

Réf.: 2021-05-27-1/SIOFA- SCC

La Réunion, Thursday 27th May 2021

## SC- CIRCULAR n° 2021-03

### **SUBJECT: Update on the revised timetable of Scientific Activities related to the EU Grant.**

Dear Heads of Delegation of the Scientific Committee,

Dear Colleagues,

In view of the activities of the EU Grant Agreement between the European Union and SIOFA, the Chairs of the Scientific Committee and its subsidiary bodies, the Scientific Committee Head of the EU Delegation and the Secretariat met on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May and Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May, to take evaluate progress on the studies carried out to date and plan for those that are due to be undertaken in the coming months. After having considered several ways of timetabling the different activities, the participants agreed on an updated timetable (Annex 1 attached to this letter).

I invite you to take note of the proposed modifications to the work programme detailed in Annex 1 that resulted from this meeting. This would update and revise Annex G of the SC6 Report.

The first consideration is the grouping of some PAEWG activities. Specifically, the “Bioregionalizations searches for smaller spatial entities within a larger area using a range of environmental information”, the “Investigation of holistic framework assessing and preventing Significant Adverse Impacts on VMEs”, “Support work on benthic bioregionalization (underway) and (future) investigate possible habitat suitability modelling”, and the “Investigation of representative protected areas” would be combined into a single project with a budget of €60,000 (calculated as the sum of the individual budgets in the original four projects). This would allow the work to take account of the interdependence of the activities, to encourage applicants’ interest and to make more effective progress on the studies.

Second, it was noted that the proposed deadlines should be able to be achieved in spite of the short time frame available; (i) the importance of starting the Saya de Maya Bank Fisheries Project this year was emphasised, and (ii) the reading of the Orange roughy otoliths and the estimation of revised growth curves would be feasible to undertake in 2021 and hence provide the input age data and growth parameters for the planned orange roughy assessment at the end of 2021.

Under this revised timetable the development of the ToRs for the studies in the EU funded program for 2022-2023 should all be completed just after the end of the SC7 (31 March 2022), with all of the work in this program completed by SC8. The specific details are given in Annex 1.

Although these modifications were agreed by the SC and WG Chairs, Scientific Committee Head of the EU Delegation and the Secretariat, the proposed modifications will need to be agreed with the European Union (EU) as the funding agency.

Therefore, if no Head of Delegation have any objections, the Secretariat would undertake to initiate discussions with the EU in this respect.

Otherwise, please send any comments to the secretariat email address before the 25th June 2021.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A DUNN' with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alistair DUNN

Chairperson of the Scientific Committee  
SIOFA/APSOI

ANNEX 1: Revised timetable and associated remarks for 2021-23 Scientific SIOFA Activities:

	2021-2022 Activities	Project code	Planned on EU Grant to be launched by	Consultant recruitment must be done by	End of consultancy study (final report provided)	Related meeting (report presentation)	MoP Budget 2021(1)-2022(2) Budget	Priority level at SC5 and SC6/ EU Grant Budget	Situation of the Project and Priority	COMMENTS
	2021-2022 Activities									
SERAWG	Orange roughly acoustic data process (2018-2020) [Consultant]	SER 2021-01		1st June 2021	30 Oct 2021	SC7	20000 <sup>(1)</sup>	High	ToR published (April 2021)	<b>2 consultants applied</b>
SERAWG	Orange roughly stock assessment			November 2021	31 January 2022	SC7	25000 <sup>(1)</sup>	High	ToR in progress (Sept 2021)	
SERAWG	Alfonso Investigation of the acoustic data			September 2021	30 November 2021	SC7	5000 <sup>(1)</sup>	High	<b>ToR to be done by July 2021</b>	<b>ToR to be done by Secretariat with SERAWG and SC Chair support</b>
SERAWG	Development of T + L Reference points and Harvest strategies Phase 2			December 2021	28 February 2021	SC7	15000 <sup>(2)</sup>	High	<b>ToR to be done by September 2021</b>	2nd part (2021) of the project to develop Harvest Strategies for Key and important species in SIOFA. ToR to be done by Secretariat with SERAWG and SC Chair support.
PAEWG	Bioregionalisation searches for smaller spatial entities within a larger area using a range of environmental information			August 2021	31 December 2022	SC8	15000 <sup>(2)</sup>	High	ToR in progress	<b>PAEWG Chairperson, suggest grouping this consultancy with the three consultancies below</b>

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PAEWG	Investigation of a holistic framework for assessing and preventing Significant Adverse Impacts on VMEs		March 2021				EU Grant Agreement	15000	ToR in progress	<p><b>PAEWG Chairperson suggest grouping these 3 consultancies with the consultancy above, in one Term of Reference for a budget of 60 000 €. ToR to be done by Dr Gary Morgan with PAE Chairperson and Secretariat support.</b></p>
PAEWG	Support work on benthic bioregionalization (underway) and (future) investigate possible habitat suitability modelling		January 2021				EU Grant Agreement	15000		
PAEWG	Investigation of representative protected areas (relevant to the bioregionalization work)		March 2022				EU Grant Agreement	15000		
SERAWG	Orange Roughy Otolith ageing and growth equation		May 2021	July 2021			EU Grant Agreement	5000 (1/3 Of 15K€)	Hight Priority - ToR to be done	<p>Inventory of otolith samples will be investigated by the Secretariat in May 2021. If the aged data are available in Cook Islands, the growth equation can be estimated by Cook Islands in 2021. Other plans depend on the inventory.</p> <p>ToR to be done by Dr Gary Morgan with SERA Chairperson and Secretariat support.</p>
SERAWG	Saya da Maya Bank fisheries		September 2021	September 2021			EU Grant Agreement	15000	Hight Priority - ToR to be done	<p>Scoping study for stock assessment, ERA and/or ecosystem approach needed as basic knowledge and information are not yet fully compiled and analysed. Basic Information such as fisheries, catch, effort, CPUE, biology, VME, ecology and other relevant information need to be collected and compiled. The MRAG(UK) report on stock assessment may be one of useful reference.</p>

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SERAWG	Updates to the ERA work - Considering seabirds & mammals		September 2021	November 2021			EU Grant Agreement	10000	ToR to be done	ToR to be done by Dr Gary Morgan with SERA Chairperson and Secretariat support.
SC + SEC	Develop the database system and analyses.		May 2021	June 2021			EU Grant Agreement	20000	ToR in progress (May 2021)	ToR to be done by Secretariat with Dr Gary Morgan, SC and WG Chairperson support.
SC + SEC	Coordinate, plan and assist Implementation of Science Consultancy to support the SC Working Plan		January 2021	February 2021			EU Grant Agreement	15000	In progress	

**2022-2023 Activities**

	<b>2022-2023 Activities</b>	<b>Project Code</b>	<b>Planned on EU Grant to be launched by</b>	<b>Consultant recruitment must be done by</b>	<b>End of consultancy study (final report provided)</b>	<b>Related meeting (report presentation)</b>	<b>2022 budget</b>	<b>Budget obtained from EU Grant</b>	<b>Priority (SC6)</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
SERAWG (Orange Roughy)	Stock structure studies		May-June 2021						Low Priority	There are no discussion nor proposals on this study in SEARWG and SC. In the last stock assessment, 8 features (stocks) (spawning grounds) are assumed, which is likely plausible hypothesis. Thus, this study may be not urgent but SERAWG and SC (2022) will discuss this issue.
SERAWG (Toothfish)	Stock structure studies in 2 areas (to be conducted with CCAMLR with agreement).		September 2021		Optimum timing will be determined by SERAWG+SC+EU (funding Agency) +Secretariat  (draft ToRs by end of March 2022, studies to end by March 2023)		EU Grant Agreement	25000 +10000 (2/3 of 15K€)	High Priority	(1) SIOFA (Del Cano) and CCAMLR (Crozet, Kerguelen & Prince Edward) (2) SIOFA (William's Ridge) and CCAMLR (Kerguelen's and Heard & McDonald's) (EU, France Territories, Japan & Australia) (Consultant is subject to the SC review for the similar work by the UK) (Japan's cooperation is subject to the tissue sampling protocol)
	Otolith reading & growth equation (to be conducted with CCAMLR with agreement).		November 2021	High Priority		Collection of otolith and ageing (Del Cano Rise and William's Ridge) and estimation of the growth equations (EU, France Territories, Japan & Australia, (Japan will provide aged data by otolith)				
SERAWG (Alfonsino)	Stock structure studies		May 2022			Low Priority			SERAWG and SC discussed this issue extensively in 2019 and agreed to the current 2 provisional management units (EAST and WSET). SERAWG+SC (2022) will re-visit this issue and will proceed this project if they recommend.	

	(1) Age validation and (2) growth equation		May 2022	Optimum timing will be determined by SERAWG+SC+EU(funding Agency) +Secretariat  (draft ToRs by end of March 2022, studies to end by March 2023)					High Priority	(1) Age validation using bomb calorimetry and (2) National scientists are encouraged to do this work as aged data by otolith (Fish Ageing Services, Australia) in the WEST are available & not yet analysed (n=250 each ♂ & ♀). The growth equation in EAST was estimated which was agreed by SC6.		
	Stock Assessments update		May 2022							25000	High Priority	Using more biological data and the acoustic data if feasibility is proved in the 2021
SERAWG	Updates to the ERA work - update the Teleost ERAs with better and more recent input data		September 2021							15000	High Priority	Australia led project (2021-22). Necessity of the budget depends on Australia (under investigation)
	Legend											
	Activity, planned, budgeted and current											
	Activity budgeted, planned to begin in 2021 (ToR in progress)											