



SIOFA | APSOI

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

# Report of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)

Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene, Mauritius

30 June–4 July 2025

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## Agenda item 1 – Opening of the meeting

1. The Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP), Mr Ichiro Nomura (Japan), opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was held at Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene, Mauritius.

### 1.1 Opening statements

2. The Chairperson invited the Honourable Dr Arvin Boolell, Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries of the Republic of Mauritius to make a welcome statement (**Annex A**).
3. The Chairperson made an opening statement (**Annex B**) and welcomed all delegates.
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, Mr Thierry Clot, thanked the Government of the Republic of Mauritius for its financial support for hosting the meeting, the Honourable Minister Boolell and Senior Chief Executive Dr Dhanandjay Kawol of the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries of Mauritius for their attendance, France Territories for providing funding for the interpretation arrangements, the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the MoP and its subsidiary bodies for their hard work over the past year, and the delegates for their participation. He also apologised for not being able to attend the CC9 meeting due to unforeseen circumstances and thanked the other Secretariat members for their excellent efforts in his absence. The progress of SIOFA depends on constructive discussions towards improvement of the long-term management and conservation of fisheries resources in the SIOFA Area. The Executive Secretary then explained the practical arrangements for the meeting.

### 1.3 Admission of observers

6. The MoP welcomed the Observers present at the meeting, which included Comoros and India as Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCs), as well as Kenya, South Africa, the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Deep-Sea Fisheries (DSF) Project, the Deep-Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC), the Joint Commission of the Seychelles-Mauritius Joint Management Area (JMA), the Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), and the Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fishers Association (SIODFA).

### 1.4 Status of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

7. The FAO is the Depositary of the Agreement. The Executive Secretary provided an update on the Status of the Agreement in MoP-12-01 (**Annex D**), which confirms that there are 10 Contracting Parties (CPs), 1 Participating Fishing Entity (PFE) and 5 signatories, including 2 Cooperating non-Contracting Parties.
8. **The MoP NOTED the Status of the Agreement.**

### 1.5 Participation in decision-making

9. The Executive Secretary reported that all CPs and PFEs had paid their contribution for 2025. Therefore, all CPs and PFEs were entitled to participate in the taking of decisions during this meeting.

## Agenda item 2 – Administrative arrangements

### 2.1 Adoption of the agenda

10. The Secretariat presented the revised provisional agenda (MoP-12-ADM-05).
11. The MoP moved the agenda item "IOTC" from 14.2.1. to 14.1.6 and renumbered the

associated and adjacent agenda items accordingly.

12. The MoP added the agenda item “14.3 Cooperation with SWIOP”.
13. The MoP reordered the sub-agenda items under agenda item 13 (Secretariat administration) as follows: 13.1 SIOFA Procurement Policy for High-Value Services / Goods; 13.2 Report on the Secretariat activities (since MoP11); 13.3 Financial Status; 13.4 SIOFA Budget.
14. The MoP incorporated the above revisions and adopted the agenda (**Annex E**).

## 2.2 Confirmation of meeting documents

15. The Chairperson informed the MoP that the list of meeting documents is presented in MoP-12-ADM-06-Rev6 (**Annex F**).
16. The MoP thanked the Secretariat for improving the management of meeting documents and respecting the categorisation of papers.
17. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to implement the following additional improvements:**
  - a. **More stringently distinguish between which working papers should be brought to the attention of the Scientific Committee (SC) and which to the MoP.**
  - b. **For papers that are submitted to both the Compliance Committee (CC) and the MoP, use the same title for both papers and attribute the same numbering, e.g., if a paper is CC-09-01, the identical MoP paper should be numbered MoP-12-01.**
  - c. **Add a column to the meeting page with the date on which a paper was published on the SIOFA website to enable users to more easily identify if and when a paper has been revised.**

## 2.3 Appointment of rapporteurs

18. 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 MoP11

19. The Chairperson summarised the two intersessional decisions taken since the 11<sup>th</sup> MoP, as described in MoP-12-02. Intersessional decision 2024-I concerned the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the MoP and the Secretariat for the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP). The MoP reaffirmed its support for the MoU with the ACAP Secretariat and noted that the MoP Chairperson signed the MoU for a new period of six years. Intersessional decision 2024-II concerned the validation of the Comoros Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment (BFIA). The MoP evaluated the recommendations of the Second Extraordinary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC-EXTRA2) on the Comoros BFIA and determined that, pursuant to Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 01(2024) paragraph 31, the Comoros BFIA is acceptable and the vessel FV Rinascente may be authorised by Comoros to fish in the Agreement Area, subject to a number of conditions, including a total allowable catch (TAC), total allowable effort (TAE), and review of the fishery at SC10 and MoP12. A move-on rule for encounters with vulnerable marine ecosystem (VME) indicator taxa was added as a voluntary measure.
20. **The MoP NOTED the summary of intersessional decisions taken since MoP11.**
21. The European Union (EU) pointed out that intersessional decision 2024-II constituted a decision on a matter of substance and that according to Rule 13.2 of the Rules of Procedure (RoP), “Normally, the Meeting of the Parties shall only take intersessional decisions on matters of procedure. However, in exceptional circumstances, where an

urgent decision is necessary, the Meeting of the Parties may take intersessional decisions on matters of substance". The EU explained that at the time of the intersessional decision, it had requested that an additional condition be applied to the fishing activities by FV Rinascente for the protection of VMEs, but was informed that the setting of an additional mandatory condition would require an additional intersessional decision, which would delay the proposed fishing activities. The EU explained that despite its reservations, the EU demonstrated flexibility and agreed to have the condition only be applied on a voluntary basis. The EU stated that, nevertheless, it considered it inappropriate to take an intersessional decision on a matter of substance without allowing all CCPs' views to be expressed and reflected, and that it would therefore not accommodate such requests for intersessional decisions on matters of substance in the future.

22. The Cook Islands shared the EU's discomfort with the extensive efforts taken to accommodate an unusual and exceptional circumstance and agreed that this practice should not be repeated.
23. The Cook Islands expressed the view that Comoros' lobster fishery would constitute a new fishery and noted that the MoP should determine whether this is the case. If so, Comoros would need to submit a Fishery Operation Plan (FOP) to the SC and the CC for their review.
24. Japan explained that it had submitted a proposal (MoP-12-40) aimed at designating Comoros' lobster fishery as a new and exploratory fishery and avoiding a similar occurrence in the future.
25. The MoP discussed the status of Comoros' lobster fishery further under agenda item 6.
26. The MoP recalled another matter that had occurred in the intersessional period, albeit one that did not involve an intersessional decision. This matter concerned the notification sent by the Russian research vessel *Atlantida* to the Secretariat regarding its plans to conduct research activities in the SIOFA Area. The MoP discussed this matter further under agenda item 4.4.

## **Agenda item 4 – Compliance Committee (CC) and report of the CC9**

### **4.1 Presentation of the report of the 9<sup>th</sup> Compliance Committee**

27. The CC Chairperson, Mrs Meera Koonjul (Mauritius), presented a summary of the report of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CC (CC9), which was held at Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene, Mauritius, on 25–27 June 2025. The CC9 report is available as MoP-12-17.
28. The MoP reviewed the advice and recommendations of the CC9 report.

### **4.2 SIOFA Compliance Report (SCR)**

29. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 28 of the CC9 report regarding the CC's adoption of the provisional Compliance Report (pSCR) and the pending status of the provisional compliance status of Seychelles for implementation of paragraphs 1 & 7 of CMM 07 (2024) on Vessel Authorisation.**
30. The Compliance Officer, Mr Johnny Louys, presented the pSCR adopted by the CC, as described in MoP-12-18, and outlined the decisions of the CC9 on the provisional compliance status for each CCP, for review by the MoP.
31. Seychelles expressed concern about the interpretation, assessment and implementation of CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Authorisation) regarding incidental catches of oilfish by Seychelles' longline vessels authorised by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), as it involves a technically complex issue regarding handling longline vessels under another regional fisheries management organisation's (RFMO's) jurisdiction. Therefore,



Seychelles' longline fishing vessels targeting tuna and tuna-like species under the IOTC mandate should not be deemed non-compliant solely based on incidental oilfish bycatch within their overlapping area of competence since oilfish is an associated pelagic species in tuna fisheries, occurring in areas where the IOTC and SIOFA overlap. This ambiguity places an undue compliance burden on vessels and flag States operating under IOTC rules and would be disproportionate.

32. Seychelles recommended the MoP to consider a risk-based and science-informed approach to defining when a vessel is deemed to be fishing under SIOFA competence and urged the MoP to define clear criteria for compliance in overlapping RFMO areas, especially where incidental bycatch is concerned.
33. **The MoP considered the status of Seychelles' compliance with paragraphs 1 & 7 of CMM 07 (2024) on Vessel Authorisation and AGREED to assign a final compliance status of "not assessed".**
34. The MoP noted that India had not been present at CC9 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.
35. India explained that due to technical issues, it had had trouble engaging in email communication with the SIOFA Secretariat and had therefore had difficulty in attending the CC meetings, had submitted its compliance report one day late, and had been unable to respond to the follow-up questions from the Secretariat. India informed the MoP that it intended to provide the requested information later during the meeting.
36. Several CCPs noted that India had not provided any additional information that warranted assigning final compliance statuses that differed from the provisional compliance statuses assigned by the CC for India's compliance with the SIOFA CMMs.
37. The EU noted that India had been requested to provide the missing information since MoP11 and that India had previously committed to implementing the obligations of SIOFA, which apply to India, as a CNCP, regardless of whether it is actively engaged in fishing. The EU also noted that India was once again absent from the CC meeting, pointing out that it was a hybrid meeting with remote attendance being an option. The EU expressed concern that India's commitment to the SIOFA compliance process is not at the level that is expected of a CNCP, which should be noted when the MoP considers the renewal of its CNCP status.
38. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 39 of the CC9 report regarding CCPs' different views on the interpretation of the definition of established fisheries and new and exploratory fisheries and the CC's recommendation that the MoP discuss this matter further.**
39. **The MoP AGREED to hold further discussions on the definition of established fisheries and new and exploratory fisheries and AGREED that, in the absence of a clear definition at this time against which to assess CCPs' compliance, Mauritius' final compliance status against paragraph 15 of CMM 17(2024) should be "not assessed".**
40. **The MoP ADOPTED the final SIOFA Compliance Report outlined in Annex G.**

#### **4.3 Report of Intersessional Vessel Monitoring System working group**

41. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-31-Rev1, which provided an update on the progress made by the Working Group to Support the Establishment of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement Vessel Monitoring System (VMS WG) since MoP11. The VMS WG held three intersessional meetings, during which it produced an options paper for hosting the SIOFA VMS, drafted terms of reference for procurement, and suggested potential amendments to CMMs and SIOFA SSPs to support the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS. The VMS WG also prepared an updated work plan with the

implementation status of planned activities and necessary new activities.

42. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 148 of the CC9 report, ADOPTED the updated VMS WG Work Plan (Annex H) and TASKED the VMS WG to continue its work.**
43. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-30, which provided the outcomes of the VMS WG's assessment of potential hosting options for the SIOFA VMS and an Options Paper for the Hosting of the SIOFA Vessel Monitoring System prepared based on the VMS WG's discussions. The VMS WG considered two possible hosting options: Software as a Product (SaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS), along with their operational and technical considerations, indicative costs and resource implications, and practices by other RFMOs. The key difference between the options is that SaaS requires the Secretariat to host the necessary infrastructure to operate the VMS, while SaaS involves the VMS being hosted online by the service provider. The VMS WG noted that a SaaS system may have substantially higher operational costs and resource requirements compared to a SaaS system while offering minimum additional benefit. The VMS WG expressed general support for a SaaS option over a SaaS option.
44. **The MoP NOTED the CC's recommendation in paragraph 150 of the CC9 report and AGREED to opt for a SaaS-deployed SIOFA VMS.**
45. The EU explained that its voluntary funding would cover not only acquisition of the VMS but also the first few years of operation. Therefore, the EU suggested that the discussion of how future costs would be covered could be held after the operationalization of the VMS, at which point factors such as the actual number of vessels and the actual costs would become clearer.
46. The MoP thanked the EU for providing voluntary funding to support the acquisition and operationalization of the SIOFA VMS.
47. France Territories reiterated the point it made at meetings of the VMS WG that France would not be able to cover any additional SIOFA Headquarters-related costs that may arise from the installation of the SIOFA VMS.

#### **4.4 Listing of IUU fishing vessels**

48. The Compliance Officer presented the Provisional IUU Vessel List (MoP-12-19), which provided information relevant to the listing of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing vessels, including the draft IUU vessel list, a request for the removal of a vessel from the SIOFA IUU Vessel List and relevant supporting documents, proposed modifications to the current SIOFA IUU vessels list, and vessels proposed for cross-listing from the IOTC IUU Vessel List.
49. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 114 of the CC9 report that no vessels had been proposed for inclusion on the draft SIOFA IUU vessel list.**
50. **The MoP NOTED the CC's recommendation in paragraph 123 of the CC9 report and ENDORSED the proposed modifications to the current SIOFA IUU vessels list to reflect the most recent changes from other RFMOs and to correct typographical errors, as shown in CC-09-04 (MoP-12-19).**
51. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 129 of the CC9 report and agreed to add the three new vessels on the IOTC IUU Vessel List to the SIOFA IUU Vessel List as cross-listed vessels.**
52. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 130 of the CC9 report that the CC had not made any recommendations to remove any vessel from the current IUU vessel list. At the same time, the MoP also NOTED paragraph 122 of the CC9 report, whereby CCPs could not reach a consensus decision at CC9 on the request for the removal of the vessel *EI Shaddai* from the current SIOFA IUU vessels list and the CC recommended that the MoP discuss this matter further.**

53. South Africa explained that, in response to the actions of the *El Shaddai*, it has extensively amended conditions of the Patagonian toothfish permits and added conditions to the relevant high seas vessel licenses to ensure that the conditions are clear and unambiguous, thereby enabling a successful prosecution to any future contravention; has embarked on an amendment process to further enhance the Marine Living Resources Act to add clarity on the relevant issues; continued to effectively monitor and control vessels' movements in the SIOFA Area; and effectively suspended the vessel owner's Patagonian toothfish right for some four years by refusing to issue a permit to the vessel owner, thereby causing a substantial loss of income to the company in an amount that is far more significant than any fine that could have been imposed during a criminal prosecution.
54. South Africa also expressed understanding for the concerns raised by the EU at CC9 that South Africa had not satisfied all the conditions of paragraph 28 of CMM 06(2024) (IUU Vessel List), specifically the requirements to take effective action in response to the IUU fishing, including prosecution and imposition of sanctions of adequate severity, or alternatively a change in vessel ownership, but reiterated its position as follows. South Africa initiated and pursued all possible legislative options available to it. Unfortunately, this did not result in the desired sanction, as the Director for Public Prosecutions was unwilling to prosecute the matter. South Africa has therefore exhausted all its options. In the absence of criminal action, the owner could not be charged again, but South Africa refused to issue the owner with a permit to fish for a period of four years, thereby deterring future violations and effecting a more significant financial loss than the maximum criminal fine that could have been imposed. South Africa requested that CMM 06(2024) be interpreted based on context and its intended purpose, rather than in literal terms, taking into consideration the diverse nature of each country's legal system, and that the *El Shaddai* be removed from the current SIOFA IUU vessels list.
55. The EU thanked South Africa for its constructive discussions and cooperativeness. The EU emphasised the very strict standards in CMM 06(2024) noting that paragraph 28 provides three conditions for de-listing an IUU vessel, the third one of which, covered by subparagraphs (c) and (d), provides two alternatives: the flag State must demonstrate that it has taken effective action in response to the IUU fishing, including prosecution or that the vessel has changed ownership. The EU emphasised that the wording is "including prosecution" rather than "such as" or "for example". The EU noted that given there was no effective prosecution, the only sanction on the vessel owner and the vessel itself was a suspension of license, which is not sufficient to meet the standards of the CMM. The EU expressed understanding for South Africa's situation and the independent powers of public prosecutors but reiterated its discomfort with ignoring the literal wording of the CMM and cautioned against setting an undesirable precedent by deviating from it.
56. Australia agreed that the CC had been correct in assessing the request against the provisions of the CMM, concluding that the criteria in paragraphs 28(c) and (d) of CMM 06(2024) had not been met, and forwarding the decision to the MoP for further consideration. At the same time, it recognised the need to respect each country's own legal system and the decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions to not prosecute the vessel owner was independent of the fisheries authority. Australia indicated that it would not object to de-listing the vessel, but cautioned that this must not set a precedent and that each case must be considered based on the individual circumstances and the evidence received.

57. The Cook Islands agreed that the MoP and its subsidiary bodies must apply the provisions of CMM 06(2024) and that the criteria in paragraphs 28(c) and (d) of CMM 06(2024) had not been met. It also noted that there were some circumstances that complicated South Africa's ability to fulfil these criteria. The Cook Islands noted that, under paragraph 28(c) of CMM 06(2024), the flag State must take effective action and that this requires positive action from the flag State, rather than any omission. The Cook Islands recognised the need to respect each country's own national legal system and processes. However, it noted that domestic frameworks must not subvert international legal requirements. The Cook Islands indicated that, in the event there was consensus to delist, the MoP must avoid setting a precedent and ensure that the onus remains on any flag State requesting the removal of a vessel from the IUU vessel list to fulfil the requirements of paragraph 28 of CMM 06(2024).
58. Japan stated that it would not object to de-listing the vessel, expressing understanding for the difficult situation faced by South Africa and the extensive efforts it made under those circumstances. Japan also pointed out that since South Africa was not able to prosecute the vessel owner as required in paragraph 28(c) of CMM 06(2024), it would not realistically be able to realise a change in vessel ownership and thereby fulfil the alternative criterion in paragraph 28(d).
59. China stated that it would not object to de-listing the vessel, pointing out that South Africa had exhausted all legal remedies, cautioning against interpreting CMM 06(2024) from a purely literal standpoint, and noting that the financial losses for the company to not be issued a fishing permit constitutes a strong sanction.
60. The EU disagreed with South Africa's interpretation of the provisions of CMM 06(2024). The financial losses resulting from the inclusion of *El Shaddai* on IUU Vessel Lists cannot be considered a "prosecution and imposition of sanctions of adequate severity" in the meaning of paragraph 28(c) as they resulted from the vessel's listing into RFMOs' IUU lists, action taken by RFMOs rather than by the flag State, which bears primary responsibility for sanctioning a fishing vessel under international law. The EU noted that neither the condition of "prosecution and imposition of sanctions of adequate severity" provided in points (c), nor "change of ownership" provided as an alternative condition in point (d) of paragraph 28 in CMM 06(2024) has been met. However, the EU also recognised that the imposition of sanctions is a flag State responsibility, and that the prosecution is an independent authority from the one issuing fishing permits. Recognising the limits of the prosecution action in this case, the EU noted the assurances provided by South Africa by amending the conditions of the Patagonian toothfish permits and adding conditions to the relevant high-seas vessel licences, and South Africa's commitment to effectively monitor fishing activities of the vessel in the future. The EU also noted the positions of other CCPs who did not oppose the removal of the vessel from the IUU Vessel List. In view of the above, and given the case's specific circumstances, the EU did not oppose the de-listing of the vessel. The EU stressed, however, that this case should not be a precedence for any future SIOFA decisions on its IUU Vessel List. The EU also expressed its general concern and cautioned against overly flexible interpretations of CMM provisions.
61. South Africa extended its appreciation to all parties for their valuable contributions, thoughtful interventions, and the understanding and respect shown toward South Africa's legal framework during CC9 and MoP12. South Africa stated that, in its interpretation of paragraph 28(c) of CMM 06(2024), particularly the requirement for prosecution, South Africa has fulfilled its obligations under the CMM by initiating legal

proceedings against the vessel owner and allowing the judicial process to take its course, in line with South Africa's domestic legal framework. South Africa expressed its appreciation for the outcome, which it felt reflected a fair and balanced application of the CMM and demonstrated the value of cooperation and mutual respect at SIOFA.

62. **The MoP AGREED to remove the *El Shaddai* from the current SIOFA IUU vessels list.**
63. **The MoP ADOPTED the SIOFA IUU Vessel List (Annex I).**
64. The MoP discussed the notification sent by the Russian research vessel *Atlantida* to the Secretariat regarding its plans to conduct research trawls in the SIOFA Area in June 2025.
65. The Executive Secretary explained that the vessel provided said notification to the Secretariat on 16 May 2025. In response, he sent a reply, on 20 May 2025, to the head of the expedition informing him of the process for conducting scientific research within the SIOFA Area as outlined in the Agreement and the CMMs but did not receive any reply. The Executive Secretary subsequently sent a follow-up seeking confirmation of receipt but received no reply once again.
66. The MoP noted that the Executive Secretary's correspondence with the vessel's head of expedition clearly outlined that the proposed research activities within the SIOFA Area would constitute fishing and therefore require prior MoP approval and/or the vessel being on the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels (RAV), neither of which had occurred.
67. The MoP discussed that there was publicly available information clearly indicating that the vessel has been engaging in fishing activity within the SIOFA Agreement Area, notwithstanding that the vessel was not listed on the RAV nor was any approval provided by the MoP.
68. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to send another follow-up to the head of the expedition and also to the flag State seeking an explanation of their intentions and recent activity.**
69. The MoP encouraged CCPs to conduct analyses to investigate the actions of the vessel, including through Automatic Identification System (AIS) tracking and communication with relevant port States, and to share pertinent information with the MoP.

#### **4.5 Recommendations from the Compliance Committee on current SIOFA CMMs**

70. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 59 of the CC9 report regarding France Territories' proposal to amend to CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality) (CC9 Report, Annex E) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.1.**
71. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 65 of the CC9 report regarding the joint proposal by the Cook Islands and France Territories to amend CMM 13(2022) (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) (CC9 Report, Annex F) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.4.**
72. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 68 of the CC9 report regarding Australia's proposal to amend CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) (CC9 Report, Annex G) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.5.**
73. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 71 of the CC9 report regarding Australia's proposal to amend CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) (CC9 Report, Annex H) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.3.**
74. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 74 of the CC9 report regarding Seychelles' proposal to amend CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Authorisation) (CC9 Report, Annex I) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.2.**
75. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 77 of the CC9 report regarding the CC's endorsement of the EU's proposed amendment to CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Authorisation) (CC9 Report, Annex J) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.2.**
76. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 79 of the CC9 report regarding the EU's proposal to amend**

**CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) (CC9 Report, Annex K) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.3.**

77. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 84 of the CC9 report regarding the CC's endorsement of the EU's proposed amendments to CMM 16(2023) (Vessel Monitoring System) (CC9 Report, Annex L) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.6.**
78. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 90 of the CC9 report regarding the EU's proposal to amend CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) (CC9 Report, Annex M) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.5.**
79. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 93 of the CC9 report regarding the EU's proposal to amend CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) (CC9 Report, Annex N) and held further discussions under agenda item 9.7.**
80. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 101 of the CC9 report regarding the joint proposal by Australia, the Cook Islands, and Japan for a new CMM for Benthic Protected Areas (BPAs) (CC9 Report, Annex O) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.1.**
81. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 111 of the CC9 report regarding the Cook Islands' proposal for a new CMM for a SIOFA allocation framework (CC9 Report, Annex P) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.2.**

#### **4.6 Operationalization of the SIOFA VMS**

82. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-33-Rev1, which provided draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for procuring a SaaS-based VMS. The draft ToR was prepared by the Secretariat and VMS WG Chairperson, based on several rounds of review by the VMS WG. It has subsequently been reviewed by the CC.
83. **The MoP NOTED the CC's recommendation in paragraph 153 of the CC9 report, ADOPTED the draft ToR for procuring a SaaS-based VMS (Annex J), and TASKED the Secretariat to launch the procurement process of the SIOFA VMS on the basis of the approved ToR.**
84. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-32, which provided potential amendments to CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality), CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Registration), CMM 16(2023) (Vessel Monitoring System), CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) and the SIOFA SSPs to support the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS as discussed by the VMS WG and the CC.
85. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 156 of the CC9 report and ADOPTED the potential amendments to the SIOFA SSPs to support the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS (Annex K).**
86. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to publish the SIOFA SSPs to support the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS as a standalone document on the SIOFA website to enable easier access.**
87. **The MoP NOTED the amendments suggested by the VMS WG to CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality), CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Registration), and CMM 16(2023) (Vessel Monitoring System), NOTED that these amendments had been taken up in CCP proposals, and held further discussions under agenda item 9.**
88. The MoP thanked Ms Fiona Harford for her hard work and leadership as the VMS WG Chairperson.

#### **4.7 Recommendations for the development of the SIOFA Information System Security Policy (ISSP)**

89. The Data Officer, Mr Pierre Périès, presented MoP-12-22, which provided a draft ToR for a consultancy to develop the SIOFA ISSP.
90. **The MoP NOTED the CC's recommendation in paragraph of the CC9 report that the**

**MoP adopt the draft ToR for a consultancy to develop the SIOFA ISSP (CC9 Report, Annex T) subject to further discussion about the allocation of funding for this work.**

91. Following a request for clarification, the Executive Secretary confirmed that funding for consultancies is included in the draft budget under item 9.3, that this funding could be used for the consultancy to develop the SIOFA ISSP, and that no other consultancies are planned for the coming year.
92. **The MoP ADOPTED the ToR for a consultancy to develop the SIOFA ISSP (Annex L), and AGREED to allocate funds for the ISSP work in the 2026 budget and initiate the call for applicants in 2026.**

#### **4.8 Other recommendations from the Compliance Committee**

93. The Compliance Officer explained that pursuant to paragraph 5 of CMM 11(2020) (Compliance Monitoring Scheme) the CC and the MoP are required to review any other recommendations made by the MoP in the previous years' Final Compliance Reports. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-34-Rev1, which provided the status of the implementation of the recommendations of MoP11 on the SIOFA Final SIOFA Compliance Report (fSCR), as updated by CC9.
94. **The MoP NOTED the status of the implementation of the recommendations from MoP11 outlined in MoP-12-34-Rev1.**
95. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 49 of the CC9 report regarding CCPs' lack of consensus on defining targeting for compliance.**
96. **The MoP NOTED the CC's recommendations in paragraphs 159 and 160 of the CC9 report regarding data collection and data reporting requirements and held further discussions under agenda item 7.4.**
97. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 167 of the CC9 report regarding Comoros' request for renewal of CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 15.1.1.**
98. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 171 of the CC9 report regarding India's request for renewal of CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 15.1.2.**
99. **The MoP NOTED paragraphs 174 and 177 regarding developing a SIOFA definition of "developing States" and held further discussions under agenda item 11.2.**
100. China expressed its opposition to the content of paragraphs 174 and 177 of the CC9 report, which proposed to establish a clear definition of "developing States" and set up an intersessional working group to advance the development of such a definition. China noted that the classification of developing states is a political and economic issue, rather than a fisheries issue, which should be defined by universal institutions (such as the UN and the World Bank) based on recognised standards, such as gross national income per capita (World Bank) and Human Development Index / Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI; UN), and RFMOs like SIOFA lack the authority to unilaterally determine a country's development status. China noted that the identity of a developing state is the autonomous right of a sovereign State, rather than a "gift" or "label" bestowed by any international organisation. China stated that in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality in the UN Charter, States have the right to independently determine their own development stage and participate in international affairs based on international law. China also pointed out that denying this principle violates the UN Charter's sovereign equality principle, politicises economic issues, and oversteps institutional mandates.
101. **The MoP NOTED paragraphs 181–183 of the CC9 report regarding potential options for addressing capacity needs related to compliance and straddling themes and the prioritisation of capacity building options and held further discussions under agenda**

item 11.3.

102. The MoP NOTED paragraph 186 of the CC9 report regarding the CC's input and the current status of the plan adopted at MoP11 for the implementation of the SIOFA Performance Review Panel recommendations and held further discussions under agenda item 13.1.1.
103. The MoP NOTED paragraph 192 of the CC9 report regarding SIOFA's participation in the SWIOP Project and held further discussions under agenda item 14.3.
104. The MoP NOTED the CC's request, in paragraph 193 of the CC9 report, to consider Comoros' FOP and any implications in accordance with CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) paragraph 10, and held further discussions under agenda item 6.
105. The MoP NOTED paragraph 199 of the CC9 report regarding Japan's proposed process for considering the authorisation of the Comoros lobster fishery (CC9 Report, Annex W) and held further discussions under agenda item 6.
106. Following its review, the MoP ADOPTED the CC9 report.

## **Agenda item 5 – Scientific Committee (SC) and Report of the SC10**

### **5.1 Presentation of the report of the 10<sup>th</sup> Scientific Committee annual meeting**

107. The SC Chairperson, Mr Alistair Dunn, presented a summary of the report of the 10<sup>th</sup> Scientific Committee meeting (SC10), which was held at the Concarneau Marine Station, Concarneau, France, on 17–26 March 2025. A summary of the recommendations and relevant annexes of the SC10 report is available as MoP-12-07.

#### **5.1.1 Fisheries reports**

108. The MoP NOTED paragraph 72 of the SC10 report, NOTED the revised guidelines for the Submission of Annual National Reports given in SC-10-INFO-01-Rev1, and TASKED the Secretariat to make it available on the SIOFA website.
109. The MoP NOTED paragraph 78 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries 2025 (SC-10-14-Rev1), and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
110. The MoP NOTED paragraph 84 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Ecosystem Summary 2025 (SC-10-15-Rev1), and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
111. The MoP NOTED paragraph 236 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Fisheries Summary: orange roughy 2025, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
112. The MoP NOTED paragraph 245 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED SIOFA Fisheries Summary: alfoncino 2025, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
113. The MoP NOTED paragraph 282 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Fisheries Summary: Toothfish 2025, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
114. The MoP NOTED paragraph 294 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA fisheries summary for oilfish (*Ruvettus pretiosus*) and escolar (*Lepidocybium flavobrunneum*) 2025, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.
115. The MoP NOTED paragraph 318 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Fisheries Summary: hapuka (*Polyprion* spp., hapuku wreckfish *P. oxygeneios*, wreckfish *P. americanus*) 2025, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.



116. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 322 of the SC10 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Fisheries Summary: common mora (*Mora moro*) 2025, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.**
117. The MoP expressed its appreciation for the hard work by the Science Officer, Dr Marco Milardi, to prepare the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries, the SIOFA Ecosystem Summary, and the SIOFA fisheries summaries.
- 5.1.2 Data Standards, Access and Dissemination**
118. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 118 of the SC10 report regarding proposed amendments to CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) to cover squid jigging vessel logbooks and observer logbooks shown in Annex D.3 of the SC10 report.**
119. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 122 of the SC10 report regarding proposed amendments to CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) for trap and pot fisheries as shown in Annex D.3 of the SC10 report.**
120. Upon the request of the MoP, the Science Officer prepared a paper (MoP-12-51) that reflected the SC's proposed amendments to CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards).
121. The MoP held further discussions on the proposed amendments under agenda item 9.8.
- 5.1.3 SIOFA Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment**
122. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 137 of the SC10 report regarding the proposed Comoros hapuka fishery and AGREED with the SC's interpretation that this was not an established fishery.**
123. The SC Chairperson informed the MoP that the SC noted the revised version of the BFIA for Hapuka Fishery provided by Comoros and noted that it meets the BFIA Standard (SC10 Report, para 140). Furthermore, the SC considered the Comoros' FOP and Data Collection and Analysis Plan (DCAP) and agreed that the approach outlined in the FOP is likely to ensure that the exploratory fishery is developed consistently with its nature as an exploratory fishery, and consistently with the objectives of the Agreement (SC10 Report, para 477). Comoros' FOP is contained in SC-10-51-Rev1 and was submitted to MoP12 upon the request of the MoP.
124. **The MoP NOTED that in accordance with paragraph 10 of CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries), the CC is to consider any FOPs and any advice of the SC thereon, but that this had been omitted from the CC's agenda and the CC had therefore sought to defer the review of Comoros' hapuka fishery to the MoP.**
125. **The MoP further NOTED that:**
  - a. **paragraph 10 of CMM 17(2024) provides that the CC is to also consider an associated draft CMM prepared by the proposing CCP in respect of the new and exploratory fishery but that no associated draft CMM had been submitted; and**
  - b. **paragraph 12 of the same CMM provides that the MoP shall take a decision as to whether to approve the proposed new and exploratory fishery in accordance with the FOP and DCAP, and if the MoP approves the proposed new and exploratory fishery, it shall adopt a CMM in respect of the fishery which shall include objectives, reference points, a precautionary catch limit and any other management measures the MoP deems appropriate.**
126. **The MoP NOTED that Comoros, as a CNCP, is not permitted to submit a proposal for a new CMM, NOTED that under Rule 6, paragraph 1j) of the RoP, the MoP Chairperson shall perform any other functions as may be assigned to him or her by the MoP, and REQUESTED that the Chairperson table a CMM proposal for the proposed hapuka fishery on behalf of Comoros and present it for further discussion under agenda item**

**10.3.**

127. The Cook Islands noted the highly unusual nature of the proposed approach, noting that some of the issues may have arisen due to this being a new CMM and the first time the MoP has considered an application for a new and exploratory fishery.
128. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 154 of the SC10 report; NOTED that the SC had difficulties interpreting the current provisions that define established fisheries and new and exploratory fisheries, in the case of Mauritius' planned bottom trawling activities as the planned activities appeared to meet the species, fishing gear and CCP criteria for being considered an established fishery, but fishing has not taken place in more than 10 years; NOTED the SC's request for further guidance on the definitions of established fisheries and new and exploratory fisheries; and held further discussions under agenda item 6.**
129. **The MoP AGREED that it would be useful to conduct an updated cumulative SIOFA BFIA to better understand the state of bottom fishing in the SIOFA Area and TASKED the SC to develop a ToR for a consultancy to conduct this work and to present the ToR to MoP13.**
130. The MoP held further discussions on the appropriate timing for this work as part of its consideration of the SC work plan under agenda item 5.1.12.

**5.1.4 SIOFA Precautionary Approach and Management (PAM)**

131. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 179 of the SC10 report, for holding additional PAM workshops, including joint workshops with the MoP along with technical ad-hoc meetings with experts from the SC and MoP, to ensure that the work would be appropriately developed and fully considered by the SC and MoP. The MoP discussed this matter further as part of the SC work plan under agenda item 5.1.12.**
132. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendations, in paragraph 180 of the SC10 report, that:**
- a. **the development of biological reference points (BRPs) and harvest control rules (HCRs) should be evaluated with consideration to their robustness to the effect of climate change on stock productivity and distribution.**
  - b. **the precautionary approach framework should include consideration of the value of monitoring of, for example, age and length distributions, spatial distribution, etc., for evidence of changes in productivity or spatial distribution that would indicate if climate change effects would impact the scientific advice for managers.**
133. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 181 of the SC10 report, that exceptional circumstance rules be developed for the HCRs and that these include guidelines for management if climate change effects on spatial distribution or productivity that would affect the management advice were detected.**

**5.1.5 Stock assessments and advice**

134. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 223 of the SC10 report and NOTED that:**
- a. **for all stock structure assumptions tested, the current stock status of orange roughy is well above the target 40%B<sub>0</sub> level, and the exploitation rates are currently below F<sub>40%</sub>.**
  - b. **the biomass of orange roughy is not predicted to drop below 40%B<sub>0</sub> under projection of continuing current catch.**
  - c. **for some potential scenarios, however, the exploitation rates of orange roughy could increase in future for some stocks.**
135. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 224 of the SC10 report, NOTED the SC's recommendation to continue the current approach of maintaining orange roughy catch at 2015–2020 levels, NOTED the SC's recommendation of a catch limit consistent with the average**

catch from 2015–2020 which equates to 1010.75 t for the SIOFA Area (which includes catch outside the assessment areas) should the MoP wish to establish a catch limit for orange roughy, and NOTED that currently there is no proposal to split any catch limit between or within areas.

136. The MoP NOTED paragraph 248 of the SC10 report, NOTED that the study in SC-10-38 indicated a single panmictic population of Patagonian toothfish in the SIOFA Area, and NOTED the SC's recommendations to:
  - a. harmonise management measures across toothfish management units, and
  - b. continue to maintain management approaches that are consistent with the management framework of CCAMLR.
137. The MoP NOTED paragraph 255 of the SC10 report, NOTED that the main purpose of the line spacing requirements on Del Cano Rise (DCR) is to spread the tagging and recapture effort for stock assessment/monitoring purposes, and NOTED the SC's advice that a minimum line spacing could help mitigate depredation of toothfish on the line by marine mammals.
138. The MoP NOTED paragraph 257 of the SC10 report and NOTED that, in the interim, CMM 15(2024) paragraph 19 should be interpreted as specifying that the line spacing should apply at the trip level, until further advice from the SC has been formulated.
139. The MoP NOTED paragraph 264 of the SC10 report and NOTED the SC's reaffirmation of its recommendation for the establishment of a new Management Area for toothfish, South Indian Ridge (SIR), which should be the area bounded by the box defined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The proposed South Indian Ridge (SIR) area

Latitude	Longitude
40°00' S	43°30' E
44°00' S	43°30' E
44°00' S	40°55' E
43°47.2' S	40°30' E
40°00' S	40°30' E

140. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) under agenda item 9.5.
141. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 267 to set a catch limit of 52.8 t for the DCR Management Area for 2026, based on the SIOFA trend analysis, and held further discussions under agenda item 9.5.
142. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 270 of the SC10 report to set a catch limit of 83.4 t for the proposed SIR Management Area for 2026, based on the SIOFA distance-based trend analysis, and held further discussions under agenda item 9.5.
143. The MoP NOTED paragraph 311 of the SC10 report and NOTED that China's historical squid fishing footprint spans SIOFA Subareas 1, 4, 7 and 8.
144. The MoP NOTED paragraph 312 of the SC10 report and NOTED that squid are mobile and may be distributed beyond Subareas 1, 4, 7 and 8.
145. The MoP NOTED the SC's request, in paragraph 313 of the SC10 report, that the MoP reconsider the operational scope of squid fisheries and held further discussions under agenda item 9.8.

#### 5.1.6 Bycatch and incidental captures

146. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 347 of the SC10 report, to add *Bythaelurus naylori* to Annex 1 of CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) and to consider smooth lanternshark (*Etmopterus pusillus*) a species at "high risk". The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) under agenda item 9.3.
147. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 358 of the SC10 report and consistent with previous advice from SC8 and SC9, to take urgent action to limit the catch of deepwater sharks associated with the bottom longline fishery in Subareas 2, 4 and 5. The MoP NOTED the following SC recommendations:
  - a. Subarea 4: that, as a precautionary measure, bottom longline fishing be managed on a set-by-set basis and that, consistent with the SC definition of targeted species, in each set where the catch composition is over 50% of deepwater sharks, the vessel will apply the 5 nm move on rule.
  - b. Subarea 5: that, as a precautionary measure, bottom longline fishing be temporarily prohibited until a Portuguese dogfish stock assessment in the whole SIOFA Area is presented.
  - c. Subarea 2: that the existing catch limit on Portuguese dogfish be retained.
148. The MoP NOTED paragraph 360 of the SC10 report and NOTED that, due to the increased catch of deepwater sharks and the unavailability of the results of the wire trace trial, the SC had re-iterated the SC8 advice (para 230, SC8 report), which recommended restricting bottom longlines to nylon trace, until such time the results of the proposed trial on trace type is analysed by SC.
149. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting the recommendations of paragraphs 358 and 360 of the SC10 report in CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) under agenda item 9.3.
150. The MoP ADOPTED the recommendation in paragraph 374 of the SC10 report to adopt a skate tagging rate that is based on a level of observer coverage as high as opportunity allows.
151. The MoP NOTED paragraph 419 of the SC10 report and NOTED the SC's recommendation to amend CMM 13(2022) (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) to include specifications or guidance for the mitigation of seabird bycatch from trawl vessels. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 13(2022) (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) under agenda item 9.4.

#### 5.1.7 Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME)

152. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 426 of the SC10 report, to update Annex 1 of CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) with the revised VME indicator taxa list in Annex D.1 of the SC10 report.
153. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) under agenda item 9.8.

#### 5.1.8 Marine protected areas

154. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 443 of the SC10 report, to designate Atlantis Bank as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of unique habitats, VME indicator taxa, and endemic species.
155. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 445 of the SC10 report, to designate Coral as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing, except bottom longlining, due to the presence of unique habitats, VME indicator taxa, and endemic species.
156. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 447 of the SC10 report, to designate Fools Flat as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of VME

indicator taxa and potential unique habitats.

157. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 449 of the SC10 report, to designate Middle of What as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of unique habitats, VME indicator taxa, endemic species and long history of closure following high historic fishing effort.
158. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 451 of the SC10 report, to designate Walter's Shoal as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing, except longlining, due to the presence of unique habitats, the area's recognition as a VME and endemic species.
159. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 453 of the SC10 report, to designate Banana as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of unique habitats, VME indicator taxa, and endemic species.
160. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 455 of the SC10 report, to designate Bridle as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of VME indicator taxa and endemic species.
161. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 457 of the SC10 report, to designate East Broken Ridge as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of VME indicator taxa.
162. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 459 of the SC10 report, to designate Gülden Draak as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the potential presence of VME indicator taxa, potential unique habitats, and sensitive geology.
163. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 461 of the SC10 report, to designate Mid-Indian Ridge as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the sensitive geology of the area, the likely presence of VME indicator taxa, and the remote and pristine nature of this area.
164. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 463 of the SC10 report, to designate Rusky Knoll as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing due to the presence of VME indicator taxa, potentially unique habitats, and long period of closure following historic fishing effort.
165. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 465 of the SC10 report, to designate South Indian Ridge as a BPA and close it to bottom fishing, except longlining, due to the presence of potential VME indicator taxa, potential unique habitats, and potential sensitive geological features.
166. The MoP NOTED paragraph 466 of the SC10 report, NOTED that the SC has proposed the establishment of a new toothfish management area under the same name (South Indian Ridge), and ENDORSED the SC's recommendation that the proposed South Indian Ridge BPA, if it is designated, be renamed Magneto to reflect the magnetic anomaly found in that area.
167. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 467 of the SC10 report, that these BPAs, if designated, should undergo collective or individual implementation reviews by 2035 (i.e., within 10 years) or as new information comes to light.
168. The MoP held further discussions on the designation of these areas under agenda item 10.1.
169. China expressed appreciation to the SC for its discussions on marine protected areas (MPAs), which are of great significance for the protection of VMEs. China noted that while the SC may provide helpful suggestions, the establishment of MPAs or BPAs falls under the purview of the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). China also pointed out that MPA matters have far broader

objectives, safeguarding entire marine ecosystems, biodiversity, and ecological processes and requiring a holistic approach that balances environmental, social, and economic factors. China noted that this complexity demands expertise and authority held by specialised environmental bodies, like BBNJ, rather than RFMOs.

#### **5.1.9 New and Exploratory Fisheries and Research cruises**

170. The MoP NOTED paragraph 496 of the SC10 report and NOTED that the SC reviewed and approved the draft Nansen research cruise plan (SC-10-59-Rev1) subject to further development in collaboration with the EAF Nansen programme and key scientists.
171. The MoP NOTED paragraph 497 of the SC10 report and NOTED that the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen will operate according to the conditions approved by the MoP (para 108, MoP11 Report), including that:
  - a. the data are submitted to SIOFA within 9 months of the cruise (i.e., by October 2026).
  - b. information placed in the public domain must be in accordance with SIOFA data rules.
  - c. CCPs participate in work and capacity building.
172. The MoP NOTED paragraph 500 of the SC10 report and NOTED that the SC had reaffirmed the SC9 recommendation (para 105, SC9 Report) that a specific research cruise CMM be developed. The MoP held further discussions on the development of a research cruise CMM under agenda item 6.3.

#### **5.1.10 Scientific Observers**

173. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 530 of the SC10 report, to amend CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) as shown in Annex D.3 of the SC10 report. The MoP held further discussions on reflecting this recommendation in CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) under agenda item 9.8.
174. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 541 of the SC10 report, that the MoP consider adopting the IOTC e-monitoring standards (IOTC Resolution 23/08) for collecting scientific data on pelagic longline fisheries in SIOFA.
175. As recommended by the SC in paragraph 542 of the SC10 report, the MoP TASKED the SC to develop e-monitoring standards for gear types other than pelagic longlines, using the IOTC e-monitoring standards as a basis, and NOTED the SC's intention to hold a Workshop on the Development of E-Monitoring Standards in early 2026.

#### **5.1.11 Climate change**

176. The MoP NOTED that the SC did not provide any specific advice related to climate change at SC10. The MoP NOTED that the SC work plan includes Project CLI-2024-01 for the assessment of SIOFA species and ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts.
177. The DSCC thanked the SC for considering climate change in its work and urged the MoP to consider climate refugia as part of the process for designating areas under the revised protected areas designation protocol. The DSCC welcomed the SC project on the assessment of SIOFA species and ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts and noted the need for funding for that project. The DSCC urged the MoP to consider incorporating climate change impacts into its decisions and CMMs.

#### **5.1.12 Future work**

178. The MoP NOTED paragraph 569 of the SC10 report and NOTED that the SC had provided a summary of progress on the recommendations of the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2024 that were adopted at MoP11 (Annex I, SC Report).
179. The MoP held further discussions on the recommendations of the SIOFA Performance

Review Panel under agenda item 13.2.1.

180. **The MoP NOTED the SC's request, in paragraph 578 of the SC10 report, for further guidance on a number of aspects of capacity building:**
  - a. **Areas in which a certain level of capacity would be desirable/required (as it can be difficult for CCPs that lack capacity in a certain area to recognise and/or convey that lack of capacity);**
  - b. **Timelines and prioritisation; and**
  - c. **Potential funding sources beyond CCPs, such as multilateral banks.**
181. The MoP held further discussions on capacity building under agenda item 11.3.
182. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 585 of the SC10 report, that the next SC meeting, including any focused agenda topics, be held for 7 days from 23 to 31 March 2026.**
183. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 586 of the SC10 report and NOTED that a 7-day meeting would be 1 day shorter than in recent years and that there is a risk of the SC not completing its agenda but that the SC believed that this risk was a low one.**
184. The MoP held further discussions on 2026 meeting arrangements under agenda item 18.
185. The Science Officer presented the draft SC workplan for 2025–2029, along with project priority scores assigned by CCPs.
186. The MoP reviewed and revised the draft SC workplan.
187. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to apply the SIOFA trend analysis rules to the William's Ridge Management Areas and to work closely with CCPs when the trend analysis rules are developed for the Del Cano Rise and South Indian Ridge areas.**
188. **The MoP NOTED that the necessity of Project ALF-2025-01 for alfonso age and growth, which had been included in the SC work plan, would depend on the outcomes of Project ALF-2024-01 for alfonso age protocol development, which is ongoing. The MoP AGREED to maintain the budget associated with Project ALF-2025-01 and to TASK the SC to report to the MoP on whether Project ALF-2025-01 and its associated budget would still be required once Project ALF-2024-01 is complete and the SC has reviewed the results.**
189. **The MoP AGREED to add "Update to the SIOFA cumulative BFIA" to the SC's future projects.**
190. The EU noted that, for scientific work on the three main SIOFA target species, the source of funding for such work for toothfish has often been provided by voluntary contribution from the EU, while such work for orange roughy and alfonso is usually funded by the MoP budget. The EU called on those CCPs that are actively participating in the orange roughy and alfonso fisheries to consider also providing voluntary contributions to advance scientific work for these fisheries and relieve some of the pressure on the MoP budget. The EU recognised that scientific work benefits all CCPs, not only those that are actively involved in a particular fishery, but pointed out that SIOFA is a small organisation and that each CCP has a responsibility to contribute to SIOFA's scientific work.
191. The Cook Islands pointed out that it has supported SIOFA's acoustics surveys as well as data collection and ageing and growth work on alfonso and orange roughy through voluntary financial and in-kind contributions.
192. Thailand pointed out that its vessels conduct research on the fisheries it operates, including the collection of data by onboard scientific observers. Thailand expressed its intention to convey to the next SC how it could make further contributions to SIOFA scientific work.
193. Japan thanked the EU for its generous funding to SIOFA scientific work and pointed out

that Japan has funded and conducted otolith analysis for alfoncino caught by Japanese vessels to support SIOFA's alfoncino stock assessment work.

194. The Cook Islands suggested that, for transparency, a column could be added to the table of projects in the work plan to indicate any voluntary contributions made by CCPs to a particular project.
195. **The MoP ENDORSED the SC Workplan as outlined in MoP-12-08-Rev1.**
- 5.1.3 Other recommendations**
196. **The MoP requested the MoP and SC Chairpersons develop draft Terms of Reference for the Third Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies (WS2025-HSS).**
197. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 597 of the SC10 report and NOTED that the SC agreed to elect Ms Charlotte Chazeau (France Territories) as an SC Vice-Chairperson.** The MoP welcomed the election of Ms Chazeau as an SC Vice-Chairperson.
198. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 600 of the SC10 report and NOTED that, as there were no nominations for a new SC Chairperson from among CCPs and recognising the significant progress that the SC has made under the leadership of the current SC Chairperson, Mr Alistair Dunn, the SC recommended that the MoP extend his term for two years as this would ensure stability and continuity in advancing the SC's work over this time period.** The MoP held further discussions on the SC chairing arrangements under agenda item 16.1.
199. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 602 of the SC10 report, NOTED that the creation of the Science Officer position has greatly enhanced the SC's ability to conduct its work and provide advice, and NOTED the SC's strong recommendation that this position be renewed when the existing contract expires in 2026 and that Dr Marco Milardi be retained in that position.**
200. **The MoP NOTED that although the SC reviewed and assessed an FOP that was submitted to SC10, the SC did not make a clear recommendation to the CC or the MoP in the SC10 report. The MoP REQUESTED that the SC more clearly convey its advice and recommendations on any FOPs that it assesses in future SC reports.**
201. The DSCC welcomed the SC report, particularly the work on the adoption of a revised protected area designation protocol. The DSCC urged the MoP to endorse the protocol as an initial step towards implementing protection for areas and informed the MoP that it has outlined several options for progressing such work in MoP-12-INFO-02. In addition, the DSCC proposed that the MoP consider seamounts to be VMEs, in line with the FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas. The DSCC also welcomed SIOFA's commitment to holding further discussions on the protection of VMEs and the prevention of severe adverse impacts on them, and urged the MoP to advance work to that end.
202. **Following its review, the MoP ADOPTED the report of the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Scientific Committee.**

## **Agenda item 6 – New and Exploratory Fisheries**

### **6.1 New Fisheries**

### **6.2 Exploratory Fisheries**

203. Comoros gave a presentation outlining the FOP for its planned hapuka fishery. The full FOP is available in SC-10-51-Rev1.
204. **The MoP NOTED that the SC has assessed the BFIA for Comoros' planned hapuka fishery and confirmed that it meets the BFIA standard.**



205. **The MoP NOTED that the SC has assessed the FOP for Comoros' planned hapuka fishery and endorsed it from a scientific perspective.**
206. **The MoP NOTED that as the next step, the CC was to assess the FOP from a compliance perspective, but had not assessed the FOP and requested that this assessment be deferred to the MoP.**
207. **The MoP AGREED to take the following approach for assessing the FOP for Comoros' planned hapuka fishery from a compliance perspective, if possible:**
  - a. **The Secretariat would develop a checklist for assessing FOPs from a compliance perspective, similar to the one used by the SC for assessing FOPs from a scientific perspective (SC10 Report, Annex H).**
  - b. **The MoP would review and endorse the checklist.**
  - c. **Comoros would conduct a self-assessment of its FOP using the endorsed checklist.**
  - d. **The MoP would review the Comoros' self-assessment and conduct its own assessment of Comoros' FOP.**
208. **The MoP also NOTED that the MoP would, if possible, also consider an associated draft CMM, which the MoP Chairperson would table on Comoros' behalf at the direction of the MoP (MoP-12-52).**
209. Several CCPs expressed their discomfort with deviating from standard processes, particularly the requirement to submit CMM proposals no less than 40 days before the date fixed for the opening of the MoP. These CCPs indicated that they would endeavour to follow the proposed process, to the best of their abilities, but not at the expense of the MoP's existing work.
210. The Compliance Officer prepared and presented a draft checklist for assessing FOPs from a compliance perspective based on the checklist developed by the SC.
211. **The MoP reviewed, revised and ENDORSED the draft checklist for assessing FOPs from a compliance perspective (Annex M).**
212. Due to time constraints and its full agenda, the MoP was unable to progress beyond this stage in its proposed process for considering Comoros' plans for a new and exploratory hapuka fishery. The MoP invited Comoros to take the following steps in accordance with CMM 17:
  - a. complete a self-assessment of its FOP using the endorsed compliance-based assessment checklist;
  - b. submit the self-assessment to the CC for further review;
  - c. prepare a draft CMM for the planned hapuka fishery; and
  - d. request a CP or PFE to submit the draft CMM to the CC and the MoP on its behalf.
213. Comoros thanked CCPs for the goodwill and assistance they had extended.
214. Mauritius drew the MoP's attention to the absence of its alfonsino midwater trawl fishery from the table of established SIOFA fisheries in Annex 1 of CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries). Mauritius explained that the fishery had already been in operation prior to the entry into effect of said CMM, that the vessel conducting the fishery is listed on the SIOFA RAV, and that the associated data from the fishery had been provided in its annual report submitted to the SC in 2025. Mauritius believed that the absence of its alfonsino midwater trawl fishery from the table of established SIOFA fisheries was an omission and requested that the MoP add Mauritius as a participant to the alfonsino midwater trawl fishery in Annex 1 of CMM 17(2024).
215. **The MoP NOTED that Mauritius' alfonsino midwater trawl fishery began prior to the establishment of CMM 17(2024).**

216. **The MoP NOTED that in order for Mauritius' alfonso midwater trawl fishery to be included in the table of established SIOFA fisheries in Annex 1 of CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries), the following procedure must be followed:**
- a. **Mauritius shall present its catch data and/or other information about the fishery to the SC.**
  - b. **The SC shall provide advice to the MoP on the inclusion of the fishery in Annex 1.**
  - c. **The MoP shall consider whether or not to update Annex 1 based on the SC's advice.**
217. **The MoP AGREED that the current omission of Mauritius' alfonso midwater trawl fishery from Annex 1 of CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) would not prohibit Mauritius from continuing to operate in this fishery.**
218. Japan presented MoP-12-40-Rev1, which proposed a process through which the authorisation of the Comoros lobster fishery could be considered. Japan recommended designating the fishery as a new and exploratory fishery and establishing interim monitoring measures until, in accordance with CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries), the formal approval thereon as a new and exploratory fishery has been made, in order for the Comoros to properly implement the requirements stipulated in SIOFA CIRCULAR n° 2024-40. Japan explained that there had been general support for the proposal at the CC but that further refinement of the details was required, and that it has subsequently updated its proposal based on feedback from CCPs. Japan invited initial feedback, while explaining that it was working in the margins with other interested parties to prepare a further revision.
219. The Executive Secretary cautioned that the Secretariat would likely lack the capacity to process and circulate daily reports from the fishery.
220. Japan presented an updated proposal based on comments received at CC9 and during the current meeting (MoP-12-40-Rev2).
221. Chinese Taipei noted that in light of the extraordinary circumstances, it supported the proposal in the spirit of Article 13 of the SIOFA Agreement, taking the special requirements of developing States into consideration.
222. **The MoP ENDORSED the proposed process to designate the Comoros lobster fishery as a new and exploratory fishery in accordance with CMM 17(2024) (Annex N).**
223. **The MoP AGREED to designate the Comoros lobster fishery as a new and exploratory fishery, in accordance with CMM 17(2024), from the end of MoP12 to the beginning of MoP13.**
224. **The MoP AGREED to authorise the Comoros lobster fishery on an interim basis under the following transition process, so that the formal procedures for approval of this fishery will be completed in accordance with CMM 17(2024) in a timely fashion.**
- a. **In accordance with CMM17(2024), the proponents shall develop a FOP which shall be reviewed by SC11 and CC10 in accordance with their established processes (e.g. Fisheries Operation Plan Checklists).**
  - b. **In accordance with CMM17(2024), the proponents shall develop a CMM for consideration by CC10 and MoP13.**
  - c. **In accordance with paragraph 12 of CMM17(2024) the CMM shall be time bound for no more than 3 years from the commencement of the fishery (18th December 2024).**
225. **The MoP AGREED that:**
- a. **the authorisation shall be based on conditions, such as TAC and TAE,**

- stipulated in Annex N.1.
- b. The period of authorisation is for one year from the end of MoP12 to the beginning of MoP13 and the MoP shall not consider any extension of the interim authorisation unless CMM 17 has been complied with in full, including SC11 and CC10 consideration of the FOP and MoP13's approval of a CMM submitted in accordance with all SIOFA procedural requirements.
226. The MoP AGREED to establish the following provisional monitoring measures with a view to properly monitoring and ensuring the compliance by the Comoros lobster fishery to the conditions (TAC, TAE) required by the intersessional decision, before its approval for Comoros to conduct this proposed fishery as a new and exploratory fishery in accordance with CMM 17.
- a. In order to monitor the use of the TAC in a transparent manner, Comoros shall send monthly catch reports of its lobster fishery to the Secretariat using the template in Annex N.2.
  - b. The Secretariat will circulate this report to CCPs.
  - c. In order to monitor the use of the TAE in a transparent manner, Comoros shall ensure the *FV Rinascente 9* reports daily to the Secretariat of the trap settings, including the position of traps (30 minutes resolution), using the template in Annex N.3. This daily report is required when at least one trap remains to be set under the water.
  - d. The Secretariat will compile the daily position reports from *FV Rinascente 9* on a monthly basis and circulate this monthly compilation to CCPs .
  - e. Any CCP that wishes to receive the daily position reports on a more frequent basis shall notify the Secretariat 30 days in advance.
227. The EU stressed that this would be the only time that it considers such exceptional procedures, noting that CMM 17(2024) has been adopted and entered into effect, and that its procedures shall always be respected. The EU also strongly called on Comoros to complete the necessary procedures to become a CP, now that it has started fishing operations in the SIOFA Area and its fishing interest is expanding.
228. The MoP NOTED that the MoP shall not consider any extension of the designation of the Comoros lobster fishery beyond MoP13 unless CMM 17 has been complied with in full, including SC11 and CC10 consideration of the FOP and MoP13's approval of a CMM submitted in accordance with all SIOFA procedural requirements.
229. The MoP EMPHASISED that the established rules and procedures set forth in SIOFA CMMs and other basic documents must be respected and complied with when addressing the items in agenda 6 on New and Exploratory Fisheries.
230. Japan recognised that CCPs continued to have different interpretations of the definition of established fisheries, likely stemming from their respective understanding of Annex 1 of CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries). Japan stated that in its view, a fishery did not need to simultaneously meet all components in the table in Annex 1 (species/gear/participant/area) to be considered an established fishery. Japan considered the gear component to be most important as differences in gear would result in differences in impact on the target species, ecologically related species and VMEs. Regarding paragraph 3c of CMM 17(2024), Japan expressed the view that this provision only applied in the case that no CCP has undertaken fishing in that fishery in the previous ten years, rather than a specific CCP.
231. Japan suggested that the MoP would likely continue to have difficulty implementing CMM 17(2024) and suggested that the SC conduct a review of Annex 1 of the CMM and

provide its advice to the MoP. The review should, in particular, include the following two perspectives: 1) whether a different structure, e.g., oriented by gear, would be more appropriate; and 2) how to include other primary species.

232. The Cook Islands pointed out that the main reasoning behind the ten-year period in CMM 17(2024) is that if a CCP has not fished in a fishery for ten years, within that time, gear types and other factors will have changed and the potential impacts on the bottom might be different. Therefore, a CCP seeking to resume bottom fishing after a ten-year lapse would need to re-evaluate its potential fishing impact as part of an updated BFIA.

### 6.3 Scientific Research

233. The EU presented MoP-12-48, a paper to facilitate continued discussions on developing a framework for research cruises and scientific research in the SIOFA Area. The paper built on a previous EU proposal from MoP6 (2019) and considered SC discussions and recommendations from SC6 to SC10. The EU recognised that further development of the working paper is required, invited initial comments from CCPs, and welcomed further engagement from CCPs at the meetings of the MoP and its subsidiary bodies, as well as intersessionally, towards the adoption of a new CMM at MoP13.
234. CCPs provided further feedback, including the following:
- a. Refinement of the definition of “scientific research”;
  - b. Clarification of whether a fishing vessel could be used as a research vessel and whether research vessels commissioned by a CCP that were not undertaking fishing activities needed to be registered on the SIOFA RAV and comply with the provisions of all SIOFA CMMs; and
  - c. Resolution of seemingly conflicting provisions in different paragraphs.
235. Seychelles and Mauritius pointed out that they needed to consider the implications of the proposal on research conducted in the JMA and that they would present the proposal to the Joint Commission of the JMA for further review.
236. The DSCC welcomed the proposal from the EU. The DSCC pointed out the need to consider the impact of research bottom trawling on VMEs or potential VMEs, including seamounts, and whether the proposed framework should make clear which current CMMs are being applied during planned research, for example when conducting research that would impact on the sea over closed areas or VMEs, including seamounts.
237. Based on CCPs’ feedback, the EU submitted an updated proposal (MoP-12-48-Rev1) as a basis for further intersessional work.
238. The EU thanked the MoP for its feedback and indicated its intention to continue to work with CCPs to develop the proposal further and to present it to the SC workshop “Window of Opportunity – Research Vessels In SIOFA” (WS2025-ORS) and to SC11 for their input.
239. China presented MoP-12-50, which provided its draft research cruise plan for the 2025–2026 survey year. Building on its 2023 and 2024 high seas resource cruises, China intends to continue to conduct scientific surveys in the SIOFA area from October 2025 to March 2026 in the area of 9°S–10°N and 59°E–68°E to contribute to the scientific research on SIOFA managed species and their associated ecosystem and environment. Specifically, the survey is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of the species composition and quantity distribution of swimming organisms, plankton, fish eggs, and juvenile fish in the surveyed waters; grasping the physical marine environmental characteristics of the surveyed waters; and analysing the components of the pelagic marine ecosystems in the surveyed waters. China will submit the results of its research surveys to the SC.
240. **The MoP NOTED China’s draft plan for a research cruise in the SIOFA Area and the purpose of the research cruise, which is to collect scientific data for research on SIOFA**

species and their environment and marine ecosystems.

## **Agenda item 7 – Data access and dissemination**

### **7.1 Data and security audits implementation update**

241. The Data Officer presented MoP-12-21, which summarised the data and security audit recommendations endorsed by the MoP, and provided an update on the implementation status of each recommendation. In 2025 most of the recommendations have been considered and implemented. However, a few recommendations still need to be addressed.
242. **The MoP NOTED the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the data and security audits (MoP-12-21).**

### **7.2 Discussion on public data definition and limitation, recommendation from SC9**

243. The MoP discussed the definition and limitation of public data as part of its discussions of proposed amendments to CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality) under agenda item 9.1.

### **7.3 Review of the criteria and process by which papers are classified and implications for the RoP**

244. The Data Officer presented MoP-12-23-Rev2, which provided an overview of the criteria and process, based on the RoP and past meeting recommendations, by which the Secretariat classifies papers as proposals, working papers or information papers and by which it determines whether papers should be made public or their access restricted. Annex A of the paper provided a draft SIOFA Meetings Documents Policy, covering document distribution and access, storage and disposal rules.
245. The EU expressed concern with the general direction of the draft meetings documents policy and emphasised the need for greater transparency. The EU also considered the various document classifications in the draft policy to be overly complex and restrictive.
246. Several participants questioned the practicality and logic of the “restricted” classification, whereby if a document is classified as “restricted”, observers would not have access to it, but the document would then be discussed publicly in plenary with observers present and be projected on the screen.
247. In response to a question for clarification regarding the “confidential” classification for SC documents, the Data Officer and the SC Chairperson explained that the SC has so far not received any documents labelled as “confidential” but that this classification would be useful to have in the event that a paper containing confidential data, such as confidential operational information, were to be submitted to the SC in the future.
248. Japan suggested that closed sessions of the MoP may in practice be attended by not only Heads of Delegation but also other invited delegates and that documents for closed sessions should also be accessible to delegates.
249. The MoP also suggested some other editorial amendments.
250. The DSCC expressed support for greater transparency of SIOFA in its documents and for making documents available to observers and releasing them to the public. The DSCC explained that it has struggled in the past to provide input into the SIOFA process because it had limited access to information on fisheries due to confidentiality issues.
251. **The MoP NOTED that the draft SIOFA Meetings Documents Policy required further development and refinement. The MoP REQUESTED that CCPs provide comments on the draft to the Secretariat in the intersessional period and TASKED the Secretariat to present an updated draft to MoP13.**

### **7.4 Review of the data collected by the CCPs and data reported to the Secretariat**

252. The Data Officer presented MoP-12-29, which described 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, as tasked by MoP11. The Data Officer explained that these two types of data are mostly the same. Regarding Catch and Effort and Observer data, he noted that separating the data collection and the data submission requirements in CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) would improve flexibility and efficiency when the SC provides recommendations on data to be collected and how the collection should be undertaken. Furthermore, if the data collection requirements were set outside the CMM, there would not be a need to amend and adopt a new CMM every time the data collection needs change. The Data Officer explained that the CC had reviewed the same paper and recommended continuing to keep the data collection requirements and the data submission requirements that are set in CMM 02(2023) in said CMM.
253. **The MoP NOTED that the data to be collected and the data to be reported are usually the same.**
254. **The MoP AGREED to continue to keep the data collection requirements and the data submission requirements that are set in CMM 02(2023) in said CMM, rather than setting the data collection requirements outside the CMM.**

## **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 CMM 01 (2024)**

255. The EU explained that it had submitted a minor update to its measures established under CMM 01(2024). The EU explained that as its relevant legislation is renewed each year, the EU informs the Secretariat of the updated legislative reference each year. The EU confirmed that no revisions of substance have been made to its measures.
256. **The MoP NOTED that no interim bottom fishing measures were submitted under agenda item 8.1.**

### **8.2 States or fishing entities that became CCPs after the MoP in 2017 – approval of measures pursuant to paragraph 28 of CMM 01 (2024)**

257. **The MoP NOTED that no interim bottom fishing measures were submitted under agenda item 8.2.**
258. **The MoP NOTED that agenda item 8 had been included on the MoP's agenda due to the requirements in paragraphs 10(2) and 10(3) of CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) that revisions to measures established under CMM 01(2024) and approval of measures pursuant to paragraph 28 of CMM 01 (2024) be disclosed to the ordinary Meeting of the Parties. The MoP also NOTED however, that no such measures had been submitted to MoP12 and that this was also the case at many other meetings of the MoP. The MoP further NOTED that CCPs are already asked whether they have disclosed such measures as part of the completion of their compliance reports.**
259. **The MoP AGREED:**
- a. **that any update to a CCP's interim bottom fishing measures could be submitted to the MoP as an information paper with the expectation that they would not be discussed unless the MoP considers this to be necessary; and**
  - b. **that "Interim bottom fishing measures" would no longer be a standing agenda item of the MoP but this would not prejudice CCPs' right to propose its inclusion on the MoP's agenda.**
260. The DSCC urged SIOFA to develop a comprehensive set of bottom fishing conservation

measures that replaces current ad-hoc interim measures applied by individual CCPs and avoids significant adverse impacts (SAIs) on VMEs, including seamounts. The DSCC has made suggestions to past MoPs on BFIsAs and measures needed based on the FAO deep-sea guidelines and approaches by other RFMOs, including those outlined in MoP-12-INFO-04. DSCC welcomed further discussions at the SC on precautionary approaches, spatial management measures, move-on rules and other measures to protect VMEs, including seamounts, from SAI and applying these in a comprehensive CMM.

261. Mauritius and Seychelles, on behalf of the Joint Commission for the Mauritius-Seychelles JMA, provided a statement reaffirming their serious concern over the continued consideration and potential authorisation of bottom trawling activities in the JMA region. The full statement is included in **Annex O**.

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

### **9.1 Amendments to CMM 03 (2016) Data Confidentiality**

262. France Territories presented MoP-12-35-Rev2, which proposed amendments to CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality) to implement modifications related to the VMS implementation process and to address longer-term considerations on data confidentiality within SIOFA bodies. France Territories explained that there had been general support for the proposal at CC9 but that CCPs needed time for further consideration, particularly regarding the treatment of economic data.
263. Based on feedback from CCPs, France Territories presented an updated proposal (MoP-12-35-Rev4).
264. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 03(2016) (Data Confidentiality) (Annex P).**

### **9.2 Amendments to CMM 07 (2024) Vessel Authorisation**

265. Seychelles withdrew its proposal (MoP-12-42) to amend CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Authorisation) in light of the comments received from CCPs at CC9, as well as the proposed plans of the SC to work towards a definition of bycatch by developing a scientifically based categorisation of the different species that are targeted by the SIOFA fisheries or fall under the category of retained or discarded bycatch. Seychelles thanked CCPs for the comments they provided at CC9.
266. The EU presented MoP-12-43, which proposed an amendment to CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Authorisation) based on discussions by the VMS WG (VMSWG06 Report, para 19). The proposed amendments aimed to establish procedures for handling vessels with incomplete Automatic Location Communicator (ALC) details.
267. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 07(2024) (Vessel Authorisation) (Annex Q).**

### **9.3 Amendments to CMM 12 (2024) Sharks**

268. Australia presented MoP-12-41-Rev1, a proposal to amend CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) to implement recommendations made by the SC (SC10 Report, paras 347, 358 and 360). Australia explained that the proposal reflected feedback received from CCPs at CC9 and during the current meeting.
269. The EU explained that it had also submitted a proposal (MoP-12-44) to amend CMM 12(2024) based on the recommendations from SC10. The EU explained that its proposal was similar to that of Australia but that it differed in its interpretation of paragraphs 359 and 360 of the SC10 report regarding the ongoing trial on the use of wire traces. The EU

- noted that the trial has just been completed and that the results will be available soon, that the workshop (WS2025-DWS) will be held to review the results of the trial, and that the SC will also analyse the results and present its advice to MoP13. Therefore, the EU considered it would be premature to include a provision prohibiting the use of wire traces from January 2027. The EU also expressed reservation regarding the inclusion of a footnote with a definition of bycatch, noting that the definition of bycatch is a matter of ongoing discussion, that the purpose of such a definition would be to guide the Secretariat, and that any such definition therefore did not belong in an individual CMM.
270. The Cook Islands supported the Australian proposal, pointing out that the current version already constituted a compromise that had duly taken into consideration the EU's concerns and expressing disappointment that the EU still had reservations. The Cook Islands pointed out that the SC, as well as international scientific literature, has provided clear advice on the effectiveness of the use of wire trace as a mitigation measure, and believed that Australia's proposal was not calling for any premature action.
  271. Australia presented an updated proposal (MoP-12-41-Rev2) with the removal of the footnote defining bycatch and addition of square brackets around the paragraph prohibiting the use of wire traces from January 2027.
  272. The EU reiterated its concern about the inclusion of provisions that pre-emptively prohibit the use of wire traces. The EU noted paragraphs 258 and 259 of the SC9 report and noted that the SC noted that there was limited information available on the impact of wire traces on deep water bycatch rates in bottom long lines and that most research on the use of wire or monofilament traces has been focused on pelagic sharks in tuna fisheries. The EU pointed out that it has financed multiple projects in support of more robust scientific on deepwater sharks, including the proposed trial on the impact of using alternative trace types, which has just been completed, as well as a tagging and sampling protocol for hierarchical risk analysis, genetic analysis, and a post-release survival study. The EU reiterated that the results of the wire trace trial would be reviewed at an SC workshop and at the next SC, that the SC would provide its advice to MoP13, and that the EU would be ready for further discussion at MoP13 based on the outcomes of the trial.
  273. The Cook Islands supported the updated proposal, while expressing disappointment that the current provisions were not more closely aligned with the original SC10 advice.
  274. Australia disagreed with the position expressed by the EU noting the two key measures for subarea 4 and subarea 5 are an urgent and precautionary management response to the expansion of fishing effort in 2024 into new areas of SIOFA for this fishery. Australia also noted the catch of deepwater sharks has increased by over 70% from 2023 to 2024, but agreed to remove the paragraph about prohibiting wire trace and revise its proposal in order to reach consensus (MoP-12-41-Rev3).
  275. Japan expressed its general concern regarding the prohibition of related fishing activities before a stock assessment has been conducted. However, Japan also noted with concern the serious situation in terms of fishing impact on deepwater shark species. Japan stated that it would therefore not block consensus.
  276. **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 12(2024) (Sharks) (Annex R).**
  277. **The MoP AGREED that for the purpose of assessing compliance with CMM obligations, the species constituting the majority of the retained catch in a reporting year shall be considered to be a target species. This interpretation shall be applied from the reporting year 2026 and shall not be applied retroactively to the compliance assessments for catches taken in 2024 or 2025. The MoP AGREED that this**



**interpretation will only apply to vessels registered on the SIOFA RAV.**

278. The Cook Islands thanked Australia for its leadership on this proposal and shared Australia's disappointment that the MoP was not able to include specific provisions regarding the use of wire trace by bottom longline vessels. The Cook Islands noted that the science and the SC10's advice are clear. Despite the MoP's inability to achieve consensus on that paragraph, the Cook Islands strongly supported effective and sustainable fishing practices regarding catch of deepwater sharks and welcomed the adoption of the revised CMM.
279. The EU thanked Australia for taking the EU's concerns and comments into consideration and withdrew its own proposal to amend the same CMM (MoP-12-44).
280. The DSCC thanked Australia for its proposal but expressed disappointment that the measure did not go further in protecting deepwater shark species in these fisheries.

**9.4 Amendments to CMM 13 (2022) Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch**

281. The Cook Islands presented MoP-12-37-Rev1, a joint proposal by the Cook Islands and France Territories to amend CMM 13(2022) (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch). The proposal was aimed at implementing recommendations made by the SC (SC10 Report, para 419) for more effective seabird bycatch mitigation in SIOFA fisheries consistent with the advice of the SC. The proposal seeks to address global concerns about seabird population declines and the latest scientific advice, including the addition of mitigation requirements for trawl vessels. It also sought to remove redundant text from the current measure.
282. Thailand suggested that the area of application, south of the 25°S, be specified for the measures for trawlers.
283. Japan reiterated the position it expressed at CC9 that, while Japan recognised the importance of seabird mitigation measures, it did not think there was sufficient reason for the proposal to apply such measures to trawl vessels as the incidental seabird mortalities from trawl fisheries in the SIOFA Area are rare.
284. Based on CCPs' feedback, the Cook Islands revised its proposal (MoP-12-37-Rev2), including making some of the proposed trawl measures non-obligatory.
285. Japan thanked the Cook Islands for addressing some of its reservations but expressed its continued concern regarding the application of mitigation measures on trawl vessels, when seabird bycatch is rarely reported from trawl fisheries in the SIOFA Area.
286. France Territories pointed out that the seabird mortality rate is harder to assess for trawl fisheries compared to longline fisheries.
287. Several CCPs expressed support for the proposal, while expressing disappointment that the proposal could not include measures for trawl fisheries that were of a similar robustness to those that have been applied to longline fisheries.
288. Japan noted that the SC had considered the ACAP Best Practices and analyses of seabird distributions, and acknowledged the usefulness of such work. However, Japan did not think it was prudent to directly apply such work to the context of trawl fisheries in the SIOFA Area.
289. The Cook Islands presented an updated proposal reflecting feedback received from CCPs (MoP-12-37-Rev3).
290. Japan reiterated that seabird mortality in SIOFA trawl fisheries is rare and cautioned that seabird distribution and seabird mortality are separate matters. Japan believed that there was therefore no scientific justification for imposing additional obligations on these fisheries.
291. Taking Japan's continued concerns into consideration, the Cook Islands presented a

revised proposal (MoP-12-37-Rev4), in which the proposed measures for trawl fisheries were restructured as voluntary guidelines in the Annex of the CMM.

292. The MoP reviewed the updated proposal and added an editorial amendment (MoP-12-37-Rev5).
293. **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 13(2022) (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) (Annex S).**
294. France Territories welcomed the adoption of the proposal and thanked the Cook Islands for its hard work, while reiterating its disappointment that stricter, binding measures could not be adopted for trawl fisheries.
295. Japan reiterated that, as a matter of principle, it did not consider it necessary to impose additional obligations on a fishery where seabird mortality is rare and that it was unconvinced that the papers submitted to the SC justified the imposition of such obligations. However, out of respect for the enthusiasm by the proponents to showcase their seabird-safe fisheries and considering that this is a voluntary guidance, Japan was willing to compromise this time and to support the proposal. Japan cautioned against this becoming a precedent and suggested that there were other ways for CCPs to showcase the efforts of their industry besides adding measures to the CMM.
296. The Cook Islands thanked its co-proponent, France Territories, for working together to develop a proposal that implements the SC's scientific advice and that is in line with ACAP best practice. The Cook Islands noted the critical status of a number of Indian Ocean seabird species and expressed its strong commitment to sustainable fishing operations that include specific and science-based mitigation measures to address seabird bycatch. Despite the trawl elements of the CMM being voluntary, the Cook Islands indicated that it would maintain the measures outlined in the guidelines as mandatory regulations for its flagged vessels to reflect the best practice seabird mitigation and urged other CCPs to also implement those measures.
297. The EU supported the encouragement expressed by the Cook Islands.

#### **9.5 Amendments to CMM 15 (2024) Management of Demersal Stocks**

298. Australia presented MoP-12-36, which proposed amendments to CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) to implement recommendations from SC10 and to reduce the operational burden on vessel operators and the Secretariat in relation to daily notifications. The proposed amendments aim to:
  - a. establish the South Indian Ridge (SIR) management area and the SC recommended catch limit;
  - b. include an interim catch sharing arrangement similar to current practice in Del Cano;
  - c. recognise the ability to transfer catch limits as is currently practiced for Del Cano;
  - d. update the catch limit for Del Cano;
  - e. update the requirement to report catch from Del Cano and SIR to weekly instead of monthly;
  - f. move the VMS requirement in Del Cano to the "general provisions" for toothfish;
  - g. make minor changes to the toothfish reporting forms in the relevant Annexes; and
  - h. trigger daily notifications only when two or more vessels have notified their intent to fish in Williams Ridge.
299. The Cook Islands noted that the EU had proposed amendments to the same CMM and expressed its preference for Australia's proposal as a starting point. The Cook Islands also indicated its preference for first establishing a SIOFA allocation framework before including allocation mechanisms in CMMs.

300. With respect to toothfish allocation in Del Cano and SIR management areas, Japan indicated its preference for the Australian proposal as Japan's toothfish longline fishery would be excluded under the EU proposal.
301. The EU presented MoP-12-46, which proposed amendments to CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) to incorporate recommendations from SC10 regarding the management of toothfish, orange roughy, and alfonsino. The proposed amendments aimed to:
  - a. establish the SIR management area with a TAC for toothfish and a mechanism for allocating said TAC (SC10 Report, paras 264 and 270);
  - b. increase the TAC for Del Cano Rise (SC10 Report, para 267);
  - c. amend the management system for Williams Ridge by retaining the catch limit while removing effort-based management (SC10 Report, para 248);
  - d. establish a catch limit for orange roughy (SC10 Report, para 224); and
  - e. establish a catch limit for alfonsino (MoP10 Report, para 79).
302. Australia and the EU prepared a merged proposal (MoP-12-46-Rev1) that combined elements from each other's proposals. The EU presented the proposal for the MoP's consideration.
303. CCPs had different views on the catch-sharing arrangements for the proposed SIR management area.
304. In the absence of an agreed catch-sharing mechanism for SIR, CCPs could not reach consensus on the establishment of the proposed SIR management area and associated catch limit.
305. France Territories pointed out that the SC has advised that there is one toothfish population across the Del Cano Rise management area and the proposed SIR management area. Therefore, in order to ensure the sustainability of this toothfish population, France Territories did not support an increase in the TAC for Del Cano Rise without the establishment of the proposed SIR management area and associated catch limit.
306. Australia stated that it did not support the removal of the grid cell-based management measures for Williams Ridge without first seeking the SC's advice on an appropriate catch limit.
307. Australia withdrew its proposal to update the requirement to report catch from Del Cano and SIR to weekly instead of monthly, explaining that this had been premised on the establishment of the SIR management area.
308. Mauritius expressed concern with regard to the catch limits being proposed for orange roughy and alfonsino. Mauritius was of the opinion that since there are no recent stock assessments for alfonsino carried out and given that there are no mechanisms for control or monitoring, a catch limit cannot be implemented at this stage for both species.
309. In the absence of allocation mechanisms for orange roughy and alfonsino, CCPs could not reach consensus on establishing catch limits for these fisheries.
310. The MoP reviewed and revised the merged proposal (MoP-12-46-Rev3).
311. **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) (Annex T).**
312. Australia expressed its disappointment and concern that the MoP had once again made no progress in establishing the SIR management area and an appropriate catch limit for that area, which were both key scientific committee recommendations. Australia considered this to be another example of the MoP's inability to make progress on substantive issues, which is impacting on the integrity of SIOFA and the credibility of its

fisheries. Australia emphasised the need for CCPs to work together over the next year to resolve this issue and implement the recommendations to harmonise the management of toothfish to ensure its long-term sustainable use.

313. The EU expressed its disappointment that the MoP could not reach a consensus on adopting the different recommendations of the SC and incorporating them in CMM 15(2023), particularly the lack of consensus on the establishment of SIR, its associated TAC and an allocation mechanism. The EU noted that establishing a TAC without an allocation mechanism would result in an Olympic fishery, which it did not consider to be appropriate fishery management. The EU expressed its intention to continue to engage actively with other toothfish harvesters to find a way forward. The EU also expressed its disappointment that the MoP did not adopt a TAC for orange roughy, noting the advice for the setting of an orange roughy catch limit in paragraph 224 of the SC10 report, as well as paragraph 79 of the MoP10 report in which the MoP endorsed the recommendations in paragraph 178 of the SC8 report regarding candidate HCRs for interim management. The EU acknowledged that CCPs actively fishing on this stock were not ready to adopt a TAC without an allocation mechanism, but did not think it appropriate for the EU, which does not fish for orange roughy, to propose an allocation mechanism. The EU called on CCPs fishing for orange roughy and for alfonsino to propose the establishment of catch limits for those species based on the SC's advice. The EU also reminded the MoP that CMM 15 is not a toothfish management measure but a measure to manage demersal stocks.
314. The DSCC expressed disappointment with the final results of CMM 15. It reiterated its concern over unconstrained and unregulated toothfish fishing continuing to take place. It also expressed disappointment that SIOFA could not agree to a catch limit for orange roughy fisheries given the recommendations by the SC10. The DSCC urged the MoP to adopt catch limits for all toothfish fisheries, and for orange roughy and alfonsino fisheries at MoP13.
315. SIOFA noted that the orange roughy and alfonsino fisheries are effort limited and that there are not enough vessels currently operating in SIOFA to exceed the recommended catch limits.

#### **9.6 Amendments to CMM 16 (2023) Vessel Monitoring System**

316. The EU presented MoP-12-45, which proposed amendments to CMM 16(2023) (Vessel Monitoring System) based on discussions by the VMS WG (VMSWG06 Report, para 24). The proposed amendments aimed to refine technical specifications and operational procedures for the SIOFA VMS.
317. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 16(2023) (Vessel Monitoring System) (Annex U).**

#### **9.7 Amendments to CMM 17 (2024) New and Exploratory Fisheries**

318. The EU presented MoP-12-47, which proposed amendments to CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) to specify the area of China's established squid jigging fishery in the Agreement Area based on information submitted by China on its historic squid fishery (SC10 Report, paras 311–313).
319. China sought clarification regarding the intended meaning of paragraph 227 of the MoP11 report, which states, "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". China indicated its understanding that this

meant that any CCP may participate in an established fishery that meets the abovementioned conditions without having to conduct a BFIA or other procedures required for a new and exploratory fishery, such as the submission of an FOP.

320. China noted that squid are a mobile and pelagic species with a short lifecycle. China noted that, in light of squids' biological and ecological characteristics, the operational scope of its squid fisheries should not be limited to the current areas in Annex 1. China expressed its intention to provide updated historical data and other information to SC11 and seek a consideration of the appropriate operational scope for its squid fisheries.
321. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) (Annex V).**

#### **9.8 Other amendments to CMMs**

322. The Science Officer presented the SC's proposed editorial amendments to the revised VME indicator taxa list in Annex 1 of CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing), as described in Annex D.1 of the SC10 report.
323. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED the above amendments to CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) (Annex W).**
324. The MoP discussed additional amendments to CMM 01(2024) in conjunction with its consideration of a proposal for a new CMM for Benthic Fishery Closures under agenda item 10.1.
325. The Science Officer presented MoP-12-51, which detailed the SC's proposed amendments to CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards).
326. **The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 02(2023) (Data Standards) (Annex X).**

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

#### **10.1 Proposal for a Benthic Protected Areas CMM**

327. The Cook Islands presented MoP-12-38-Rev3, a joint proposal by Australia, the Cook Islands, and Japan, which proposed a new CMM for benthic fishery closures (BFCs). The proposal aimed to enact the recommendations from the workshop to progress future protected area designation (WS2024-PAD) and SC10 (SC10 Report, paras 443, 445, 447, 449, 451, 453, 455, 457, 459, 461, 463 and 465) to establish 12 BFCs within the Agreement Area, comprising nine areas closed to all bottom fishing and three areas closed to bottom fishing but with allowances for bottom longlining. The Cook Islands explained that the proposal also incorporated feedback received from CCPs at CC9.
328. Mauritius appreciated the Cook Islands' efforts to amend the proposal to avoid overlap with Mauritius' maritime zones. Nevertheless, Mauritius expressed its serious and continuing concern that even with the adjusted boundaries, the proposed CMM still covers areas that are subject to exploratory activities being undertaken under the auspices of the International Seabed Authority (ISA). Mauritius cautioned against adopting unilateral or uncoordinated measures within SIOFA, without consultation with the ISA. Mauritius urged the MoP to consider a more coherent and coordinated approach, including the possibility of initiating formal consultations with the ISA. Mauritius expressed its continued commitment to constructive engagement in SIOFA's efforts to protect VMEs, but reiterated the need to ensure that such measures do not conflict with parallel international legal frameworks or scientific activities and that any ongoing activities conducted under the realm of international law should not be affected by any SIOFA measures.
329. Of the two alternate approaches in the Cook Islands' proposal that were aimed at

- addressing Mauritius' concerns, some CCPs expressed their preference for adding a clarifying footnote regarding the proposed Mid-Indian Ridge BFC, although one of these CCPs requested more general language than the phrase "territorial claims".
330. The Cook Islands clarified that it had no intention to propose any measures that would conflict with international processes or impinge on any CCP's sovereign rights, and expressed its intention to continue to work with CCPs to address any concerns they may have.
  331. The DSCC welcomed the proposals for the establishment of BFCs, which are within the competence of SIOFA in restricting bottom fishing where it causes harm. The DSCC noted that these areas have gone through extensive consultation and discussion through the SC processes over the last year and considered these measures to be an important part of protecting VMEs, including seamounts, and associated biodiversity. The DSCC looked forward to the proposals being adopted by the MoP.
  332. The Cook Islands updated its proposal further to address CCPs' feedback (MoP-12-38-Rev4).
  333. The MoP reviewed the updated proposal and made some additional editorial amendments (MoP-12-38-Rev4).
  334. **The MoP ADOPTED the new CMM (CMM 18(2025)) for Benthic Fishery Closures (Annex Y).**
  335. **The MoP NOTED that, with the adoption of CMM 18(2025) for BFCs, paragraphs 42, 43 and 44 of CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) would become redundant and AGREED to revise CMM 01(2024) by deleting these paragraphs and Annex 3 to update CMM 01.**
  336. **The MoP ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 01(2024) (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) (Annex W), which also included an update of Annex 1, VME Indicator Taxa.**
  337. SIODFA congratulated the Cook Islands, Japan, and Australia on the adoption of the BFCs and thanked them for their efforts. SIODFA noted that it was a world first when a group of fishing companies instituted these protected areas in 2006 and that SIODFA has stood by its commitments to these areas for nearly 20 years. SIODFA welcomed SIOFA carrying on this work into the future.
  338. The DSCC welcomed the adoption of the new CMM for BFCs as a significant step forward in protecting benthic areas and associated biodiversity in the SIOFA Area. The DSCC considered this a first step in the protection of VMEs, including seamounts, and looked forward to the identification of further protected areas in the future.

## **10.2 Proposal for an interim SIOFA allocation framework CMM**

339. The Cook Islands presented MoP-12-39-Rev2, which proposed a new CMM for a SIOFA allocation framework based on the direction of the MoP, the discussions of the SC, and the discussions of the CC. The proposed allocation framework would establish allocation criteria and include stipulations related to catch management measures such as allocation transfers and the management of overages, underages and carryovers. The framework would apply to all established SIOFA fisheries.
340. In response to a question for clarification, the Cook Islands confirmed that the new allocation framework would not supersede existing allocations but would be applied in any future reallocation. The EU shared the Cook Islands' interpretation.
341. The EU thanked the Cook Islands for including contribution to science in the allocation criteria, but called for more emphasis to be placed on this criterion.
342. Australia cautioned that emphasising contribution to science could disadvantage

developing States, which may have had fewer opportunities than developed States to make such contributions.

343. In response to a question for clarification, the Cook Islands confirmed that the proposed 5% total annual catch allocation for new entrants was intended to be the combined allocation for all new entrants in a given year, rather than the percentage allocated to each new entrant.
344. Seychelles and Mauritius expressed concern regarding the 5% total annual catch allocation for new entrants and because the provision does not make a distinction between a new CP and PFE entrant and a new CNCP entrant. They pointed out that 5% was a minimal amount, that these provisions would prevent the participation of new entrants, and that this would prejudice the legitimate rights and aspirations of developing coastal States, particularly small island developing States (SIDS), from developing their own sustainable fisheries.
345. The Cook Islands clarified that it had no intention to prejudice the rights of developing States and that it placed great importance on such rights. The Cook Islands explained that it had tried to find a balance between the rights and aspirations of new entrants, and the rights of existing participants.
346. Several CCPs suggested that paragraphs 6 and 7 required further consideration and refinement.
347. Thailand suggested that the proposal should more clearly tie allocation in each fishery to the underlying scientific information and data about that fishery.
348. CCPs also suggested a number of other editorial amendments.
349. The Cook Islands presented an updated proposal (MoP-12-39-Rev3) based on CCPs' comments.
350. Seychelles and Mauritius pointed out that the updated proposal still did not address their concerns.
351. The MoP could not reach consensus on the adoption of the proposal.
352. **The MoP NOTED continued interest among CCPs for the development of a SIOFA allocation framework and AGREED to continue to discuss this matter at MoP13.**
353. The Cook Islands thanked CCPs for their engagement and feedback and expressed its intention to work intersessionally with CCPs and develop a new proposal to present to MoP13.

### **10.3 Other new CMM**

354. A draft CMM for Comoros' planned hapuka fishery (MoP-12-52) was tabled but not discussed due to time constraints.

## **Agenda item 11 – Capacity building needs for developing states**

### **11.1 Technical assistance needed for the implementations of obligations**

355. Pew informed the MoP that it would be able to provide support for CCPs' capacity building in specific areas, such as the development and implementation of HCRs and management strategy evaluation (MSE). Pew offered to hold further discussions with individual CCPs on the sidelines of the meeting.
356. The MoP welcomed the offer from Pew.

### **11.2 Review of existing mechanisms to provide support to developing States and other relevant information relating to Article 13.**

357. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-12-24-Rev1, which provided an overview of the existing mechanisms to provide support to developing States under Article 13 of the

Agreement, focusing on the needs of the developing States bordering SIOFA, the cooperation between the parties, and the provision of financial assistance to eligible countries. SIOFA appears to be compliant with the Agreement. However, the Agreement has no clear definition of “developing States”. The Secretariat used the World Bank’s classification on some CCPs, but this could disadvantage small island States that might soon achieve high-income status while remaining dependent on the level of the previous supports that it would no longer be eligible to receive. To avoid this, it could be appropriate to introduce vulnerability indices that make it possible to identify the needs of any CCP more precisely and to draw up an action plan with each of them progressively.

358. **The MoP NOTED the work done by the Secretariat to develop a paper that outlines the existing mechanisms to provide support to developing States and other relevant information relating to Article 13, as tasked by MoP11.**
359. China reiterated its position that the developing status of a State is a political and economic issue and not a fisheries issue. China state that it would not be prudent for SIOFA to discuss this status and suggested following the World Bank or UN classification of “developing State”.
360. The EU suggested that the MoP had a general understanding of CCPs’ level of development and capacity and that the MoP should take a pragmatic and non-restrictive approach in providing support for CCPs’ capacity building, without trying to discuss any SIOFA-specific definition of “developing State”.
361. The Cook Islands welcomed the discussion and recognition of the rights of developing States, particularly SIDS, to access resources as part of global commons. The Cook Islands agreed that SIOFA should not seek to redefine “developing States”. The Cook Islands supported an approach in which the Secretariat and CCPs give close consideration to how best to support developing States, particularly SIDS, and explore ways to share ideas and knowledge to support and value their rights.
362. The Executive Secretary clarified that the Secretariat was not intending to suggest that the MoP develop a SIOFA-specific definition of “developing State” and was only seeking the MoP’s guidance on the appropriate reference to apply. The Executive Secretary explained that it currently applies the World Bank classification.
363. Chinese Taipei noted that the World Bank classification may not be the only reference that SIOFA could apply.
364. Seychelles did not object to the use of the World Bank classification but suggested that MVI should also be considered.
365. **The MoP discussed mechanisms for providing support to developing States and the prioritisation of capacity-building efforts and AGREED on the following:**
  - a. **The Secretariat can continue to use the World Bank’s classification for “developing States”, as appropriate.**
  - b. **Vulnerability indices can be introduced to gauge the eligibility for assistance.**
  - c. **Support for capacity-building needs will be provided on a request basis, with CCPs being responsible for conveying their needs and requests to the Secretariat.**
  - d. **The Secretariat will consider any requests it receives and endeavour to accommodate those requests to the extent possible.**
  - e. **If the Secretariat receives multiple requests in the same year, higher priority will be given to the following:**
    - i. **requests that are more likely to enhance the capacity of CCPs to implement the obligations under the Agreement and the SIOFA**



**CMMs;**

- ii. requests from CCPs that have not previously received capacity building support or have received such support less recently; and
  - iii. requests from CCPs that are SIDS.
- f. If funding is required for the provision of capacity-building support, the Secretariat will notify the MoP and seek its approval for the proposed support activities and allocation of the associated budget.

### **11.3 Review of the options to facilitate and address the capacity building needs of CCP developing States**

366. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-12-25-Rev2, paper that was developed by the Secretariat following the request from the MoP to identify capacity building needs of developing States and provide options for addressing these needs. The paper was prepared through consultation with CCPs, who identified a range of needs spanning science, data, general capacity, compliance, and needs straddling data/compliance and data/science. It also reflects input from the SC and the CC. The Executive Secretary presented potential options for addressing these needs and invited the MoP to comment on capacity building needs/mechanisms.
367. **The MoP NOTED the work done by the Secretariat in preparing the paper (MoP-12-25-Rev2) on options for facilitating and addressing the capacity building needs of CCP developing States.**
368. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to correspond with the relevant CCPs to seek their input on their preferences among the proposed options in MoP-12-25-Rev2 and to submit an updated paper, with CCPs' input, for review to SC11, CC10, and MoP13.**
369. Mauritius informed that it had presented two BFIA reports in connection with bottom trawl to SC10 for assessment. The SC raised additional points in order to develop the BFIA and these aspects were not found in the BFIA standard. In this context, Mauritius proposed that the SIOFA BFIA standard needs to be reviewed for a more practical means to ensure that it contains all the aspects required for the development of a BFIA. Based on the recommendations of SC10 (SC10 Report, para 156), it was proposed that a checklist be developed to assess any BFIA in the future. Mauritius requested that this checklist should be developed. Mauritius then requested the assistance of the Secretariat with respect to preparation of the BFIA, in line with the BFIA standard.
370. The SC Chairperson thanked Mauritius and noted that the BFIA standard was on the SIOFA website. He invited CCPs to provide a paper to the SC that may help further refine and clarify the BFIA standard.
371. Pew suggested that it could work with the Secretariat and that it could hold a two or three-day workshop that would encompass all three options proposed for addressing need no. 19 (Development and implementation of HCRs and MSE) in SC-12-25-Rev2.

## **Agenda item 12 – Climate Change**

### **12.1 Identification of advice required from Scientific Committee on the implications of climate change**

372. Australia noted the inclusion of Project CLI-2024-01 for the assessment of SIOFA species and ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts in the SC work plan. Australia welcomed this planned work as a good first step to support SIOFA's future discussions in relation to climate change.
373. The DSCC welcomed the inclusion of climate change in the MoP agenda. The DSCC urged SIOFA to incorporate climate change impacts into its decisions and CMMs and indicated

that it had submitted further suggestions on this subject in MoP-12-INFO-04, including the MoP considering what advice it would like from the SC on the potential implications of climate change on SIOFA ecosystems and species. The DSCC also urged the MoP to support funding for research proposals by the SC to assess SIOFA species and ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts.

374. The FAO-DSF Project noted that it has been working with RFMO partners on climate change through focused project consultancies and would hold a virtual workshop with scientists and managers in late 2025 or in 2026 to review the results of these consultancies with project partners. The FAO-DSF Project encouraged MoP participants to join the workshop.

## **Agenda item 13 – Secretariat administration**

### **13.1 SIOFA Procurement Policy for High-Value Services / Goods**

375. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-03, which provided a proposal for a high-value procurement policy and procedures. The Compliance Officer explained that, in light of SIOFA's growing operational needs, it is necessary to establish a transparent, fair, and efficient process for procuring high-value goods and services that is aligned with SIOFA's Financial Regulations and other standard best practices. The policy outlines procedures for needs assessment, competitive bidding, evaluation by a designated panel, and contract implementation. It also allows for specific exemptions to maintain flexibility, while robust reporting and recordkeeping ensure transparency and accountability.
376. The MoP reviewed and updated the policy (MoP-12-03-Rev1).
377. **The MoP ADOPTED the High-Value Procurement Policy and Procedures for SIOFA (Annex Z) and AGREED to enter it into effect immediately following the close of MoP12.**

### **13.2 Report on Secretariat activities (since MoP11)**

378. The Executive Secretary presented a report (MoP-12-02) on staff resources and Secretariat activities prepared in accordance with Rule 8.1(f) and 8.1(g).
379. **The MoP NOTED the report on the Secretariat activities in MoP-12-02.**
380. The Executive Secretary encouraged CCPs to send the Secretariat a confirmation of receipt in response to SIOFA Circulars sent by the Secretariat.

#### **13.2.1 Actions done relative to SIOFA Performance Review recommendations**

381. The Secretariat presented MoP-12-26-Rev2, which provided a summary of the status of the implementation of the recommendations proposed by the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2023 and adopted by MoP10. The summary was updated at MoP11, with input from the SC and the CC. Further updates have been proposed by SC10 and CC9. The Executive Secretary invited the MoP to provide further comments as appropriate.
382. The MoP reviewed the implementation plan and added further comments. The updated implementation plan is attached as **Annex AA**.
383. **The MoP AGREED to implement a more streamlined process for reviewing the status of the implementation of the SIOFA Performance Review recommendations going forward as follows:**
- a. **The implementation status of recommendations that relate to the work of the subsidiary bodies of the MoP will be reviewed and discussed within the relevant subsidiary body and captured in any output from those bodies, e.g., the SC and CC reports.**
  - b. **The MoP's review will focus on the implementation status of recommendations that require the specific direction of the MoP and recommendations for which**

progress has been made in the intersessional period.

- c. **The MoP will not regularly review the implementation status of recommendations that are incomplete and for which no actions have been taken in the intersessional period.**
- d. **The table of recommendations in the paper presented by the Secretariat for the MoP will be reordered as follows:**
  - i. **Recommendations on which progress has been made in the intersessional period will be presented at the top of the table.**
  - ii. **Recommendations that have been adopted by the MoP and completed will be moved to second from bottom in the table;**
  - iii. **Recommendations that the MoP has not adopted will be moved to bottom in the table.**

### **13.3 Financial status**

384. Agenda item 13.3 and its sub-agenda items were discussed in a closed session.

#### **13.3.1 Update on the 2020 fraud**

385. China informed the MoP that it is making progress in recovering the defrauded funds for its 2019 and 2020 contributions. China will continue to push forward in its efforts to recover the defrauded sum and remit it to SIOFA as soon as possible.

386. The Executive Secretary stated that the Secretariat will continue to support China's efforts to recover these contributions and hopes that the matter will be resolved before the end of 2026.

387. The MoP held more detailed discussions on this matter, including the information provided in MoP-12-20, in a meeting of the Heads of Delegation.

#### **13.3.2 Financial report**

388. The Executive Secretary presented a report on financial resources (MoP-12-05) 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 RoP.

389. **The MoP NOTED the Report on Financial Resources provided by the Secretariat in MoP-12-05.**

#### **13.3.3 External Auditor report**

390. The Executive Secretary presented the Auditor's report (MoP-12-06). The report confirmed that, in all material respects, SIOFA's financial position as at 31 December 2024 and its financial performance for the year then ended are in compliance with SIOFA Financial Regulations.

391. **The MoP NOTED the annual financial statements and the Auditor's report presented in MoP-12-06.**

### **13.4 SIOFA Budget**

392. Agenda item 13.4 and its sub-agenda items were discussed in a closed session.

#### **13.4.1 Mid-year budget tracking paper with the actual expenditure**

393. The Executive Secretary presented the 2025 mid-year budget report (MoP-12-INFO-01).

394. **The MoP NOTED the mid-year budget report provided in MoP-12-INFO-01.**

#### **13.4.2 Provisional 2026 budget and 2027 forecast budget**

395. The Executive Secretary presented the draft SIOFA 2026 budget in MoP-12-04-Rev2. CCPs requested clarifications and modifications to the draft budget, and the MoP incorporated those changes in the 2026 budget.

396. Information on the 2026 forecast budget is available in MoP-12-04-Rev2.

397. **The MoP AGREED to step increments for the Secretariat members as described in MoP-**

**12-04-Rev2.**

398. **The MoP AGREED to extend the duration of future contracts for professional officers of the Secretariat from two years to three years to provide greater contract stability.**
399. Australia indicated its intention to host the SC11 meeting and suggested that it may be able to bear some of the meeting support costs that are currently allocated for the SC11 meeting in the 2026 budget, subject to further internal discussions.
400. Seychelles indicated its intention to host the CC10 and MoP13 meetings and suggested that it may be able to bear some of the meeting support costs that are currently allocated for those in the 2026 budget, subject to further internal discussions.
401. The EU called for CCPs that are actively participating in fisheries to make not only in-kind but also financial voluntary contributions to support related research activities.

**13.4.3 Adoption of the budget**

402. **The MoP ADOPTED the 2026 budget (Annex AB), in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.7.**

## **Agenda item 14 - Cooperation with other RFMOs, international bodies and other relevant matters**

**14.1 Cooperation with CCAMLR, RFMOs and other international organisations****14.1.1 CCAMLR**

403. The Executive Secretary reported that members of the Secretariat attended the 43<sup>rd</sup> meetings of CCAMLR and the CCAMLR Scientific Committee virtually and that the El Shaddai vessel was removed from the CCAMLR IUU vessel list at the CCAMLR annual meeting.

**14.1.2 SEAFO**

404. The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat was not able to attend meetings of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) this year due to scheduling reasons but that it continues to maintain close cooperation with SEAFO.

**14.1.3 SWIOFC**

405. The Compliance Officer reported that he participated in an extraordinary meeting of South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC), the SWIOFC Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Experts Workshop, and the SWIOFC Working Party on Collaboration and Cooperation in Tuna Fisheries.

**14.1.4 SPRFMO**

406. The Executive Secretary reported that cooperation with the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) is continuing.

**14.1.5 ACAP**

407. The Executive Secretary reiterated that the MoP made an intersessional decision to renew the MoU between the MoP and the ACAP Secretariat.

**14.1.6 IOTC**

408. The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat attended IOTC meetings on Reunion Island in April. The Executive Secretary reminded the MoP of its previous discussions on trying to conclude an MoU with the IOTC and the MoP's view that SIOFA and the IOTC could continue to collaborate in an informal manner. He reported that the Secretariat is continuing to explore options for more formal cooperative arrangements between the two organisations. The Executive Secretary also reported that, in conjunction with the 29th Session of the IOTC, the Secretariat organised an informal cocktail dinner on SIOFA premises for IOTC delegates, SIOFA delegates, and the Secretariat staff to discuss mutual objectives.

409. The Compliance Officer reported that he visited the Secretariat headquarters of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) to learn from the NPFC's data security and confidentiality measures and data management practices in relation to the operation of the NPFC VMS. He reported that he was also able to exchange best practices with the NPFC Secretariat and that the two sides shared information about their current scientific projects and how scientific projects are managed.

## **14.2 Cooperation with FAO**

### **14.2.1 FAO ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project**

410. The FAO presented MoP-12-INFO-05, which provided an overview of the DSF Project's recent and upcoming activities relevant to SIOFA. Key achievements include the convening of a virtual workshop on the application of the precautionary approach to the management of DSF stocks; the holding of various capacity building workshops and training, including an observer training capacity building workshop for SIOFA CCPs in Mauritius; the organizing of a Symposium on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM), in collaboration with the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES); an industry workshop with DSF industry operators from across the globe; and development of a "smart" Deepwater Shark Guide. Proposed activities for 2025–2026 include a workshop on deepwater sharks to be held on 14–16 July 2025, a workshop on improving the integration of cross-sectoral activities to maintain biodiversity and resource sustainability to be held on 24–26 September 2025, activities from September 2025 in partnership with ICES to examine data-collection requirements and assessment methods that will help determine the status of select data-limited stocks, and a joint cruise with the R/V Nansen in the SIOFA Area in November/December 2025.
411. The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat participated in the observer training capacity building workshop and that it will participate in the workshop on deepwater sharks and joint research cruise with the R/V Nansen.

### **14.2.2 FAO Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN)**

412. The Executive Secretary reported that he attended the Honiara Summit in the Solomon Islands with support from the Sasakawa Peace Foundation and that he attended an event on the role of regional fisheries bodies in supporting implementation of SDG 14.4. held by RSN in conjunction with the Summit.

### **14.2.3 FAO FIRMS**

413. The Science Officer reported that he attended the FAO Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) 9th Technical Workgroup meeting virtually and completed the annual submission of aggregated data to FAO-FIRMS.

## **14.3 Cooperation with SWIOP**

414. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-12-49, which proposed EU support for SIOFA under the new Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Programme (SWIOP) and sought agreement for the signing of an MoU with Expertise France, the implementing partner for the "Support to RFMOs (IOTC & SIOFA)" component of SWIOP. The project would include activities contributing to the general strengthening of SIOFA and designing capacity-building activities that would benefit the entire membership of SIOFA and would support specific CCPs, namely Mauritius, Seychelles and Comoros. Due to the project timing, the MoU would need to be signed intersessionally by the end of 2025.
415. The EU provided some additional background information regarding SWIOP. The EU explained that the Secretariat had been actively involved in drafting the ToR for the project to ensure that it reflects the needs of SIOFA. However, SWIOP would not

significantly add to the Secretariat's workload, nor require any additional allocation to the SIOFA budget. Under SWIOP, direct in-country activities can be conducted in Mauritius, Seychelles, or Comoros. SWIOP can also support other activities that support SIOFA as a whole, provided they are not in-country activities in other CCPs' countries.

- 416. **The MoP NOTED the proposed EU Support.**
- 417. **The MoP AGREED to the participation of SIOFA in the SWIOP Project and TASKED the Secretariat to sign the proposed MoU between SIOFA and Expertise France on its behalf.**
- 418. The MoP also discussed the importance of SIOFA staying abreast of developments related to the BBNJ Agreement and other relevant fora. The Chairperson recalled that RFMOs can use advice provided by other international organisations such as FAO, but RFMOs are to remain independent and to develop their own management measures.
- 419. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to gather information about developments related to BBNJ and other fora of relevance to SIOFA where possible in the course of its activities, such as its participation in the RSN, and to submit information papers with this information to future meetings of the MoP.**
- 420. The DSCC welcomed efforts by SIOFA to prepare for the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and drew the MoP's attention to MoP-12-INFO-03, which contained the DSCC's recommended actions for the MoP.

## **Agenda item 15 – Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCs)**

- 421. 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 CC9 and MoP12 meetings.

### **15.1 Renewal of CNCP status**

#### **15.1.1 Comoros**

- 422. The MoP acknowledged that Comoros had written to the Secretariat on 25 April 2025 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-12-27).
- 423. **The MoP AGREED that Comoros qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2025.**
- 424. The MoP invited and encouraged Comoros to become a CP, noting that this would be the appropriate way forward as Comoros begins fishing operations and expands its fishing interests, and would enable Comoros to participate directly in SIOFA decision-making.
- 425. Comoros expressed its intention to become a SIOFA CP and explained that it has initiated procedures to that end.

#### **15.1.2 India**

- 426. The MoP acknowledged that India had written to the Secretariat on 25 April 2025 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-12-28).
- 427. India acknowledged the concerns raised by the CC and the MoP regarding its absence from CC9, the delayed submission of its compliance report, and its failure to respond to follow-up queries. India explained about unforeseen technical issues and reporting limits as a non-fishing CNCP. India explained that it had submitted its revised Compliance Report (MoP-12-53) on 1 July 2025 and explained that it had taken a number of remedial steps to avoid recurrence of the above issues. Furthermore, India expressed its commitment to upholding the objectives and principles of SIOFA and provided its assurances that it would comply with the requirements of SIOFA fully in future.
- 428. The MoP expressed its disappointment that India had once again failed to engage fully with the SIOFA compliance assessment process, including not attending CC9, submitting its compliance report late and without sufficient detail, and not responding to follow-ups

from the Secretariat. The MoP also expressed its disappointment that India had not submitted the information that it had committed to providing at MoP11 until partway through MoP12. The MoP emphasised that several CCPs would be unwilling to consider renewing India's CNCP status in 2026 if it did not attend CC10. On the other hand, the MoP welcomed India's continued interest in SIOFA, especially as a coastal State.

429. The Executive Secretary reminded the MoP that it had previously agreed that only in-person participants could make interventions at SIOFA meetings and that virtual participants were limited to observing. He also reminded India that, as a developing State, it is eligible to apply for support to attend SIOFA meetings in person in accordance with the SIOFA Financial Regulations.
430. **The MoP AGREED that India qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2025.**

## **Agenda item 16 – Future Chairing arrangements**

### **16.1 Chairperson of the SC**

431. **The MoP AGREED to extend the term of Mr Alistair Dunn as the Chairperson of the SC for two years.**
432. Mr Dunn thanked the MoP for agreeing to extend his term and expressed his appreciation to all members of the SC for their active engagement and cooperation.
433. **The MoP NOTED that Dr Zhou Fang (China) had completed the first year of his two-year term as an SC Vice Chairperson and that he intended to continue to serve in his position in the coming year.**
434. **The MoP NOTED that the SC agreed to elect Ms Charlotte Chazeau (France Territories) as a new SC Vice Chairperson.**

### **16.2 Chairperson of the Compliance Committee**

435. **The MoP NOTED that the CC Chairperson, Mrs Meera Koonjul (Mauritius), and the CC Vice Chairperson, Mr Patrick Sachs (Australia), completed the first year of their two-year terms at the end of the CC9 meeting and that both intend to continue to serve in their positions in the coming year.**

### **16.3 Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP)**

436. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Ms Anaïd Panossian (France Territories) would serve as its Chairperson and that Ms Laura Marot (EU) would serve as its Vice-Chairperson from the conclusion of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the conclusion of the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties.**

## **Agenda item 17 – Any other business**

437. **The MoP NOTED that CCPs' remote delegates had been unable to participate in the closed sessions due to the Secretariat's concerns about access by MoP participants that were not authorised to attend these sessions. The MoP AGREED that, going forward, the MoP plenary sessions and MoP closed sessions would be separate Zoom meetings with separate links, thereby enabling remote CCP delegates to attend closed sessions, while addressing concerns about unauthorised access.**

## **Agenda item 18 – 2026 meeting arrangements**

438. **The MoP AGREED that the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SC will take place from 23 to 31 March 2026.**
439. **Australia tentatively expressed its intention to host the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SC.**
440. The MoP thanked Australia for its offer.
441. **The MoP AGREED that the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CC will take place from 1 to 3 July 2026**

**and the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties will take place from 6 to 10 July 2026.**

442. **Seychelles confirmed its intention to host the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CC and the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties.**

443. The MoP thanked Seychelles for hosting the meetings.

### **Agenda item 19 – Report adoption**

444. **The MoP ADOPTED the report of its 12<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting at 12:25 p.m., 4 July 2025.**

### **Agenda item 20 – Meeting closure**

445. The MoP thanked the Government of Mauritius for hosting the meeting.

446. The MoP thanked the Chairperson for his leadership and wished him a very happy birthday.

447. The Chairperson thanked the MoP, the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat, the interpreters, the rapporteur, and the technical team for their hard work.

448. The MoP thanked 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.

449. The meeting was closed at 12:30 p.m., 4 July 2025.