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Accord relatif aux Pêches dans le Sud de l'Océan Indien

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Working Paper to continue the discussion on Research Cruise and Scientific Research

European Union

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Abstract

Scientific research is considered in the SIOFA Agreement in Articles 1 (Definitions), 7 (Subsidiary bodies) and 13 (Special requirements of developing States).
While Research cruises have been conducted in the SIOFA area, so far, the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement has not developed a single framework providing how that research cruises and scientific research should be conducted.
To address that loophole, the European Union submits this working paper that builds on our proposal presented to MOP6 in 2019 (MoP6-Prop07) while considering Scientific Committee (SC6-SC10) discussions and recommendations.
The main objective of this Working Paper is launching a discussion and work on such a framework for research in the SIOFA Area while guiding further discussions at SC11 acknowledging that if SIOFA adopts a CMM for research cruises, it may become necessary to amend CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) to clearly identify data derived from research cruises and scientific research.

[1] Restricted documents may contain confidential information. Please do not distribute restricted documents in any form without the explicit permission of the SIOFA Secretariat and the data owner(s)/provider(s).
[2] Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

Recommendations

- Consider the working paper and submit comments and language suggestion
- Recommend to the SC11 to review any working paper on research cruise and scientific research that would be tabled by CCP

EU Working Paper on a
Research Cruise and Scientific Research in the SIOFA Area

It is suggested that the Meeting of the Parties to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement considers a development of the CMM(s) in accordance with the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2009) and Article 4 and 6 of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement, including the following elements:

Objective

1. The objective of the "Research Cruise and Scientific Research CMMs" is to govern the undertaking of fisheries-related scientific research in the SIOFA Area and to set out a clear legal framework and consistency in approaches for research cruises and scientific research.
2. The specific "Research Cruise and Scientific Research CMMs" are separated from the process adopted for exploratory fisheries (CMM 17(2024) ensuring that all three activities are appropriately sanctioned prior to the activity being undertaken and subsequently reported.

Application

3. These CMMs should apply to all Contracting Parties, cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCPs), participating fishing entities (PFEs) and any third party engaged in fishing operations for scientific research purposes in the SIOFA Area to all gears for any fishery falling under SIOFA´s competence.

Definitions

4. For the purposes of this Working Paper "scientific research" is defined as:
    a) Vessel-based activities collecting environmental data and work conducted under the scope of Scientific Committee ('SC') activity that includes information gathering without extraction of fisheries resources,
    b) Conducting fishing activities collecting data from marine living resources including potential or established fishery resources.

5. For the purpose of this Working Paper, "research cruises" is defined as single trips conducted by a dedicated research vessel under the scope of an SC activity, where the sale of commercial catch is not the primary objective of the trip.

6. Research conducted by fishing vessels is [not] subject to this framework.

Specific provisions for Scientific Research activities and catches

7. Any Contracting Party, CNCP, PFE or a third-party planning to use a vessel or vessels for Scientific Research purposes as defined in paragraph 4, shall notify the SIOFA Secretariat at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the survey, and provide a copy of the Scientific Research Activities (SRAs).
8. Catches taken by any vessel during the implementation of a Scientific Research will be considered as part of any catch limits in force for each species taken.
9. Catches taken during the implementation of a Scientific Research activity shall not exceed the amount recommended by the Scientific Committee and adopted by the MoP per season.
10. Catches of SIOFA fisheries resources taken during the implementation of a notified Scientific Research activity will be recorded and reported as per CMM 02(2023).

Specific provisions for Research Cruises

11. All research cruises require SIOFA authorisation on the basis of research cruise plans.
12. A research cruise plan is submitted to the SIOFA SC for approval prior to conducting the cruise.
13. The MoP considers the recommendation of the SC and authorises the cruise.
14. The data collected during the cruise are submitted to the Secretariat within 9 months of the end of the cruise.
15. The results of the research cruise are reported to the SC and the Meeting of the Parties.
16. No subsequent research cruise will be permitted by the organisation undertaking the cruise if they do not submit the data emanating from the cruise to the SIOFA Secretariat and a final detailed cruise report is submitted.
17. Research cruise operators shall allow scientists from CCPs to participate in the cruise as development opportunities or to provide relevant expertise.
18. Research cruises may be conducted by fishing vessels registered in SIOFA RAV subject to conditions of MoP's authorisation upon recommendation of SC, and comply with SIOFA CMMs.

Scientific Committee

19. The Scientific Committee shall develop a template for the SIOFA Scientific Research Activities (SRAs). SRAs shall include scientific objectives, detailed survey design and a plan for dissemination of scientific outputs and knowledge.
20. At its annual meeting, the Scientific Committee shall consider any new SRAs and research cruise plans submitted, and any other relevant information.
21. The Scientific Committee shall provide recommendations and advice on SRAs and research cruise plans to the Meeting of the Parties.
22. The Scientific Committee at each annual meeting shall review available data and reports from ongoing or ended SRAs and research cruise plans, in view to enabling an assessment of the stocks covered by these plans, the feasibility and appropriateness of

establishing a fishery and the impact of fishing activities on non-target, associated or dependent species and the marine ecosystem in which these plans apply.

23. The Scientific Committee may request updated reports on the outcomes of SRAs and research cruise plans, and amend the SRAs and research cruise plans as necessary.
24. The SC shall provide recommendations considering that scientific research activities as well as fisheries management can be implemented differently and meaningfully under this framework.

Meeting of the Parties

25. The Meeting of the Parties, taking into account the recommendations and advice of the Scientific Committee, shall decide whether to authorise the SRAs and the research cruise plan.

Review

26. When a SRA expires, any Contracting Party CNCP and PFE may submit a new SRA to the Scientific Committee in accordance with paragraph 7.
27. The CMM shall be reviewed no later at than two years of its implementation. The review shall also take into account the latest advice of the Scientific Committee on previous or ongoing scientific research activities in the SIOFA Area.