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Committee
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SIOFA and SWIOFC Collaboration

A Concept Note

Relates to agenda item: 10.2

Working paper Info paper

Secretariat

Abstract

A concept note to initiate cooperation with SWIOFC in matters of mutual interest, in accordance with Article 16 of the SIOFA Agreement and attract grant assistance to finance for research on transboundary and deep-sea SIOFA resources, capacity building to meet SIOFA CMM requirements, and support for eligible countries to SIOFA process.

Recommendations

The SC is invited to consider this paper and advise if;

- SC support in principal a collaboration project as outlined in this note,
 - SC support that the Secretariat engage further with World bank and SWIOFC to explore possibilities for -collaborative actions and grant assistance for activities, and
 - SC recommend the Secretariat produce a revised and updated version of this concept note be submitted to the next MoP.
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SIOFA and SWIOFC Collaboration

A Concept Note

1. Introduction

The Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)¹ facilitates international cooperation for the conservation and management of non-tuna fish stocks in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction of the Southern Indian Ocean. SIOFA has regulatory powers to adopt conservation and management measures that are binding on Contracting Parties. SIOFA is mandated to cooperate closely with other international fisheries and related organizations in matters of mutual interest and in accordance with Article 16 of the SIOFA Agreement in particular the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission². As such SIOFA is well placed for governing straddling or shared non-tuna fish stocks between zones of national jurisdiction in the Western Indian Ocean and the high seas, in addition to governing stocks existing solely within the high seas.

This draft concept note follows initial discussion with World Bank Lead Fisheries Specialist and the representative of SWIOFC and is being developed on the suggestion of World Bank Lead Fisheries Specialist.

SWIOFC, IOC and IOTC are established beneficiaries of WB funded development projects. SIOFA has not previously be considered for inclusion in any project as the secretariat was not yet established. The possibility for SIOFA to become a beneficiary to such projects and other funding sources is being explored. Developing collaboration projects with SWIOFC, or a group of eligible SWIOFC coastal member states, would be necessary to becoming a beneficiary. The potential to fund projects associated to the high seas fisheries, in addition to projects associated to the transboundary fisheries of SIOFA and SWIOFC, is being explored. Such projects should be primarily for the benefit of SWIOFC or SIOFA countries eligible to the International Development Association (IDA) financing (e.g., coastal countries of East Africa, possibly other developing countries with interest for SIOFA).

The suggested activities presented here are a first attempt to gain an idea what activities might be useful and possible within a collaboration project. The production and further development of this concept note does not presume any commitment or agreement of SIOFA SC or SIOFA MoP. This paper is being presented to SC3 to gauge support in principle for such activities and to collect suggestions for activities that would benefit both SIOFA and SWIOFC. Should SC3 be supportive a revised version of this concept note will be produced and shared with SWIOFC for their contribution, and presented to MoP5 for their consideration. Various opportunities are being explored and any such revised version submitted to MoP5 will include updated information/confirmation on what activities could be funded, how the projects would be managed and what the commitments and obligations of SIOFA for engaging in this project would be.

¹ <http://www.siofa.org/>

² <http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/swiofc/en>

2. Objectives

In general terms the objectives of engaging in a collaboration project with SWIOFC will be;

- to contribute towards the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the SIOFA Area through cooperation among the Contracting Parties;
- to promote the sustainable development of fisheries in the Area, taking into account the needs of developing States bordering the Area that are contracting Parties to this Agreement in accordance with Article 2 of the SIOFA Agreement³;
- to initiate cooperation with SWIOFC in matters of mutual interest, in accordance with Article 16 of the SIOFA Agreement; and
- to provide the financial assistance required for activities of developing states bordering the area activities, as listed in Article 13.4 (a)-(d) of the SIOFA Agreement.

More specifically the objectives would be;

- To promote the implementation of SIOFA Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) by concerned SWIOFC developing member states and possibly other SIOFA developing member states (e.g., Thailand, Cook Islands)
- To promote effective management and inform management decisions through scientific research on both transboundary SIOFA/SWIOFC demersal fishery resources of the Saya de Malha bank and SIOFA deep water fishery resources.
- To promote cooperation and data exchange with developing countries bordering the Area and developing countries not bordering the Area but with vessels operating in the Area, and encourage those States to become Contracting Parties to SIOFA.

3. Main Activities

It is understood that such a collaboration project could be planned for a several-year period. Annual activities could then be described in broad terms to facilitate progressive targeted activities in the following years. It is envisaged that SIOFA subsidiary bodies, guided by the work of dedicated Working Groups, would identify activities to be undertaken in the following years and put these proposals forward as recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties (MoP) for consideration/authorisation at each annual meeting. Suggested activities could be as follows:

3.1 Research on the transboundary demersal fishery resources of the Saya de Malha bank fisheries (SIOFA Area, Seychelles EEZ and Mauritius EEZ). The stocks fished on the Saya de Malha bank in the SIOFA zone extending from Seychelles and Mauritian EEZs could be transboundary/shared stocks shared between SIOFA and SWIOFC (Seychelles and Mauritius EEZs). Research is needed to establish the status of these stocks and determine an appropriate management strategy;

³ <http://www.siofa.org/node/3>

3.2 Scientific research for the purpose of stock assessment of the principle SIOFA deep water species;

3.3 Capacity building for eligible-countries to meet data collection and reporting requirements, flag state duties and port state duties in accordance with the relevant SIOFA CMMs. This may comprise of trainings on flag state responsibilities and port inspections. During these group trainings needs assessments could be conducted to identify which countries are in need of addition assistance. Additional assistance could comprise of in country training and support, for developing and maintaining databases for catch and effort data, vessel monitoring and port inspection. Owing to a lack of SIOFA secretariat capacity trainings would require the employment of consultants.

3.4. Support to participation of eligible-countries to SIOFA process: annual meetings; working groups [etc.] and technical assistance for an informed participation as needed.

NOTES: There would be a need to consider ABNJ projects to ensure duplication avoided. Need to ensure projects eligible for EU are not included.

4. Draft Budget

To be developed

It is understood that if accepted the project would pay for 100% of activity costs and SIOFA would not have to provide a financial contribution to these projects. Further clarification to be sought.

5. Project Governance

Owing to the limited capacity of SIOFA Secretariat, assistance would be required for management of the projects. The IOC is an established regional leader in fisheries with strong internal capacity for project management and may therefore be the most appropriate body to manage these projects. Should this concept be further developed WB Lead Fisheries Specialist will discuss with IOC the possibilities of their engagement.

6. Questions to SC3

- Can SC generally support collaborative projects with SWIOFC and request that SIOFA Secretariat continue discussions with WB and SWIOFC for further development?
- Can SC support the actions suggested in section 3?
- Does SC suggest additional or alternative activities to this described in section 3?
- Can SC provide estimates for costs of suggested activities?