



SIOFA | APSOI

Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
Accord relatif aux Pêches dans le Sud de l'Océan Indien

Report of the 11th Meeting of the Parties to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)

Hotel President, Seoul, Republic of Korea

1–5 July 2024

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Agenda item 1 – Opening of the meeting

1. The Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP), Dr Dae-yeon Moon (Korea), opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed all delegates. The meeting was held at Hotel President, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

1.1 Opening statements

2. The Chairperson invited Mr Myung-Jin Kim, Director-General, International Cooperation Policy Bureau, Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, Korea, to make a welcome statement (Annex A).
3. The Chairperson made an opening statement (Annex B).
4. The Chairperson opened the floor for delegation introductions. The list of participants is available in Annex C.

1.2 Practical arrangements for the meeting

5. The Executive Secretary thanked the Government of the Republic of Korea for hosting the meeting, delegates for their active participation at the Compliance Committee (CC) meeting and the Joint MoP-Scientific Committee (SC) Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies held during the previous week, the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the MoP and its subsidiary bodies for their hard work over the past year, and the Head of the Korean Delegation, Mr Tae-hoon Won, for his extensive support for organising the meeting. The Executive Secretary then explained the practical arrangements for the meeting.

1.3 Admission of observers

6. The MoP welcomed Comoros and India as Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCs), and Madagascar, Mozambique, the United States of America (USA), the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Deep-Sea Fisheries (DSF) Project, the Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fishers Association (SIODFA), and the Deep-Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) as Observers.
7. The MoP also welcomed the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) as Observers who attended the meeting online and were therefore entitled to observe the meeting but not make interventions.

1.4 Status of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

8. The FAO is the Depositary of the Agreement. The Executive Secretary provided an update on the Status of the Agreement in MoP-11-35 (Annex D), which confirms that there are 10 Contracting Parties (CPs), 1 Participating Fishing Entity and 5 signatories, including 2 Cooperating non-Contracting Parties.
9. **The MoP NOTED the Status of the Agreement.**

1.5 Participation in decision-making

10. The Executive Secretary reported that all CPs and Participating Fishing Entities had paid their contribution for 2024. Therefore, all CPs and Participating Fishing Entities were entitled to participate in the taking of decisions during this meeting.

Agenda item 2 – Administrative arrangements

2.1 Adoption of the agenda

11. The Secretariat presented the revised provisional agenda (MoP-11-ADM-04). The MoP agreed to amend the explanatory note under agenda item 6.1 (Summary presentation of

the new and exploratory fisheries to be undertaken by CCPs).

12. The agenda was adopted by the MoP (Annex E).

2.2 Confirmation of meeting documents

13. The Executive Secretary informed the MoP that working papers MoP-11-28, MoP-11-29, MoP-11-30, and MoP-11-31 had been submitted to the meeting after the document submission deadline.
14. The Chairperson invited the MoP to decide whether to admit the aforementioned documents, in accordance with Rule 10, Paragraph 7. The MoP agreed to admit the documents.
15. The MoP noted that an inconsistent approach had been applied in determining whether papers should be classified as working papers or information papers, as well as the implications of these classifications.
16. **The MoP AGREED that if a paper requires discussion and/or actions/decisions, for example if it includes proposals, recommendations, and/or requests, it should be a working paper. The MoP AGREED that if a paper is intended only to share information, such as supplementing a working paper, it should be an information paper.**
17. **Based on the above understanding, the MoP AGREED that the following information papers should be treated as working papers: MoP-11-INFO-02, MoP-11-INFO-03, MoP-11-INFO-06, MoP-11-INFO-07, MoP-11-INFO-08, MoP-11-INFO-09, MoP-11-INFO-14, MoP-11-INFO-15, MoP-11-INFO-18, and MoP-11-INFO-20. These papers were subsequently renumbered, becoming MoP-11-35, MoP-11-36, MoP-11-37, MoP-11-38, MoP-11-39, MoP-11-40, MoP-11-41, MoP-11-42, MoP-11-43, and Annex 1 of MoP-11-30 rev1, respectively.**
18. **The MoP REQUESTED that the Secretariat present a working paper to MoP12 with an overview of the criteria and process by which papers are classified as working papers or information papers and for determining whether papers should be made public or their access restricted. The MoP REQUESTED that the Secretariat indicate the potential implications for the Rules of Procedure (RoP) of the MoP when preparing the paper and highlight any relevant provisions from the RoP.**
19. **The MoP AGREED that, in the future, if the Secretariat is late in preparing a working paper for the meeting, it should submit such a paper as a working paper to the meeting, rather than as an information paper.**
20. The list of meeting documents is presented in MoP-11-ADM-07-rev4 (Annex F).

2.3 Appointment of rapporteurs

21. The MoP agreed to appoint Mr Alexander Meyer (Urban Connections, Tokyo) as rapporteur.

Agenda item 3 – Intersessional Decision-Making

3.1 Review of intersessional decisions taken since MoP10

22. The Executive Secretary confirmed that no intersessional decisions have been taken since the tenth MoP.
23. **The MoP NOTED that no intersessional decisions have been taken since the tenth MoP.**

Agenda item 4 – Compliance Committee (CC) and report of the CC8

4.1 Presentation of the report of the 8th Compliance Committee

24. The CC Chairperson, Mr Ichiro Nomura (Japan), presented a summary of the report of the eighth meeting of the CC (CC8), which was held at Hotel President, Seoul, Republic of

Korea, on 26–28 June 2024. The CC8 report is available as MoP-11-32.

25. The MoP reviewed the advice and recommendations of the CC8 report.

4.2 SIOFA Compliance Report (SCR)

26. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 25 of the CC8 report regarding the provisional Compliance Report (pSCR).**
27. The Secretariat presented the pSCR adopted by the CC, as described in MoP-11-03, and outlined the decisions of the CC8 on the provisional compliance status for each CCP, for review by the MoP.
28. The MoP noted that India had not been present at CC8 and had been unable to answer the CC's questions on a number of outstanding compliance issues. The MoP invited India to provide a response.
29. India provided some additional comments of a general nature about its implementation of the obligations under the Agreement and the SIOFA Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs). India also explained that it is in the process of applying to become a CP and has not yet authorised any vessels to fish in the Agreement Area. India stated that it would submit more detailed information about its implementation of the obligations under the Agreement and the SIOFA CMMs upon becoming a CP.
30. The MoP reminded India that, as a CNCP, India has already committed to implementing the Agreement and all the SIOFA CMMs and that India needs to take action to implement all obligations under the Agreement and the SIOFA CMMs in full, regardless of the status of its application to become a CP.
31. The MoP urged all CNCPs to attend the annual meetings of the CC to enable the effective and efficient implementation of the compliance assessment process.
32. **The MoP ADOPTED the final SIOFA Compliance Report outlined in Annex G.**

4.3 Report of Intersessional Working group on new Compliance Report template

33. **As recommended in paragraphs 33–34 of the CC8 report, the MoP ADOPTED the new Compliance Report template (MoP-11-34) and ENDORSED its use in the next compliance assessment.**
34. **The MoP noted paragraph 35 of the CC8 report regarding the holding of an informal workshop for CCPs, arranged by the Secretariat in consultation with the CC Chairpersons, around one month before the deadline for the submission of CCPs' self-assessments so that CCPs can seek clarification and assistance in filling out the new template.**
35. **The MoP recognised the CC8's consideration of the implementation of SIOFA Performance Review recommendations (recommendations 31 and 44) relating to the Compliance Monitoring Scheme and ENDORSED the proposed workshop to assist CCPs with better understanding their obligations and the use of the new template to report on the implementation of their obligations arising from the Agreement.**
36. **The MoP ENDORSED the CC8 recommendation tasking the Secretariat to develop a paper for CC9 to identify the capacity building needs of developing states, including where technical assistance or otherwise is needed in the implementation of obligations arising from the Agreement. This should include the identification of mechanisms to provide such assistance. The Secretariat should consult CCPs for the development of this paper.**

4.4. Report of Intersessional Vessel Monitoring System working group

37. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 78 of the CC8 report regarding the proposed Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs) for the SIOFA Vessel Monitoring System (VMS).**

38. The Compliance Officer presented the proposed SSPs for the SIOFA VMS (MoP-11-17 rev1) for the MoP's review.
39. **The MoP ADOPTED the proposed SSPs for the SIOFA VMS (Annex H).**
40. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 81 of the CC8 report regarding the proposed Roadmap towards the Operationalization of the SIOFA VMS.**
41. The Compliance Officer presented the Roadmap towards the Operationalization of the SIOFA VMS (MoP-11-21 rev1) for the MoP's review.
42. **The MoP ADOPTED the proposed Roadmap towards the Operationalization of the SIOFA VMS (Annex I) and AGREED to task the intersessional VMS working group (VMS-WG) to continue its work.**
43. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 83 regarding the potential implications of adopting the proposed SSPs for other SIOFA CMMs and SIOFA policies.**
44. The Compliance Officer presented a description of these potential implications (MoP-11-20) for the MoP's review.
45. **The MoP NOTED the potential implications of adopting the proposed SSPs for other SIOFA CMMs and SIOFA policies as described in MoP-11-20 (Annex J) and AGREED to task the VMS-WG to continue its work.**
46. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 84 of the CC8 report and thanked Ms Fiona Harford for her leadership as the VMS-WG Chairperson.**
47. The MoP thanked the EU for providing funding for the work towards the establishment of a SIOFA VMS.

4.5 Listing of IUU fishing vessels

48. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 59 of the CC8 report and NOTED that the CC agreed to remove the IMULA 1844 MTR from the draft IUU vessel list and did not recommend any changes to the provisional IUU vessel list.**
49. The Compliance Officer, Mr Johnny Louys, presented the Provisional IUU Vessel List (MoP-11-22) and noted there were two vessels on that list, the IMULA 1655 MTR and the IMULA 1783 MTR, for consideration by the MoP.
50. **The MoP NOTED that Sri Lanka had provided the information requested by MoP10 to demonstrate that the IMULA 1655 MTR and IMULA 1783 MTR did not engage in fishing for SIOFA fisheries resources and the criteria listed in paragraph 14 of CMM 06(2022) (IUU Vessel List) have been fulfilled, hence the MoP AGREED to remove the IMULA 1655 MTR and IMULA 1783 MTR from the Provisional IUU Vessel List.**
51. Some CCPs noted that the newly received inspection reports showed that the IMULA 1655 MTR and the IMULA 1783 MTR had caught tuna and tuna-like species, indicating that the vessels did not fish for SIOFA fisheries resources. These CCPs asserted that in such cases, the consideration of such vessels as suspected IUU fishing vessels should be conducted at the regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) with the appropriate competence, such as the IOTC, rather than SIOFA.
52. One CCP stated that the IOTC and SIOFA share a common area that overlaps, which makes it very difficult for either RFMO to determine, in the case of a vessel operating on the high seas without being included on the Record of Vessels of either organisation, which species the vessel targeted and/or caught, until the requisite evidence is obtained. Furthermore, when a vessel is listed on the draft IUU vessel list, it is the responsibility of the flag State to present any necessary information and evidence to confirm whether or not the vessel has engaged in IUU fishing activities. This was the case with the IMULA 1655 MTR and the IMULA 1783 MTR, whereby it was not possible to determine which species were caught by the vessels until the port inspection reports were requested and

received from Sri Lanka. As such, SIOFA followed the appropriate process.

53. Other CCPs disagreed, noting that to list a fishing vessel on a draft/provisional IUU vessel list, there must be a minimum requirement of positive prima facie evidence, otherwise it would place an undue burden on members whose fishing fleet are on the record of authorised vessel list of other RFMOs. Furthermore, the procedures for including a vessel on the draft IUU vessel list are clearly stated under CMM 06(2022) (IUU Vessel List) and the burden of information collection and proof lies with the proponent of listing the vessel on the draft IUU Vessel List, not the vessel's flag State.
54. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 61 of the CC8 report that the CC had not made any recommendations to remove any vessel from the current IUU vessel list.**
55. **The MoP AGREED not to remove any vessel from the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List.**
56. **The MoP ADOPTED the SIOFA IUU Vessel List (Annex K).**

4.6 Recommendations from the Compliance Committee on SIOFA CMMs

57. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 28 of the CC8 report regarding the CC's understanding of the applicable scope of paragraphs 5 & 6 of CMM 10(2023) (Monitoring).**
58. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 42 of the CC8 report regarding the proposal to amend CMM 01(2023) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.2.**
59. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 44 of the CC8 report regarding the proposal to amend CMM 07(2022) (Vessel Authorisation) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.1.**
60. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 46 of the CC8 report regarding the proposal for a CMM for the establishment of a framework to govern the undertaking and management of new and exploratory fisheries in the SIOFA Area based on the precautionary approach and held further discussions under agenda item 10.**
61. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 50 of the CC8 report regarding the proposal to establish a CMM for New Benthic Protected Areas (BPAs) in the Agreement Area and held further discussions under agenda item 10.**

4.7 Other recommendations from the Compliance Committee

62. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 52 of the CC8 report regarding amending CMM 15(2023) (Management of Demersal Stocks) and ENDORSED the CC's proposed technical edits to the CMM (Annex L).**
63. **The MoP AGREED that the general provisions of CMM 15(2023) (Management of Demersal Stocks) are applicable within the entire Agreement Area, including the Del Cano Area, for vessels engaging in, or intending to engage in bottom fishing.**
64. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 54 of the CC8 report regarding correcting the typographical error in CMM 06(2022) (IUU Vessel List) and ENDORSED the CC's proposed technical edit to the CMM (Annex M).**
65. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 63 of the CC8 report stating that there were no reports of sightings of vessels without nationality to the Secretariat.**
66. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 65 of the CC8 report regarding the port inspections report.**
67. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 67 of the CC8 report stating that there were no reports of sightings of fishing by vessels flagged to non-CCPs to the Secretariat.**
68. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 69 of the CC8 report regarding entry/exit notifications.**
69. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 71 of the CC8 report regarding Chinese Taipei's at-sea transfers and transshipments report for 2023 and Thailand's at-sea transfers report for 2023.**
70. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 73 of the CC8 report regarding the summary of the status**

of the submission of data required in paragraph 2 of CMM 07(2022) (Vessel Authorisation) for fishing vessels authorised to fish in the Agreement Area.

71. The MoP NOTED paragraph 87 of the CC8 report regarding India's request for renewal of CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 14.1.2.
72. The MoP NOTED paragraph 95 of the CC8 report regarding Comoros request for renewal of CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 14.1.1.
73. The MoP NOTED paragraph 99 of the CC8 report regarding the election of the CC Chairperson and held further discussions under agenda item 15.2.
74. The MoP NOTED paragraph 104 of the CC8 report regarding the CC's input on the notes and current status of the implementation of the recommendations of the SIOFA Performance Review Panel that were adopted at MoP10 and held further discussions under agenda item 12.1.2.
75. Following its review, the MoP ADOPTED the CC8 report.

Agenda item 5 – Scientific Committee (SC) and Report of the SC9

5.1 Presentation of the report of the 9th Scientific Committee annual meeting

76. The SC Chairperson, Mr Alistair Dunn, presented a summary of the report of the ninth Scientific Committee meeting (SC9), which was held at Berkeley Hotel Pratunam, Bangkok, Thailand. The SC9 report is available as MoP-11-05.

5.2 Recommendations from SC9

77. The MoP reviewed the advice and recommendations of the SC9 report.

5.2.1 Overview of SIOFA fisheries 2024

78. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 76 of the SC9 report regarding the **Overview of SIOFA Fisheries**.
79. The Science Officer, Dr Marco Milardi, presented the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries. The MoP reviewed and updated the document.
80. The MoP ENDORSED the **Overview of SIOFA Fisheries (MoP-11-07 rev2)**, and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
81. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 79 of the SC9 report and NOTED the average catch values during the recent period for SIOFA species of interest in Table 1 of the SC9 report.

5.2.2 SIOFA ecosystem summary 2024

82. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 88 of the SC9 report and NOTED that while the submission of observer data is not a requirement for pelagic fisheries, it would be valuable to have this information available in the SIOFA databases.
83. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 90 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA ecosystem summary (MoP-11-08), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.

5.2.3 SIOFA Fisheries Summaries 2024 (alfonsino, orange roughy, toothfish, oilfish, hapuka, common mora)

84. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 168 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*) 2024 (MoP-11-09), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
85. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 190 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for alfonsino (*Beryx* spp.) 2024 (MoP-11-10), and REQUESTED the

Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.

86. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 221 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for toothfish (*Dissostichus* spp.) 2024 (MoP-11-11), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
87. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 232 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for oilfish (*Ruvettus pretiosus*) and escolar (*Lepidocybium flavobrunneum*) 2024 (MoP-11-12), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
88. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 236 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for hapuka (*Polyprion* spp., hapuku wreckfish *P. oxygeneios*, wreckfish *P. americanus*) 2024 (MoP-11-13), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
89. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 240 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for common mora (*Mora moro*) 2024 (MoP-11-14), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.

5.2.4 Observers' harmonisation framework

90. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 344 of the SC9 report and NOTED that a voluntary trial of the new forms for data submission would take place in the coming year and that the SC would then consider the results of the trial at its next meeting before formulating its recommendations to the MoP on the adoption of the forms.
91. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 352 of the SC9 report and NOTED that a CMM on a SIOFA Observer Programme should include elements such as a Code of Conduct for an observer scheme, defined roles and responsibilities of observers, and categories of data that should be collected by observers.
92. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 353 of the SC9 report and NOTED that specific sampling mechanisms and requirements could be defined in an observer manual that is developed by the SC and that this approach would allow greater flexibility in setting and revising specific scientific sampling priorities.
93. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 366 of the SC9 report that the MoP consider mandatory and higher levels of observer coverage. The MoP TASKED SC10 to provide advice to MoP12 on observer coverage levels by unit of effort and data collection requirements for observers on all fisheries, as well as observer data submission requirements for SIOFA.
94. The EU noted the importance of scientific observation to the work of SIOFA and welcomed the progress made by the SC. The EU expressed its hope that MoP12 would build on this work by discussing the establishment of a self-standing CMM on scientific observation.

5.2.5 New and Exploratory fisheries

95. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 95 of the SC9 report and NOTED that there were two frameworks to consider: The first for fisheries that were "new and exploratory" and another one for "research cruises". The MoP ENDORSED the SC's recommendations that separate frameworks and processes would be needed for each and that both frameworks should apply to all gears for any fishery falling under SIOFA's

- competence.
96. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 96 of the SC9 report and NOTED that, in order to sustainably manage fish stocks and protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs), the frameworks should consider the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas (FAO, 2009).
 97. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 97 of the SC9 report that the framework for exploratory fisheries given in Annex G.1 for “new and exploratory” fisheries (hereinafter referred to as “exploratory fisheries”) be used.
 98. CCPs discussed the terms “new fisheries” and “exploratory fisheries” and it was noted that there could be a distinction where new fisheries are those that have never taken place and exploratory fisheries are those that have taken place in the past but there are no longer reliable data to inform their management and they should fall under an exploratory framework before expanding to a full-fledged commercial fishery.
 99. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 98 of the SC9 report. The MoP AGREED to require that a Fisheries Operation Plan (FOP) be submitted to the SC, that the SC assess and provide recommendations on the FOP to the MoP, and that the FOP be in the format of the template given in Annex G.2. The MoP NOTED that this would ensure the appropriate information was supplied, would enable comparisons between FOPs, and would ensure fair evaluation of each FOP.
 100. The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 99 of the SC9 report that the FOP include a data collection and analysis plan (DCAP) describing the scientific information and analysis that are planned as a part of the exploratory fisheries proposal.
 101. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 100 of the SC9 report and:
 - a. AGREED to require FOPs to be submitted to the annual meeting of the SC for assessment.
 - b. AGREED to request the SC to review each FOP, including the DCAP, and the data and reports from relevant ongoing or completed new and exploratory fisheries, and provide advice and recommendations to the MoP.
 - c. ENDORSED the SC recommendation that the evaluation criteria in Annex G.3 of the SC9 report be used by the SC to assess the FOP and provide advice to the MoP on if the FOP is acceptable, requires modifications, or is not acceptable.
 - d. NOTED that the FOP should cover a maximum period of three years, but could be rolled over a maximum of two times, pending assessment by the SC and approval by the MoP at each roll over.
 - e. NOTED that once a FOP expires after 9 years, if the SC has not provided advice to the MoP on how to progress the fishery to a fully commercial operation (thereby being recognised as an established fishery), a new FOP should be submitted to the SC for assessment.
 - f. AGREED that the proponents of the exploratory fishery be required to submit annual updates of catch, effort and research work annually to the SC.
 102. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 101 of the SC9 report. The MoP NOTED that the SC would review the annual updates against progress on the FOP and AGREED that a final “Exploratory Fishing Report” should be provided to the SC at the completion of each 3-year cycle to the SC’s next meeting after completion of the exploratory fishing activities.
 103. The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 102 of the SC9 report that any exploratory fisheries where fishing gear could touch the seabed should not take place

in any established BPA.

5.2.6 Framework for research cruises in SIOFA area

104. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 104 of the SC9 report, and the MoP AGREED to define research cruises 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. The MoP AGREED to consider developing a more comprehensive definition of research cruises when the MoP develops a specific research cruise CMM.**
105. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 105 of the SC9 report that the MoP develop a specific “research cruise CMM” that is separate from the process that is proposed for exploratory fisheries. The MoP NOTED that this would ensure that these activities are appropriately sanctioned prior to the activity being undertaken and subsequently reported and AGREED that this process should ensure that:**
 - a. **all research cruises require SIOFA authorisation.**
 - b. **a research cruise plan is submitted to the SIOFA SC and that the SC assess and provide recommendations on the plan to the MoP, prior to the cruise being conducted.**
 - c. **the MoP considers the recommendations of the SC and the MoP authorises the cruise.**
 - d. **the data are submitted to the Secretariat within 9 months of the end of the cruise.**
 - e. **the results of the research cruise are reported to the SC and the MoP.**
 - f. **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 to and accepted by the next SC or within 1 year of completing the cruise.**
106. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 393 of the SC9 report to consider the type of fishing gear, the areas proposed to be fished, potential benthic impacts, the species proposed to be caught and the amount of catch proposed to be taken before approving the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen research cruise.**
107. **The FAO DSF Project presented MoP-11-27 rev1, which detailed the plans for a research cruise by the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen in the Agreement Area. The FAO summarised the proposed activities, the impact assessment, and the potential benefits to SIOFA, and sought the approval of the MoP for the research cruise plan.**
108. **The MoP NOTED the potential benefits of the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen research cruise and AGREED to approve the cruise plan, with the following conditions:**
 - a. **The Nansen Programme provides all the data gathered from this cruise to the SIOFA Secretariat within 9 months of the cruise end date.**
 - b. **That all Nansen Programme publications (including cruise reports and popular articles) and data that would be put in the public domain emanating from the research cruise must be approved by the SC or an SC advisory panel under the SIOFA data rules.**
 - c. **SC10 reviews and approves the specific scientific work, and the SC is given the opportunity to provide commentary on the work and specific tasks that are proposed in the cruise plan.**
 - d. **CCPs have opportunities to participate in the proposed work and CCP staff are given capacity building opportunities.**
109. **The MoP NOTED that the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen has conducted research cruises in the**

Agreement Area in the past, REQUESTED that the Nansen Programme share data and key reports arising from these past research cruises, and TASKED the SC to review these data and reports.

110. **The MoP RECOMMENDED that the data to be provided by the Nansen Programme follows the reporting standards established in CMM 02(2023) to the extent possible.**
111. The FAO thanked the MoP for approving the research cruise and expressed its commitment to present an updated research plan with further details based on the points raised by the MoP.
112. One of the CCPs raised concern on the proposed discards at sea of the catch emanating from the research cruise and suggested that all measures be taken to reduce or avoid any discards in line with the sustainable use of marine resources.
113. It was clarified that the vessel, like most research vessels, does not have the storage capacity to retain fish and attempts will be made to use a commercial vessel to catch the fish when mark-ID tows are undertaken.
114. **The MoP NOTED that SIOFA currently does not have a measure addressing discards at sea and NOTED that consideration could be given to the establishment of such a measure in future if needed. The MoP NOTED that there would be value in the SC providing advice on the extent of discarding in SIOFA and the impacts of restrictions on this practice.**
115. China presented MoP-11-31, which outlined a draft plan for a Chinese research cruise in the 2024–2025 survey year. China explained that it intends to engage in scientific research on SIOFA-managed species to better understand the associated ecosystem and marine environment. Based on its 2023 high seas resource survey, China will continue to conduct scientific surveys in the SIOFA Area from October 2024 to March 2025 in the area of 9°S-10°N and 59°E-68°E. The purpose of the survey is to obtain preliminary scientific data on the species composition and quantity distribution of swimming organisms, plankton, fish eggs, and juvenile fish; grasp physical marine environmental features; and analyse the components of the pelagic marine ecosystems.
116. In response to a question from the MoP, China confirmed that it will submit the data for SIOFA species from its planned research cruise to the SC. China explained that when doing so, it will follow the data reporting formats in Annex A and B of CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) for longline and trawl gears but not for squid jigging gear, as there are currently no data submission forms for squid jigging. China reiterated its intention to provide squid jigging data submission templates to SC10.

5.2.7 Stock assessments and advice

5.2.7.1 Orange Roughy

117. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 153 of the SC9 report and NOTED that there was no new information that necessitated any change to the SC's previous advice based on the stock assessment from SC7.**
118. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 159 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the current two-stock approach should be the default assumed stock structure for updating the biological parameters and conducting the next stock assessment for orange roughy in 2025.**
119. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 165 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC has no additional management advice on orange roughy.**

5.2.7.2 Alfonsino

120. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 170 of the SC9 report and NOTED that there was no new information that necessitated any change to the SC's previous**

advice based on the most recent stock assessment at SC5.

121. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 182 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the eastern and western areas should be treated as separate stocks of alfonsino assessment until further information is received.

5.2.7.3 Toothfish

122. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 209 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the trend analysis should be used for setting the respective catch limits for the data-limited toothfish management areas of Del Cano Rise (DC) and the South Indian Ridge (SIR).
123. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 210 of the SC9 report and NOTED that in the absence of a catch limit, the average 5 years' catch was used as the starting point for the SIOFA trend analysis in accordance with the interim harvest control rules endorsed by MoP10.
124. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 211 of the SC9 report and NOTED that catch limit advice had been provided for SIR and ENDORSED the recommendation that the SIR management area should be the area bounded by the box defined in Table 4 defined below, with a catch limit of 78 t in 2025 based on the SIOFA trend analysis. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 15(2023) (Management of Demersal Stocks) under agenda item 9.2.
125. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 212 of the SC9 report and NOTED that catch limit advice had been provided for DC and ENDORSED the recommendation of a catch limit of 44 t in 2025 based on the SIOFA trend analysis. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 15(2023) (Management of Demersal Stocks) under agenda item 9.2.

5.2.7.4 Oilfish

126. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 224 of the SC9 report and NOTED that there was no new information for oilfish and escolar that necessitated any change to the SC's previous advice made on the basis of the characterisation at SC8.

5.2.7.5 Other species

127. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 328 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC would consider the data submission forms for squid jigging vessel logbooks and observer logbooks at its next meeting.

5.2.8 Harvest Strategies

128. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 131 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC has considered the potential management objectives and performance indicators for orange roughy that were drafted by the WS2023-HSMO and further refined the performance indicators as described in Annex H of the SC9 Report.
129. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 135 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the development of breakout rules would be a key part of the development of harvest strategies, and that criteria would be developed as part of this process.
130. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 138 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC has considered the potential management objectives and performance indicators for toothfish that were drafted by the WS2023-HSMO and further refined them as described in Annex I of the SC9 Report.
131. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 147 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC had updated the timeline for harvest strategy development by adding the implementation status of each task, as described in Annex K of the SC9 report).

5.2.9 Bycatch and Incidental captures

132. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 251 of the SC9 report regarding updating the list of species at high risk and of concern in Annex 1 of CMM 12(2023) (Sharks) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.2.
133. The MoP ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraphs 260-262 of the SC9 report and NOTED the upcoming trial on the impact of using alternative trace types on the bycatch rate of sharks and target species.
134. The MoP thanked the EU for conducting the trial.
135. In response to a question from the MoP, the EU confirmed that it expects to be able to present the results of the trial to SC10.
136. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 265 of the SC9 report and NOTED the declining trend in nominal CPUE for *Dalatias licha* and *Deania calceus*.
137. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 280 of the SC9 report and NOTED that significant catches of species that are managed by SIOFA but taken as bycatch by fisheries managed by other RFMOs, such as the IOTC, are not reported to SIOFA, as they are only reported to those RFMOs. The MoP TASKED the SC to discuss potential data-sharing and data-reporting mechanisms that would address this issue, while also avoiding the potential issue of double-counting the same information.
138. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 291 of the SC9 report and NOTED that SIOFA demersal and pelagic longline fisheries have implemented a number of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) best practices for mitigating seabird bycatch, but that the updated best practice from ACAP is that the implementation of line-weighting, night-setting, and bird-scaring lines in combination, which is not currently required by SIOFA CMMs, could further improve SIOFA's mitigation measures.
139. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 292 of the SC9 report and NOTED that many ACAP best practices for mitigating seabird bycatch have not been officially implemented in SIOFA trawl fisheries, although many are currently in use by some flag States, and that mandating such practices so that they are more widely used would further improve SIOFA's mitigation measures.

5.2.10 Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems

140. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 306 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC intends to hold discussions on options for recording of VME taxa by line or line segment at a focused session at SC10.
141. The DSCC introduced MoP-11-INFO-19, which followed on from the DSCC paper presented to SC09 (SC-09-INFO-28) on bottom fishing, and protection of VMEs including seamounts. The paper contained a number of recommendations on the protection of VMEs and the protection of seamounts, including the consideration of seagrasses and rhodoliths as VME indicator species, and the protection of Saya de Malha Bank, which is a recognised Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (EBSA). The DSCC also welcomed the SC decision to hold a focused session on VMEs at SC10.

5.2.11 SIOFA Performance Review

142. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 384 of the SC9 report, NOTED the summary of SC progress on the recommendations of the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2023 that were adopted at MoP10 (Annex P, SC9 Report), and held further discussions under agenda item 12.1.2.

5.3 Report of the Joint MoP and SC Intersessional Workshops

5.3.1 1st Workshop to Define Harvest Strategy Management Objectives (WS2023-HSMO)

143. The SC Chairperson explained that the 1st Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development

of Harvest Strategies Management Objectives (WS2023-HSMO) was held on 7–8 November 2023 and that these outcomes were discussed further and built upon at SC9, and then fed into the 2nd Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies (WS2024-HSS).

5.3.2 2nd Workshop on Harvest Strategy Development (WS2024-HSS)

144. The SC Chairperson presented a summary of the Conveners report for the WS2024-HSS, which was held on 29 June 2024. The WS2024-HSS Conveners report is available as MoP-11-33.
145. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 13 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report regarding the usefulness of paper WSHSPA-2023-01 for tracking SIOFA's progress in developing harvest strategies and TASKED the Secretariat to regularly update this information and present it to future meetings and workshops where harvest strategies are to be discussed.**
146. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 20 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report that the management strategy evaluation (MSE) initially evaluate alternative sensitivity choices of 50-60-70% probability of being at or above a target reference point (TRP) of 30-40-50% B₀ for orange roughy.**
147. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 21 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report and ADOPTED the management objectives and performance indicators for orange roughy (Annex N).**
148. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 24 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report that the MSE initially evaluate alternative sensitivity choices of 50-60-70% probability of being at or above a TRP of 40-50-60% B₀ for toothfish.**
149. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 25 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report and ADOPTED the management objectives and performance indicators for toothfish (Annex O).**
150. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 26 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report and TASKED the SC to provide advice on determining a total allowable catch (TAC) for toothfish and on determining a TAC and/or total allowable effort (TAE) for orange roughy, as well as potential provisions to allow a degree of flexibility, such as allowable unders/overs/carry-overs, or multi-year limits.**
151. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 27 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report and TASKED the SC to consider how effort management and effort creep would be included in the MSE for orange roughy.**
152. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 28 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report that the MoP develop a framework for deciding allocations based on catch history, among other factors, and to advance this work in parallel with the development of harvest strategies.**
153. The MoP welcomed the offer from the Cook Islands to develop a paper, in collaboration with other CCPs, for MoP12 to help advance work to develop an allocation framework in SIOFA.
154. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 31 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report and NOTED that the Workshop reaffirmed that harvest strategy development work should first focus on toothfish and orange roughy, and that harvest strategies for alfonsino and other SIOFA species could be developed thereafter, as was agreed by MoP10 and SC9.**
155. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 34 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report and NOTED the updated harvest strategy development timeline (Annex D, WS2024-HSS Conveners report).**

156. The EU welcomed the progress that SIOFA has made towards the development of harvest strategies, including the recently held WS2024-HSS, which yielded productive discussions among scientists and managers. The EU noted that according to SIOFA's timeline for harvest strategy development, the SC is expected to propose the first finalised harvest strategies to the MoP in 2026 and, if these are adopted, they would be used by the SC for the formulation of scientific advice in 2027. The EU urged CCPs to maintain the current pace of work in order to maintain the ambitious timeline that SIOFA has set itself. The EU also welcomed the progress made towards establishing a SIOFA VMS, noting that harvest strategies, when combined with effective control tools such as a VMS, have been proven to be successful in producing optimal yields and preventing overfishing. The EU further noted the need to give due consideration to and explicitly state potential uncertainties in harvest strategies to ensure that managers understand the consequences thereof. The EU emphasised that harvest strategies should set binding advice that should then be followed by managers.

5.4 Presentation of the new EU-Grant Projects

157. The Science Officer explained that the Secretariat, working together with the SC and its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, has been successful in applying for an EU funding opportunity to support SIOFA's harvest strategy development work, which comprises three components: development of a SIOFA Precautionary Approach Framework, research on biological reference points, and the development of harvest strategies for key SIOFA fish stocks. He informed the MoP that, as the next step, the Secretariat and the SC Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons will draft terms of reference for consultancies to advance this work.
158. The MoP thanked the EU for providing significant funding for conducting this important work.

5.5 Scientific Committee workplan and budget

159. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 406, subparagraph c, that the MoP makes funding available for the climate change-related work in the SC workplan from 2025.**
160. The Science Officer presented the draft SC workplan for 2024–2028, along with project priority scores assigned by CCPs.
161. The MoP reviewed and revised the draft SC workplan. In particular:
- a. **The MoP TASKED the workshop “to progress future protected area designation” (WS2024-PAD) to evaluate existing and interim BPAs within SIOFA and provide advice to the SC9 and MoP12 on their application as effective spatial management tools and for providing clarity for BPA adoption within SIOFA benthic management framework.**
 - b. **The MoP AGREED, in light of the proposed research cruise of the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen to undertake the survey in question, that the alfonsino acoustic project ALF-2024-01, as indicated in Table 5, would be deferred to a later stage.**
162. Australia informed the MoP that it intends to submit a paper on the observed and projected impacts of climate change and the practices of other RFMOs to SC10.
163. China suggested that the SC devote greater effort to pelagic fisheries in its future work for the purpose of the long-term conservation and utilisation of fisheries resources covered by SIOFA. The recognised fisheries could be updated based on future scientific data and stock assessments.
164. **The MoP ENDORSED the SC Workplan as outlined in MoP-11-06 rev1.**
165. The EU noted the ambitious SC workplan for the coming year and relatively short

duration of the upcoming SC meeting. The EU encouraged CCPs to participate to the maximum extent possible in the SC's intersessional work so as to be able to deliver on this workplan. Furthermore, the EU suggested that the SC focus on projects for which funding has already been secured, over projects for which funding still needs to be obtained. The EU also encouraged CCPs that are not developing states to consider making greater financial contributions to scientific work that supports their fisheries.

166. In response to the EU's comment regarding CCPs making financial contributions to scientific work, Japan stated its view that research on alfonso and orange roughy is of fundamental importance to SIOFA and should therefore be duly covered by the SIOFA budget.

5.6 Other recommendations for the attention of the MoP11

167. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 69 of the SC9 report and NOTED the revised guidelines for the Submission of Annual National Reports given in SC-09-INFO-10 Rev1 and available on the SIOFA website.**
168. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 120 of the SC9 report that the MoP consider whether paragraph 2c of CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality) should be updated in light of the fact that the SIOFA Bottom Fishing Footprint has now been adopted and held further discussions under agenda item 7.3. The MoP encouraged CCPs to take this into consideration when considering potential amendments to CMM 03(2016) in the future.**
169. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 310 of the SC9 report that the MoP consider whether it would be appropriate to forward any SIOFA spatial management measures to the World Database on Protected Areas and the World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures or take any other related conservation measures. The MoP NOTED that SIOFA currently has few such spatial management measures in place and that it would be more appropriate for the MoP to consider the actions recommended by the SC further into the future.**
170. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 406, subparagraphs a and b of the SC9 report that the MoP adopts climate change as a standing item on its agenda and identifies what advice it would like from the SC on the potential implications of climate change.**
171. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 419 of the SC9 report regarding the dates and duration of the next SC meeting and held further discussions under agenda item 17.**
172. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 420 of the SC9 report regarding the location of the next SC meeting, NOTED that France Territories has since offered to host the meeting, and held further discussions under agenda item 17.**
173. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 426 of the SC9 report regarding the offer from SIOFA to share information related to deep-sea fisheries in the Southern Indian Ocean dating back to 1999 and held further discussions under agenda item 16.**
174. **The MoP NOTED that one of the SC Vice-Chairperson positions remained open and held further discussions under agenda item 15.1.**
175. **The MoP NOTED the recommendations in paragraphs 429-430 of the SC9 report to amend the RoP to add a deadline for the submission of working papers to the SC and a deadline for the submission of information papers to the SC, NOTED that the proposed amendments should be made to the SC Terms of Reference rather than the SIOFA RoP, and held further discussions under agenda item 11.**
176. **Following its review, the MoP ADOPTED the report of the 9th meeting of the Scientific**

Committee.

177. The MoP recalled that during the CC, concerns were raised about the Secretariat submitting proposals arising from SC recommendations, noting that this was not the role of the Secretariat. **The MoP AGREED that the SC can provide advice to the CC and MoP on new CMMs or CMM amendments and TASKED the SC to incorporate any recommendations relating to new CMMs or suggested changes to existing CMMs in an Annex to the SC report titled “SC recommendations on CMMs for consideration by the CC and MoP” to more clearly communicate these recommendations to the CC and MoP and enable the CC and MoP to act upon those recommendations at their respective meetings.**
178. **The MoP NOTED that in its review of the SC8 report at MoP10, the MoP had not made a formal decision regarding the recommendation in paragraph 118 of the SC8 report, and AGREED to revisit paragraph 118 of the SC8 report at this meeting. The MoP NOTED that SC8 had reviewed the SIOFA standard operating procedure for data use and data requests and proposed amendments to it, as outlined in Annex E of the SC8 report, to address instances where a data owner is not a CCP. The MoP NOTED the SC8 suggestion that the same process be followed for non-CCPs, and ADOPTED the proposed amendments.**
179. The MoP expressed its appreciation for the leadership of the SC Chairperson and offered its thanks for the large amount and high quality of work produced by the SC.
180. The SC Chairperson expressed his gratitude to CCPs for their active engagement and cooperation in the SC’s work, as well as to the Science Officer for his dedicated support.

Agenda item 6 – New fisheries

6.1 Summary presentation of the new and exploratory fisheries to be undertaken by CCPs

181. The Data Officer presented MoP-11-40, which provided a summary of the new and exploratory fisheries intended to be undertaken by CCPs. He explained that following MoP10, several CCPs registered new vessels on the SIOFA RAV to undertake new fishing operations in the Agreement Area and that the information in the paper was mainly compiled based on these new registrations. The fisheries in question are midwater trawl fishing by the KLONDYKE 139 (flagged to Mauritius), lobster traps by RINASCENTE NO.9 (flagged to Comoros) and squid jigging by HONG RUN 27 and HONG RUN 76 (flagged to China).
182. China stated that its squid jigging fishery is a traditional fishery. China explained that it has historically conducted a squid jigging fishery in the Agreement Area and that it had merely temporarily stopped conducting this fishery in recent years. China stated that it will submit historical data from this fishery to SC10.
183. The EU expressed concern regarding Comoros lobster trap fishery. The EU stated that before conducting this fishery, Comoros must first conduct a bottom fishing impact assessment (BFIA), present this assessment to the SC for the SC’s review and recommendations to the MoP, and only conduct the fishery after it has been approved by the MoP.
184. The EU noted that in the initial version of the paper (MoP-11-INFO-09), the Seychelles’ sea cucumber diving fishery had been included, but that this had subsequently been removed as the fishery was understood to be a fishery for sedentary species that was only taking place within the Seychelles-Mauritius Joint Management Area (JMA). The EU noted that any sea cucumber fishery conducted in the high seas portion of the SIOFA Area outside the JMA would be considered a SIOFA fishery.

- 185. The Seychelles confirmed that its sea cucumber diving fishery is confined to the JMA.
- 186. In response to a question from Mauritius, the Data Officer confirmed that Mauritius' midwater trawl fishery is not a new fishery in SIOFA, but rather a new fishery for Mauritius.

Agenda item 7 – Data access and dissemination

7.1 Summary report on the data submission (31 May 2023)

- 187. The Data Officer presented MoP-11-INFO-05 regarding the data submitted by CCPs in 2023 (for 2022 fishing activities) according to the requirements of CMM 02(2022) (Data Standards) (now CMM 02(2023)).
- 188. Regarding its catch and effort data submission, Japan informed the MoP that it has instructed its vessels to use the FAO species codes, as appropriate, going forward. Regarding its observer data submission, Japan acknowledged that it had not reported information on the observation of seabird abundance but reminded the MoP that the reporting of observer data for seabirds is not mandatory. Nevertheless, Japan expressed its intention to endeavour to report such data going forward.
- 189. Thailand acknowledged that it had reported some observer data without using the FAO species code but clarified that these data concerned species for which there is no FAO code.
- 190. CCPs discussed the footnote in the paper that stated “it is not mandatory to have observers on the non-bottom fishing vessels”. The MoP noted that the footnote was incorrect. At the instruction of the MoP, the Secretariat presented a revised paper with the footnote removed (MoP-11-INFO-05 rev1).

7.2 Data and security audits implementation update

- 191. The Data Officer presented a summary of the data and security audit recommendations endorsed by the MoP and provided an update on the implementation status of each recommendation. In 2024, most of the recommendations have been considered and implemented. However, a few items are still in progress or partially implemented, and a few of them require action on the part of the MoP and its subsidiary bodies.
- 192. The Cook Islands emphasised that recommendation D1, on the public presentation of data at a certain level of aggregation (temporal and spatial) by CCP and by species irrespective of the number of vessels involved, related to catch and effort data, not position data. The Cook Islands emphasised that the position data of its trawl fishery is commercially sensitive and should not be presented publicly.
- 193. The MoP welcomed the offer from France Territories to work intersessionally, with other CCPs, to develop a proposal to amend CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality), taking into account recommendations D1 and D2, the adoption of the SIOFA Bottom Fishing Footprint, and the concerns expressed by the Cook Islands regarding maintaining the confidentiality of vessel position data.
- 194. **To facilitate its consideration of recommendation D4, the MoP TASKED the Secretariat to prepare a paper describing the data required to be collected by CCPs, the data required to be reported to the Secretariat, and the differences between the two types of data.**
- 195. The Data Officer explained that CMM 02(2023) and its annexes specify the data to be collected, that all data collected under these annexes should be reported to the Secretariat, and that CCPs can collect other data outside of those requirements.
- 196. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to develop Terms of Reference for a consultancy for the development of the SIOFA Information System Security Policy (ISSP) that would be**

presented to CC9 for the CC to review and provide recommendations on to the MoP.

197. The MoP reviewed and updated the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the data and security audits (MoP-11-16 rev1).

7.3 Discussion on public data definition and limitation, recommendation from SC9

198. The SC Chairperson explained that the SC had discussed the potential need to update paragraph 2c) of CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality) in light of the adoption of the SIOFA Bottom Fishing Footprint.
199. The MoP encouraged CCPs to take this into account when considering potential amendments to CMM 03(2016).

Agenda item 8 – Interim bottom fishing measures

8.1 States or fishing entities that became CCPs before the MOP in 2017 – revision to measures established under paragraph 10 of CMM 01 (2023)

8.2 States or fishing entities that became CCPs after the MOP in 2017 – approval of measures pursuant to paragraph 28 of CMM 01 (2023)

200. **The MoP NOTED that no interim bottom fishing measures were submitted under agenda items 8.1 and 8.2.**
201. DOALOS informed the MoP that the United Nations General Assembly regularly reviews the actions taken by States and RFMOs in response to the relevant paragraphs of resolutions 64/72, 66/68, and 71/123 related to bottom fishing. In this context, a workshop was held in 2022 on the impacts of bottom fisheries on VMEs and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks, in which participants emphasised the significant roles of States, RFMOs, and the FAO in addressing these issues. The outcomes of the workshop and further information are available on the DOALOS website.
202. The DSCC welcomed SIOFA's progress on the management of bottom fishing, interim measures, and the bottom fishing footprint, and looked forward to the development of a more comprehensive conservation measure to protect VMEs from significant adverse impacts. The DSCC noted that the recent Advisory Opinion on climate change from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) highlighted the protection and preservation of rare or fragile ecosystems and the habitats of depleted, threatened, or endangered species as an obligation of due diligence, and the importance of applying the precautionary approach, the ecosystem approach, and obligations of cooperation in the protection of the marine environment. The DSCC looked forward to discussions in the SC focused session on VMEs to develop further measures to protect VMEs including seamounts and other vulnerable features, including seagrass and rhodolith beds.
203. Mauritius and Seychelles, representing the Joint Commission for the Mauritius-Seychelles JMA provided a statement which stated that, under Article 77 of UNCLOS, they have joint sovereign rights for exploring and exploiting natural resources on the seabed of the JMA, including sedentary species. Mauritius and Seychelles conveyed their strong opposition to bottom trawl fishing by third parties in the JMA, in line with the precautionary approach, as such fishing directly impacts the sedentary organisms in the sensitive marine ecosystems in the JMA.
204. The EU and Thailand noted that Article 78 of UNCLOS states: "The rights of the coastal State over the continental shelf do not affect the legal status of the superjacent waters. The exercise of the rights of the coastal State over the continental shelf must not infringe or result in any unjustifiable interference with ... rights and freedoms of other States." Therefore, claims of rights to permit or impose unilateral measures prohibiting bottom

fishing over the Saya de Malha Bank by Mauritius and the Seychelles would affect the legal status of the superjacent water and interfere with the right to fish on the high seas. The legitimate exercise of rights over the extended continental shelf should not preclude the legitimate right of SIOFA CCPs to access the high seas of the SIOFA Area in accordance with the established measures and that SIOFA has the mandate to manage fisheries in this area.

205. Seychelles reiterated the concerns expressed by Mauritius and Seychelles at the last MoP regarding the adverse impact of bottom trawl fishing on the ecology and marine biodiversity of Saya de Malha Bank. Seychelles expressed concern that the MoP did not agree to immediately cease bottom trawling fishing on the Saya de Malha Bank as a precautionary measure pending full evaluation of the situation. Seychelles reminded the MoP that as recorded in paragraph 147 of the MoP8 report, the MoP requested the SC to conduct further studies on the ecology of the Saya de Malha Bank and the potential impact of bottom trawling fisheries on its ecosystem as part of the planned study of the Saya de Malha Bank in the SC workplan. Seychelles requested that these studies be urgently completed under the provisions of the JMA's Marine Scientific Research Code and necessary action be taken promptly in order to avoid further damage by bottom trawling fishing. Seychelles reiterated its appeal for a ban on bottom trawling in the Saya de Malha Bank on behalf of the Joint Commission.
206. Thailand expressed its disagreement with the assertion by Mauritius and Seychelles and stated that in the Agreement, Article 1 clearly defines the fishery resources within the Agreement Area as covering fish, molluscs, crustaceans and other sedentary species, Article 2 stipulates that the objectives of SIOFA are to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Agreement Area, Article 3 clearly prescribes the Agreement area of application that the Agreement is legally binding to all SIOFA CCPs, and Article 4 addresses the principles of the Agreement in giving effect to the duty to cooperate in accordance with the 1982 Convention and international laws and stipulates that CCPs shall apply measures that shall be adopted on the basis of scientific evidence. Many scientific and management activities have been conducted under the umbrella of SIOFA for promoting the sustainable use of SIOFA fishery resources and bottom fishing operations in the Agreement Area have been carried out in compliance with the SIOFA CMMs. Thailand urged Mauritius and Seychelles, as well as the Joint Commission, to recognise and engage in the crucial roles and activities under the legal framework of SIOFA in the conservation and management of fisheries resources under SIOFA's competence in the Agreement Area.
207. The SC Chairperson drew the MoP's attention to the discussions and work conducted by the SC in relation to the Saya de Malha Bank, specifically paper SERAWG-04-10, which is a scoping study on the Saya de Malha Bank conducted by MRAG, and paragraph 172 of the SC7 report in which the SC "requested that the MoP note that, in order to better understand the bottom trawl fisheries interactions with VME species, SIOFA should prioritise efforts to document species and fisheries effort distributions more precisely both historically and in future. This would serve to improve confidence in the assessment of impacts from ongoing fisheries and allow for evidence-based management decision-making and the formulation and implementation of appropriate management actions if required."
208. The MoP noted that SIOFA has conducted work to better understand the ecosystems and the situation on the Saya de Malha Bank and that the upcoming workshops on protected areas will offer an opportunity to discuss this topic and encouraged all CCPs to engage in

those discussions.

209. Mauritius emphasised the importance of applying the precautionary approach to prevent the potential negative impacts of bottom trawling on the Saya de Malha Bank, especially since it has a high species richness of benthic invertebrates dominated by small-sized organisms and potential for discovery of new species as reported by the Monaco Exploration research cruise conducted in the area, as stated under agenda item 10.3 of the SC8 report.
210. The DSCC reminded the MoP of previous documents it has submitted to SIOFA related to the Saya de Malha Bank, specifically “Report on the Ecology of the Saya de Malha Bank and Current Threats to Its Marine Biodiversity” (MoP-08-INFO-09) and “Further action needed to protect VMEs, including all Seamounts” (SC-09-INFO-28). The DSCC reiterated that the Saya de Malha Bank has been recognised by the Convention on Biological Diversity as an Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area (EBSA) and that the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction, as well as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Leaders’ Pledge for Nature, recognise the importance of the protection of biological diversity.

Agenda item 9 – Review and amendment of Conservation Management Measures (CMMs) currently in force

9.1 Review of CMM 07 (2022) and CMM 03 (2016) regarding publicly available information of the SIOFA record of authorized vessels

211. The EU and France Territories presented MoP-11-25 rev3, a proposal to amend CMM 07(2022) (Vessel Authorisation) that was also discussed at CC8 and forwarded by the CC to the MoP for its consideration.
212. **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 07(2022) (Vessel Authorisation) (Annex P).**

9.2 Review of other CMMs

213. The EU presented MoP-11-24 rev1, which proposed amendments to CMM 01(2023) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) to reflect progress made by SIOFA in recent years concerning bottom fishing issues, to address some inconsistencies in the CMM, and to take into account the possible introduction of a new framework to govern the undertaking and management of new and exploratory fisheries in the SIOFA Area, which is the subject of a separate proposal (MoP-11-23 rev3). The EU explained that the proposed amendments were also presented at CC8, that the CC endorsed all of the proposed amendments apart from those that concern the possible introduction of a new framework for new and exploratory fisheries, as the framework is still under discussion, and put them in square brackets, and that the CC recommended that the MoP hold further discussions on the sections in square brackets.
214. The MoP reviewed the proposal and finalised the sections in square brackets with slight modifications (MoP-11-24 rev2). **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 01(2023) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) (Annex Q).**
215. The Secretariat presented MoP-11-19, which reflected technical edits to Annex 1 of CMM 12(2023) (Sharks) that were recommended by SC9. Specifically, the edits entailed a change in the name and FAO species code for one species and the addition of FAO species codes for two other species.
216. **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to Annex 1 of CMM 12(2023) (Sharks) (Annex R).**
217. **The MoP reviewed CMM 06 (2022) (IUU Vessel List) and ADOPTED the amendment proposed in paragraph 54 of the CC8 report, with some additional editorial revisions**

(Annex M).

218. **The MoP reviewed CMM 15 (2023) (Management of Demersal Stocks) and ADOPTED amendments to reflect the recommendation in paragraph 212 of the SC9 report and the amendments proposed in paragraph 52 of the CC8 report (Annex L).**
219. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to make any necessary technical edits arising from the deletion of paragraph 26 of CMM 15(2023) and renumbering of subsequent paragraphs in the CMM, including cross-references to CMM 15.**
220. The MoP considered the recommendations in paragraph 211 of the SC9 report regarding the proposed establishment of the SIR management area and the proposed catch limit for the SIR but could not reach consensus on adopting these recommendations and incorporating them in CMM 15(2023). Some CCPs supported the establishment of the SIR management area and the proposed catch limit, but believed that further discussion on the allocation mechanism is required. These CCPs suggested that the MoP could use a reporting mechanism to closely track catches in the SIR management area and ensure that they do not exceed the catch limit. There was no consensus for the establishment of the SIR management area, the proposed catch limit, and associated allocation mechanism. One CCP noted that the establishment of the SIR management area without an allocation mechanism would result in the establishment of an Olympic fishery, which it considered to be inappropriate and beyond the management capacity of SIOFA.
221. **The MoP did not reach agreement on the establishment of the SIR management area and catch limit for the area. The MoP AGREED to discuss the development of an allocation mechanism in the intersessional period and at MoP12.**
222. The USA welcomed the advice from the SC on establishing the SIR management area and catch limits for the area, and hoped that CCPs would continue to work together to bring the area under management and identify the best way forward.
223. The DSCC expressed concern that unconstrained toothfish fishing could continue to take place in the coming year without catch limits for toothfish and associated shark bycatch, and area controls in the South Indian Ocean Ridge Area and urged all CCPs to ensure catches stay within the limits proposed by the SC within this area.
224. The MoP recalled the intersessional work led by Australia related to the SIOFA Performance Review Panel's recommendations on SIOFA's port inspection scheme and CMM 08(2020) (Port Inspection), as summarised in MoP-11-28 and discussed at CC8. The MoP looked forward to the CC's continued intersessional discussions on how to move forward with the Performance Review Panel's recommendation and welcomed Australia's offer to continue to lead these discussions.

Agenda item 10 – New Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs)

225. The EU presented MoP-11-23 rev3, which proposed a framework to govern the undertaking and management of new and exploratory fisheries in the SIOFA Area based on the precautionary approach. The EU explained that the proposed framework was also presented at CC8 and that it builds on previous work of the SC and the MoP and discussions among CCPs.
226. **The MoP reviewed the proposed framework and ADOPTED the Conservation and Management Measure for New and Exploratory Fisheries in the Agreement Area (CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries)) (Annex S).**
227. **The MoP AGREED that CCPs may participate in the established fisheries in the SIOFA Area listed in Annex 1 of the new CMM, provided said fishery is not a bottom fishery, the CCP uses the same gears as have been used in the established fishery, and the CCP's fishing activity operates in the same area, not exceeding the area of the**

established fishery.

228. **The MoP TASKED the SC to review the information in Annex 1 of the new CMM at SC10.**
229. The DSCC welcomed the proposal by the EU and noted that the absence of such a measure in the Agreement Area has been a major omission in the suite of measures expected of an RFMO.
230. The Cook Islands presented MoP-11-29 rev2, which proposed the development of additional BPAs by formalising the voluntary closures that are applied by the Cook Islands to its fishing vessels and making these closures applicable to all fishing vessels operating bottom fishing gears in the waters of the SIOFA Area, with the exception of the Southern Indian Ridge, where only bottom trawl fishing will be prohibited. The Cook Islands explained that the proposal was also presented and reviewed at CC8.
231. CCPs welcomed the proposal and expressed general support for moving this important work forward, but believed that many elements of the proposal should first be discussed and reviewed by the SC. They also noted that the proposed workshops on marine protected areas (MPAs) could facilitate further review of the proposed BPAs.
232. **The MoP AGREED to forward MOP11-29 rev2 to SC10 to evaluate the voluntary and interim BPAs, outlined in the proposal, that are implemented within the Agreement Area for the SC's advice on their application as effective spatial management tools and for providing advice to the MoP on their adoption as part of SIOFAs benthic management framework.**
233. The Cook Islands expressed appreciation for CCPs' consideration and constructive input on the proposal. The Cook Islands expressed its continued commitment to ensuring that SIOFA remains proactive in implementing effective BPAs and noted that through the SC, and planned dedicated workshops, activities relating to this will continue to be progressed over the next year.
234. SIODFA expressed support for the Cook Islands proposal and informed the MoP that all members of SIODFA have treated the areas in question as protected areas for over 20 years as part of an International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognised world-first industry-led initiative to close fishing areas for benthic protection.
235. The DSCC welcomed the Cook Islands proposal to extend benthic protections in the Agreement Area, and noted that it is an important precautionary measure with support from members of the fishing industry, and looked forward to further discussion of the proposal at the SC.

Agenda item 11 – Review of rules for the submission of documents to the Scientific Committee

11.1 Amendment of Terms of Reference of the Scientific Committee regarding dates for the submission of documents (SC9 report § 429)

236. The SC Chairperson presented proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the SC regarding dates for the submission of documents.
237. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED amendments to the Terms of Reference of the SC regarding dates for the submission of documents as described in MoP-11-44 rev1.**

Agenda item 12 – Secretariat administration

12.1 Report on Secretariat activities (since MoP10)

238. The Executive Secretary presented a report (MoP-11-36 rev2) on staff resources and Secretariat activities prepared in accordance with Rule 8.1(f) and 8.1(g).

239. **The MoP NOTED the report on the Secretariat activities in MoP-11-36 rev2.**
240. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to produce a report whenever the Secretariat attends a meeting of another regional organisation and to provide this to CCPs through a SIOFA Circular.**
241. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to make the SIOFA website meeting pages more user-friendly, including by:**
- a. **adding a function to allow all meeting documents to be downloaded at once.**
 - b. **providing users who have access to restricted/confidential documents only with the full, restricted/confidential file, rather than both the restricted/confidential version and the public domain version.**

12.1.1 Inauguration of the new headquarters of SIOFA

242. The Executive Secretary reminded the MoP that the new SIOFA headquarters were inaugurated on 7th September 2023 in Le Port, La Reunion, with funding by the French State. Further details are provided in MoP-11-INFO-04.
243. The MoP thanked France Territories for providing SIOFA with the new headquarters building and funding the renovation of the building.

12.1.2 Implementation of SIOFA Performance Review recommendations

244. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-11-02 rev2, which provided a summary of the recommendations proposed by the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2023 and adopted at MoP10, including new information that has become available since MoP10. The Executive Secretary invited the MoP to provide further comments as appropriate.
245. The MoP reviewed the implementation plan adopted at MoP10 and added further comments. The updated implementation plan is attached as Annex T.
246. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat with developing a paper on options for facilitating and addressing the capacity building needs of CCP developing states to be considered by the next SC, CC, and MoP meetings. The scope of the paper should encompass a broad range of areas as commented by the SC in relation to recommendation 6 of the SIOFA Performance Review.**
247. **The MoP RECOMMENDED the establishment of a standing agenda item on the implementation of Article 13 of the Agreement. The MoP TASKED the Secretariat, in preparation for the next SC, CC, and MoP meetings, to develop a paper that outlines the existing mechanisms to provide support to developing States and other relevant information relating to Article 13.**

12.2 Financial status

12.2.1 Update on the 2020 fraud

248. The Executive Secretary informed the MoP that China continues to work with the Secretariat to resolve this issue and to recover the funds for its 2019 and 2020 contributions and remit them to SIOFA as soon as possible.
249. The MoP held more detailed discussions of the matter, including the information provided in MoP-11-37, in a closed session.

12.2.2 Financial report

250. The Executive Secretary presented a report on financial resources (MoP-11-38) to the MoP with an overview of the budget position, annual financial statements and any funds held in reserve, in accordance with Regulation 9.1 of the Financial Regulations and Rule 8(1)(f) of the Rules of Procedure.
251. **The MoP NOTED the Report on Financial Resources provided by the Secretariat in MoP-11-38.**

12.2.3 External Auditor report

252. The Executive Secretary presented the Auditor's report (MoP-11-39). The report confirmed that, in all material respects, SIOFA's financial position as at 31 December 2023 and its financial performance for the year then ended are in compliance with SIOFA Financial Regulations.

253. **The MoP NOTED the annual financial statements and the Auditor's report presented in MoP-11-39.**

12.3 SIOFA Budget

12.3.1 Mid-year budget tracking paper with the actual expenditure

254. The Executive Secretary presented the 2024 mid-year budget report (outlined in MoP-11-38).

255. **The MoP NOTED the mid-year budget report provided in MoP-11-38.**

12.3.2 Provisional 2025 budget and 2026 forecast budget

256. The Executive Secretary presented the draft SIOFA 2025 budget in MoP-11-04 rev4. CCPs requested clarifications and modifications to the draft 2024 budget, and the MoP incorporated those changes in the 2025 budget as outlined in Annex U.

257. Information on the 2026 forecast budget is available in MoP-11-04 rev4.

12.3.3 Adoption of the budget

258. **The MoP ADOPTED the 2025 budget (Annex U), in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.7.**

12.4 Staff Regulations

259. The MoP discussed MoP-11-42 in a closed session. The paper described issues that the Secretariat encountered in trying to comply with article 8.1 of the staff regulations, specifically ensuring social security benefits for Secretariat members who are not French citizens, and the solution found to resolve the issues.

12.4.1 Conflict resolution mechanism

260. The EU presented MoP-11-26, which proposed amendments to the SIOFA Staff Regulations to insert a conflict resolution mechanism, thereby providing for the processes to follow to resolve a potential conflict situation between SIOFA staff members, between the Executive Secretary and another staff member, and between the Executive Secretary and the MoP.

261. **The MoP ADOPTED the proposed amendments (Annex V).**

Agenda item 13 - Cooperation with other RFMOs, international bodies and other relevant matters

13.1 Cooperation with CCAMLR and RFMOs

262. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-11-30 rev1, which outlined a request from the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) for access to all vessel data on the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels (RAV), including restricted data, for the purpose of bolstering INTERPOL's efforts to identify, monitor, and tackle IUU fishing activities and associated offenses.

263. Several CCPs expressed support for INTERPOL's determination to tackle IUU fishing activities but expressed concern about providing INTERPOL with the blanket access to the SIOFA RAV that it had requested, noting that the SIOFA RAV contains highly confidential information such as personal data concerning vessel operators.

264. **The MoP DECLINED INTERPOL's request. The MoP AGREED that if INTERPOL wishes to access restricted data on the SIOFA RAV, it should submit ad hoc requests for specific data for specific purposes to the SIOFA Secretariat, using the SIOFA data request form**

detailed in “SIOFA standard operating procedure for data use and data requests”. The Secretariat should then forward this request to the relevant CCP(s) and the CCP(s) can consider whether to share the requested data with INTERPOL for the purpose stated in the data request.

265. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-11-43 rev1, which outlined the plans for members of the Secretariat to attend other organisations’ meetings for 2025.

13.1.1 CCAMLR

266. The Science Officer reported that SIOFA and CCAMLR exchange scientific data, notably tagging data from the two organisations’ respective toothfish tagging programmes.

13.1.2 SEAFO

267. The Secretariat reported that the Science Officer attended the 19th Annual Scientific Committee Meeting of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO), the Compliance Officer attended the 16th Annual SEAFO Compliance Committee Meeting, and the Executive Secretary attended the 20th Annual SEAFO Commission Meeting, virtually.

13.1.3 SWIOFC

268. The Executive Secretary reported that he attended a number of Technical Dialogues linked to the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) and organised by the Nairobi Convention, virtually.

13.1.4 SPRFMO

269. The Science Officer reported that no members of the Secretariat attended the meetings of South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) this year. However, it was discussed at SC that, when the Science Officer is unable to attend the SPRFMO Scientific Committee meetings, members of delegations to the SIOFA SC that also attend the SPRFMO Scientific Committee could take note of any information relevant to the SIOFA and share this with the SIOFA SC.

13.1.5 ACAP

270. The Science Officer reported that he had worked with ACAP to present a paper summarising the seabird bycatch mitigation measures implemented by other RFMOs to SC9.

13.2 Cooperation with FAO

13.2.1 IOTC

271. The Compliance Officer presented an example Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enable collaboration between SIOFA and the IOTC (MoP-11-18 rev1). He explained that following the conclusion of MoP10, the Secretariat engaged with the IOTC Secretariat to conclude a Cooperation Agreement between SIOFA and the IOTC. However, given the IOTC’s legal personality as an Article XIV body of the FAO, the SIOFA Secretariat was informed that the endorsed instrument would need to be vetted and approved by the FAO Legal Office. Following discussions between the IOTC Secretariat and the FAO Legal Office, the FAO proposed pursuing an MoU on the basis of the example provided.

272. The MoP expressed dissatisfaction with the proposal from the IOTC and disappointment with the lack of progress on establishing a framework for cooperation with IOTC, despite SIOFA’s sincere efforts and strong willingness to engage in cooperation. The MoP noted that the proposal had not taken into consideration the MoP’s previously expressed concerns and seemed to be becoming increasingly removed from the MoP’s initial intentions, and, as such, did not warrant further discussion by the MoP at this time. The MoP noted the importance of collaborative activities between SIOFA and the IOTC, such as the sharing of data, and that, in the absence of an established framework, SIOFA and

the IOTC may be able to engage in such collaborative activities based on goodwill and mutual trust.

273. **The MoP REQUESTED that the Executive Secretary prepare a letter on behalf of the MoP, in consultation with the MoP Chairperson and CCPs, to convey the MoP's position to the IOTC Executive Secretary.**

13.2.2 FAO ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project

274. The FAO presented MoP-11-INFO-17, which provided an overview of the DSF Project's recent and upcoming activities relevant to SIOFA. Key achievements include establishing an e-learning course on strengthening DSF management in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), reviewing the implementation of the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas, holding a DSF Technical Forum on the sustainable management of DSF, hosting a webinar on recent developments in DSF and their management in the high seas, holding a DSF Industry workshop with operators of deep-sea trawl and longline fisheries (the report of which is available in MoP-11-INFO-16), and ongoing development of an intuitive, digital, smart deepwater shark ID guide. Proposed activities for 2024–2025 include a 3–4 day workshop providing observer training for SIOFA CCPs, a webinar on the application of the precautionary approach, a symposium on applying the ecosystem approach to fisheries management in ABNJ, and the Nansen research cruise.
275. Several CCPs expressed their support for the work of the DSF Project, particularly the proposed observer training workshop.
276. The EU noted the importance of the work of the DSF Project and suggested that it would be beneficial to further enhance synergies between the DSF Project and the work of SIOFA, particularly with regard to the proposed observer training workshop. The EU suggested that this observer training workshop should take into consideration the outcomes of the planned SIOFA Scientific Observer Form Workshop and the two workshops could perhaps be held back-to-back.
277. The Cook Islands expressed an interest in including genetic sample, sterile protocol sampling techniques, especially using new tools such as biopsy punches, in the observer training workshop.
278. The FAO and the Science Officer invited CCPs to provide any input they may have, such as areas of interest, on the agenda and potential topics for the observer training workshop.
279. The Cook Islands emphasised that SIOFA projects and activities must be accessible to all CCPs to ensure that all CCPs are able to access support and are aligned in their collaboration to enhance and develop fisheries management operational and technical work.
280. The FAO affirmed that the proposed observer training workshop would be open to all CCPs with support made available to all CCPs.

13.2.3 FAO Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RFBSN)

281. The Executive Secretary reported that he attended the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) Committee on Fisheries (COFI), during which participants discussed common challenges faced by regional fishery bodies, such as climate change.

13.2.4 FIRMS

282. The Science Officer reported that he attended the FAO Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) Steering Committee in 2024 virtually and that SIOFA has shared aggregated data with FIRMS to support the FAO State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) Status of Stocks.

Agenda item 14 – Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCPs)

283. The Executive Secretary explained that in accordance with the SIOFA RoP, the Secretariat extended invitations to Somalia, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mozambique, South Africa, Yemen, and Tanzania to participate in the CC8 and MoP11 meetings.

14.1 Renewal of CNCP status

284. The MoP acknowledged that Comoros had written to the Secretariat on 19 April 2024 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-11-15).

285. Comoros expressed its commitment to the MoP that it will not authorise vessels to engage in bottom, including lobster trap, fishing activities until it has prepared a BFIA for these activities and submitted it to the SC, the SC has provided advice that the impact assessment meets the required standard, and the MoP has authorised the proposed bottom fishing activities. Comoros submitted a new letter, dated 3 July 2024 (provided in MoP-11-15 rev1), outlining this commitment, including the removal of its vessel from the SIOFA RAV. Comoros stated that it would submit a BFIA for lobster trap fishing as soon as possible and strongly requested that the MoP consider a process for accelerating the assessment of its BFIA and the decision on whether or not to approve it. Comoros urged the MoP to demonstrate flexibility out of consideration for Comoros status as a Small Island Developing State, the fact that it has not conducted any fisheries in the Agreement Area for several years, and the significant impact of suspending its lobster trap fishery for an entire year.

286. The MoP discussed a potential way forward and agreed to consider an intersessional assessment by the SC and an intersessional decision by the MoP.

287. Some CCPs expressed concern over the exceptional process being taken to accommodate a vessel that had conducted fishing activities in contravention of CMM 01(2023), as well as the burden and cost that would be placed on CCPs, the MoP and SC Chairpersons, and the Secretariat. Other CCPs expressed understanding for Comoros situation and stated that while they recognised the importance of abiding by the Agreement and the SIOFA CMMs, there should not be a disproportionate burden placed on Small Island Developing States for the management of SIOFA fisheries.

288. **Provided the BFIA for lobster trap fishing is received, the MoP AGREED on the following process regarding Comoros BFIA:**

- a. **The Secretariat will provide support to Comoros in the development of the BFIA .**
- b. **The SC may assess the BFIA in an extraordinary meeting as per the RoP, to be held virtually, and provide recommendations and advice to the MoP.**
- c. **The MoP may use an intersessional decision, as per the RoP, to evaluate the BFIA and consider any future participation of that vessel in that fishery.**
- d. **The MoP and SC Chairpersons will closely consult with CCPs on the timelines for this process to minimise the additional burden placed on them.**

289. **The MoP NOTED that this was an extraordinary circumstance and shall not be treated as setting a precedent for SIOFA.**

290. Comoros thanked the MoP for its flexibility.

291. **The MoP AGREED that Comoros qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2024.**

292. Comoros thanked the MoP for renewing its CNCP status.

293. The MoP acknowledged that India had written to the Secretariat on 22 April 2024 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-11-01).

294. In response to questions raised by CCPs regarding India's compliance with a number of obligations, India submitted a new letter (MoP-11-01 rev1), dated 2 July 2024, containing additional supportive documents.

295. **The MoP AGREED that India qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2024.**

296. India thanked the MoP for renewing its CNCP status.

Agenda item 15 – Future Chairing arrangements

15.1 Vice-Chairpersons of the SC

297. **The MoP AGREED to appoint Dr Zhou Fang (China) as a Vice-Chairperson of the SC.**

15.2 Chairperson of the Compliance Committee

298. **The MoP AGREED to appoint Mrs Meera Koonjul (Mauritius) as the Chairperson of the CC.**

299. **The MoP AGREED to appoint Mr Patrick Sachs (Australia) as the Vice-Chairperson of the CC.**

15.3 Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP)

300. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Mr Ichiro Nomura (Japan) would serve as its Chairperson and France Territories would provide a Vice-Chairperson from the conclusion of the 11th Meeting of the Parties to the conclusion of the 12th Meeting of the Parties. The MoP NOTED that France Territories will provide the name of the Vice-Chairperson at a later stage.**

Agenda item 16 – Any other business

301. **The MoP AGREED to the establishment of a new annual performance review framework, as per Staff Regulation 5.10, intersessionally and in time for MoP12.**

302. SIODFA presented MoP-11-INFO-13 rev1, which described the data archive of documents and information that SIODFA has offered to provide to SIOFA. The data archive contains historical operational and scientific information on SIODFA-related activities in the SIOFA Area, much of which documents fishery and operational activities prior to the creation of SIOFA. In order to fully use the information in the SIODFA data archive, the archive would need to be indexed and a meta-data catalogue of the information available in the archive would need to be created. This task is estimated to entail a dedicated activity of about 4 weeks of fulltime work, either by the Secretariat or a consultancy.

303. The MoP thanked SIODFA for its offer. The MoP noted the usefulness of the documents in the archive, some of which pre-date SIOFA's existence, and believed that they would be beneficial for SIOFA to have.

304. Japan thanked SIODFA for its offer and highlighted SIODFA's role as a leading industry group for promoting responsible fisheries on the high seas.

16.1 Climate Change

305. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-11-INFO-11, an information note on climate change. The information note provided an overview of the impact of climate change on global fish stock distributions, shared examples of efforts by organisations such as the FAO, CCAMLR, and RFMOs to address these impacts, and highlighted the importance of integrating climate considerations into SIOFA's decision-making, while drawing on global initiatives and proactive measures from other regional bodies.

306. Australia reiterated its intention to present a paper on the observed and projected impacts of climate change and the practices of other RFMOs to SC10.

307. DOALOS informed the MoP that the 17th round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, held in May 2024, focused its discussions on the topic "Sustainable fisheries management in the face of climate change". During the discussions, international cooperation was deemed crucial, including on technical

aspects, to address the impacts of climate change on fisheries. It was also acknowledged that work remains to be done by States, including through RFMO/As, which are important fora of such discussion. The draft Chairperson's summary of the meeting is available on the DOALOS website.

308. The DSCC welcomed the inclusion of climate change on SIOFA's agenda and informed the MoP that it presented a paper on climate change to SC9. The DSCC looked forward to the paper from Australia and further work by SIOFA on addressing the impact of climate change.

16.2 Consideration of OECMs

309. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-11-INFO-10, an information note on OECMs. The information note provided an overview of OECMs, highlighting their value as a framework for integrating biodiversity conservation into various sectoral management practices and the potential of fisheries OECMs.
310. The DSCC introduced MoP-11-INFO-21, a technical note prepared by the IUCN on key characteristics and criteria for OECMs. The DSCC noted the potential value of OECMs and the need to ensure the consistent application of their criteria to ensure that they deliver effective conservation outcomes.

Agenda item 17 – 2025 meeting arrangements

311. **The MoP AGREED that the tenth meeting of the SC will take place from 17 to 26 March 2025.**
312. **France Territories confirmed its intention to host the tenth meeting of the SC in Concarneau.**
313. The MoP thanked France Territories for hosting the meeting.
314. **The MoP AGREED that the ninth meeting of the CC will take place from 25 June to 27 June 2025 and the 12th Meeting of the Parties will take place from 30 June to 4 July 2025.**
315. **Mauritius confirmed its intention to host the ninth meeting of the CC and the 12th Meeting of the Parties.**
316. The MoP thanked Mauritius for hosting the meetings.

Agenda item 18 – Report adoption

317. **The MoP ADOPTED the report of its 11th ordinary meeting at 1:25 p.m., 5 July 2024.**

Agenda item 19 – Meeting closure

318. The MoP thanked the Government of Korea for hosting the meeting.
319. The MoP thanked the Chairperson for his leadership, the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat for their efforts, the interpreters for their contribution, the rapporteur for his work, and the technical team for its support.
320. The MoP Chairperson thanked the participants for their engagement and cooperation.
321. The meeting was closed at 1:30 p.m., 5 July 2024.