors),
- (iv) and, facilitate exposure to potential new funders (organizing funder roundtables, opening doors, setting up reserve funds and matching grants).

- **Reco 6: Pursue efforts to grow single-entity as well as collective fundraising capabilities in view of MAVA's exit**

- **On targeted advocacy towards the funders community**

The strong benefits of the OAP approach, highlighted in this review, call for a larger use of similar inclusive bottom-up methodologies by funders. Once the 2019 review has captured the early programmatic results of its strategy, the MAVA Foundation will be in a strong position to advocate for such ways of working. Hence, the importance to formalize the OAP methodology, capture the learnings and stabilize the related tools, as well as possibly consider a change of name to something more marketable.

This will be of value to the philanthropic field at large, but also deserves a more targeted presentation to select public funders of critical importance to sustain MAVA's legacy. (e.g. Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Union vis-à-vis the Mediterranean regional grantees “dependent” on the same regional grantees for the implementation of their strategies).

- **Reco 7: Consider formalizing the OAP methodology and sharing it with the funders field at large**
- **Reco 8: Engage in targeted and discrete advocacy towards select funders of critical importance to sustain MAVA's legacy**

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