



Government of India/ भारत सरकार
FISHERY SURVEY OF INDIA / भारतीय मात्स्यिकी सर्वेक्षण

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying / मत्स्यपालन, पशुपालन एवं डेयरी मंत्रालय
Department of Fisheries / मत्स्यपालन विभाग

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F. No. 35-21/2023 Fy. I

Date: 22.01.2026

To

The Joint Secretary (Marine)

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
Dept. of Fisheries, Krishi Bhavan,
New Delhi – 110 001

(Kind Attn: Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Dy. Commissioner (Fy))

Sub: Annual National Report to the SIOFA (for SC in 2026) - Reg.

Ref: Ministry's mail dated 13.01.2026

Madam,

Kindly refer to the e-mail cited above regarding the submission of the Annual National Report of India to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (2026) for the 11th Annual meeting of the Scientific Committee, proposed to be held in Australia from 23rd to 31st March, 2026.

The Ministry may kindly modify or approve the submitted document and forward it to SIOFA, or accord approval to this office for onward online transmission.

This is for your kind information.

Yours faithfully,


(Dr Sreenath K. R.)
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Encl: As above

L. No. 35-22/26





11th Annual Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC11)

Freemantle, Australia, 23-31 March 2026

SC-11-## (Document # to be assigned by the Secretariat)

Annual National Report of India to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

Delegation of India

Document type	Working paper <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information paper <input type="checkbox"/>
Distribution (important, please indicate an option)	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted ¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Closed session document ² <input type="checkbox"/>
Abstract	
	There was no fishing activity by Indian-flagged commercial fishing vessels in the SIOFA Convention Area.
Recommendations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It is recommended that the SC notes the national report provided by Republic of India

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² Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

1. Introduction

India is a Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (CNCP) to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA), having joined the Agreement in 2022. India recognizes SIOFA as an important regional fisheries management organization responsible for the conservation and sustainable management of fishery resources in the Southern Indian Ocean. India participates in SIOFA to engage in cooperative initiatives and, as appropriate, to contribute to science-based, sustainable fisheries management within the Convention Area.

2.1. Description of Fisheries

During the reporting period, India had no fisheries operating in the SIOFA Convention Area. There were no Indian-flagged commercial fishing vessels authorized or operating in the SIOFA Convention Area during the reporting period.

2.2. Catch, effort and CPUE summaries

Not applicable. No Indian-flagged vessels engaged in fishing activities in the SIOFA Convention Area during the reporting period.

2.3. Fisheries data collection and research activities

Not applicable. No Indian-flagged vessels engaged in fishing activities in the SIOFA Convention Area during the reporting period.

2.4. VME Thresholds

Not applicable. No bottom fishing activity occurred.

2.5. Biological sampling and length/age composition of catches

Not applicable. Biological sampling and studies on the length/age composition of catches were not undertaken because no Indian-flagged vessels conducted fishing activities in the SIOFA Convention Area during the reporting period.

2.6. Description of data verification mechanisms

Not applicable. No Indian-flagged vessels engaged in fishing activities in the SIOFA Convention Area during the reporting period.

2.7. Summary of observer and port sampling programs

Not applicable. No Indian-flagged vessels operated in the SIOFA Convention Area during the reporting period.

2.8. Relevant social and economic information

2.8.1. Brief description of relevant social or economic information related to the fisheries

At present, India does not conduct active fishing operations in the SIOFA Convention Area, and therefore, there are no direct social or economic impacts from Indian fisheries in the Area. However, the potential development of fisheries in the Southern Indian Ocean is of growing interest to India in the context of expanding sustainable livelihoods for fishers, enhancing offshore fishing capacity, and diversifying fishing opportunities beyond traditional coastal and nearshore areas.

India's fisheries sector supports a large number of livelihoods, and future engagement in high-seas fisheries, undertaken in a responsible and sustainable manner, is viewed as an opportunity to improve income stability, skill development, and technological capacity within the sector.

2.8.2. Future prospects of the fishery

India is exploring the possibility of developing fisheries in the SIOFA Convention Area in the medium to long term, subject to scientific advice, economic viability, and full compliance with SIOFA conservation and management measures. Any future fishing activities would prioritize sustainability, precautionary approaches, and adherence to ecosystem-based fisheries management principles. Engagement with SIOFA will help India build the necessary technical, scientific, and regulatory frameworks to support such development.

2.8.3. Onshore development

Prospective engagement in the SIOFA Convention Area may contribute to onshore development by strengthening landing, processing, cold-chain infrastructure, and value-added fishery products. India envisions that any future onshore development associated with SIOFA-area fisheries would focus on improving efficiency, reducing post-harvest losses, and supporting sustainable economic growth, while remaining consistent with national fisheries policies and international sustainability commitments.

3. Conclusion

India reiterates its commitment to the objectives of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) and to the conservation and sustainable management of fishery resources within the Convention Area. During the reporting period, no Indian-flagged commercial fishing vessels operated in the SIOFA Convention Area, and therefore, no information was available to report under several sections of this National Report.

As a Cooperating Non-Contracting Party since 2022, India values its participation in SIOFA and remains committed to constructive engagement in the work of the Agreement, including cooperation on scientific research, data collection, and the implementation of ecosystem-based fisheries management principles. Looking ahead, India intends to explore the development of fisheries in the SIOFA Convention Area in a phased and responsible manner, guided by scientific advice and full compliance with applicable conservation and management measures.

India affirms its continued support for SIOFA's mandate and looks forward to strengthening cooperation with Contracting Parties and the Secretariat to promote sustainable fisheries, protect marine ecosystems, and advance the Agreement's long-term objectives.
