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Comoros Annual Report 2019:
"Bottom Fishing Assessment for SIOFA / APSOI"

Please note that National Reports and SC Working Group reports shall be classified as working papers

Relates to agenda item: 03 – 6.5

Working paper Info paper

Delegation of Comoros

Abstract

Recommendations *(working papers only)*

UNION OF THE COMOROS

Unity-Solidarity-Development

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENT

Directorate-General of Fisheries Resources
(DGRH)

Comoros Annual Report 2019:

"Bottom Fishing Assessment for SIOFA / APSOI"

Updated submitted to be considered by SC5/La Réunion

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Abbreviations and acronyms:

CCM	Conservation and Management Measures
CNCSP	Centre National de Contrôle et de Surveillance de Pêche
DGRH	Direction Générale des Ressources Halieutiques
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
SWIOFish	South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Program
VME	Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

1. Introduction :

The Union of Comoros has been a cooperating and non-contracting party of SIOFA / APSOI since 2018. The decision was adopted in MoP5 held from 25 to 29 June 2018 in Phuket, Thailand (ref Paragraph 137 and 138 of MoP5 report 2018).

The Union of Comoros adopts conservation and management measures, in particular the 2018/1 CMMs for the interim management of bottom fisheries in the SIOFA area of competence, which also apply to cooperating and non-contracting parties and therefore to the Union of Comoros.

The Union of the Comoros takes all necessary measures to better control the fishing activities of its vessels in the area of competence of the Agreement. The country not only agrees to implement management measures for the targeted fish and non-targeted species, but also all the precautionary measures necessary to protect marine ecosystems.

As a reminder, the Union of Comoros registers one fishing vessel called Diego Star 2 under the Comorian flag. The vessel took fishing license in Mauritius. It carries out fishing activities in Saya de Malha (area under SIOFA jurisdiction).

This report reports on the activities carried out by the Diego Star 2 from October 17 to December 18, 2019.

2. Application area :

This report is an impact assessment of deep-sea fishing activities on vulnerable marine ecosystems and deep-sea fish stocks in the SIOFA area of competence. The report covers the last quarter of 2019.

3. Impact assessment process :

The evaluation process followed an inclusive approach which involved many departments of the Directorate General of Fisheries Resources (DGRH). The work has been prepared in accordance with the FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries.

Assessment data are collected from the vessel's fishing logbook from October 17 to December 18, 2019.

A technical meeting is held at the Directorate General of Fisheries Resources to update the impact assessment report prepared by the Directorate General and submitted during the 5th meeting of the Scientific Committee held in March 2019 in Japan.

4. Data collected for the evaluation:

Logbooks :

The logbook is annexed to this report. It includes data from the Diego Star 2 for a period of 63 days at sea, with 35 fishing effective days , in the Saya de Malha Bank.

The key information used in this impact assessment, in particular the fishing effort (fishing periods), the fishing position, as well as the composition of the catches and the species, comes mainly from the fishing logs, and is submitted to the Fisheries Control and Surveillance Center (CNCSP) of the Union of the Comoros.

4. Impact analysis :

The DGRH authorized the fishing vessel Diego Star 2 to fish outside the Comorian EEZ, in accordance with the texts in force.

The vessel practices hand line fishing. Motorized boats, with two or three fishermen per boat on board, ensure the supply of the mother ship.

The period of activities of the vessel corresponds to the last quarter of 2019.

Table 1: characteristics of the vessel :

Navire	Length	Engine power	Gross tonnage	Fishing activities	Call sign
Diego Star 2	55.55 m	Yanmar 1000 PS	379.0 T	Handline	D6 A 2026

a) Fishing gear:

19 Motorized boats do hand line fishing and supply the mother vessel, which stays offshore, with two or three fishermen for each boat. The fishing gear used is 3/0 hooks (Figure 3). Each boat is supported by an outboard motor of 10 CV each. The hooks are fixed with lead, with a small iron bar 18mm in diameter cut into small pieces of 120mm and weighing approximately 250 g (Figure 4).

Figure 1 : Diego Star 2



Figure 2 : line for hooks:



Figure 3 : hooks, 3/0



Figure 4 : fishing lead for hooks :



Figure 5 : motorized embarcations



a) Fishing area:

The main fishing grounds for the Comorian fleet in the SIOFA jurisdiction were mainly located in the Western Indian Ocean. The location (latitude and longitude) of the fishing operation is indicated in the following figure 7.

Figure 6 : map of Diego Star 2 fishing zone :

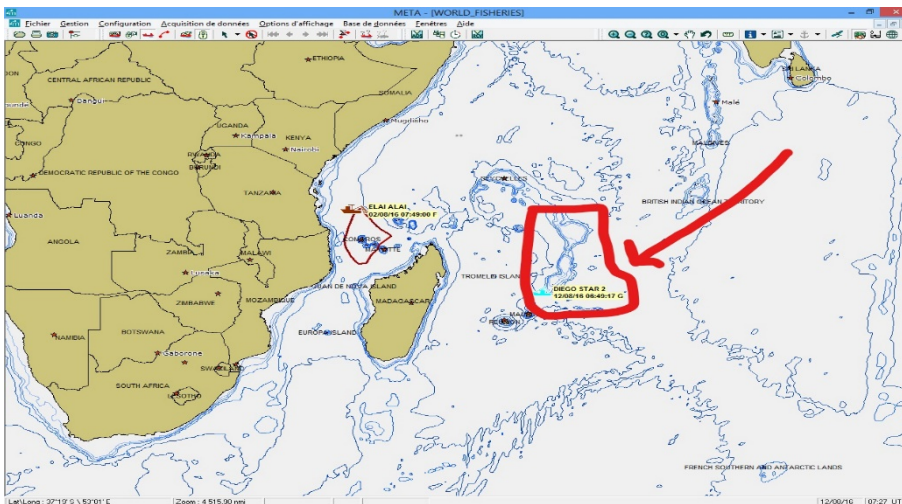
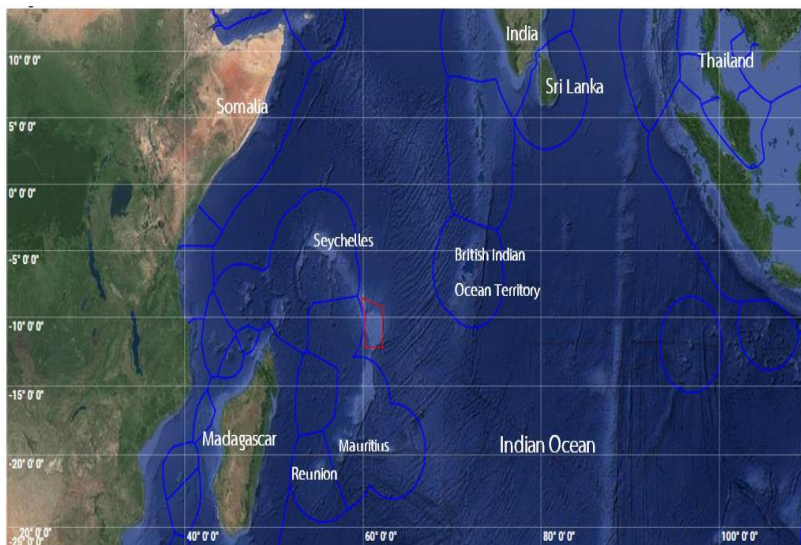


Figure 7 : fishing area. Photo from Thailand report (2017).



A. Lat. 08°15' 00" S Long. 059° 39' 00" E

B. Lat. 09° 12' 00" S Long. 062° 30' 00" E
 C. Lat. 12° 00' 00" S Long. 062° 30' 00" E
 D. Lat. 12° 00' 00" S Long. 060° 06' 00" E
 E. Lat. 10° 03' 00" S Long. 060° 06' 00" E

6. Impact assessment :

a) Spatial impact :

The Diego Star 2 practice hand line. To this end, the constraints on the spatial distribution of its fishing effort are not taken into account in this report, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 9 (a) (iii) of CMM 2018/01.

b) Analysis of fishing effort :

This assessment was carried out during the period of October to December 2019. The vessel operated on the high seas on the Saya de Malha Bank. The vessel made only one voyage. The total fishing effort for the vessel is 35 days out of 63 days at sea.

c) Information on the stock status of deep-sea fish :

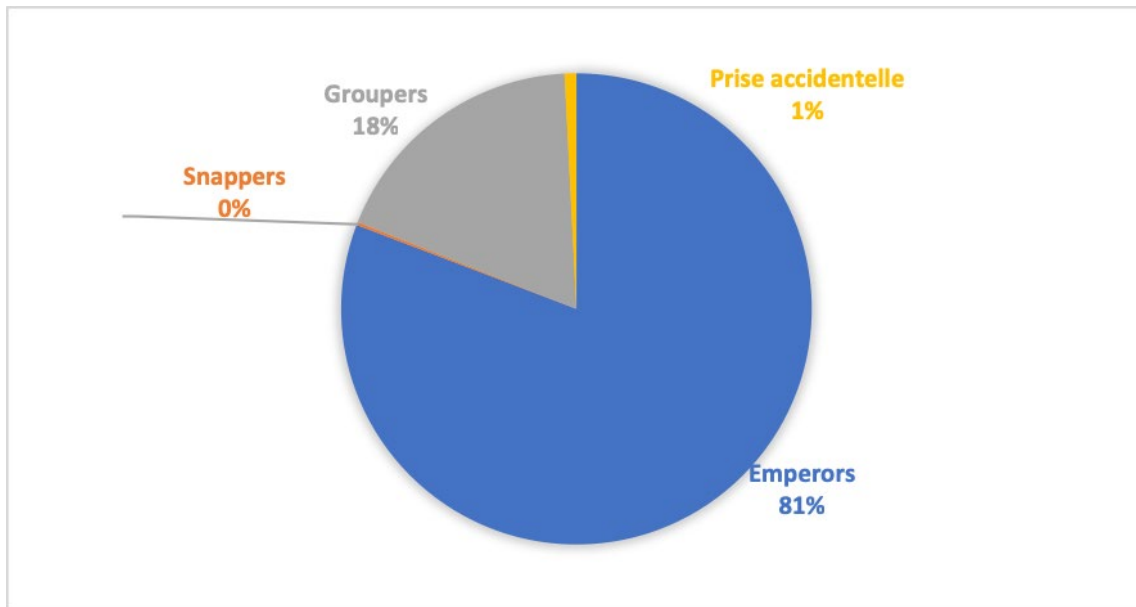
The data used to assess catches and species composition come from the fishing logbook. Total catches amounted to 41,782 Kg.

Period	Ship	Catches	
		Weight (Kg)	Percentage (%)
October – December 2019	Diego Star 2	41.782	100%
Total		41.782	100%

a) The species caught :

- Lethrinids (emperors) :
- Lutjanids (Snappers) :
- Serranids (Groupers) :
- Other accidental catches :

Figure 7 : Distribution of percentage by species, Diego Star 2 (Oct-Nov-Dec 2019)



7. Monitoring, control and surveillance :

The provisions of the fishing texts in force require fishing monitoring, control and surveillance measures, in particular the keeping of a fishing log, a statistical sheet, and the monitoring of vessels by a satellite system.

a) VMS

The Union of the Comoros requires the installation of the VMS. However there are two operational VMS:

- A national VMS: the Union of the Comoros uses software called METAFISH. The national VMS provides information on vessels in the Comorian EEZ, as well as on vessels flying the Comorian flag operating outside the Comorian EEZ,
- A regional VMS: the regional VMS system is used with the TEMIS software. Data exchange at regional level is consolidated and distributed by STARFISH. The regional VMS provides information on vessels operating in the IOC area of competence under the Regional Fisheries Monitoring Program (PRSP).

b) Inspections :

The home port of the two vessels is located in Port-Louis, Mauritius. Entry and exit inspections are carried out regularly by the Mauritian authorities. The Union of Comoros documents

inspection reports, either as regional cooperation or as bilateral cooperation with the Republic of Mauritius.

On the other hand, compliance inspections and health inspections are carried out by agents of the National Center for Fisheries Surveillance Control and agents of the National Office of Quality Control and Certification of Fisheries Products of the Union of the Comoros. The last inspections are carried out in November 2018. The two inspections allow the two vessels to be able to carry out fishing activities outside the Comorian EEZ in accordance with the fishing texts in force.

c) Observers:

The Union of the Comoros has a national observation plan which was developed and validated in 2018. The said Plan has been operational since that date.

d) The logbook:

Masters of fishing vessels are obliged to collect fishing data and send an electronic report. The logbook includes a lot of information including:

- (i) GPS fishing position,
- (ii) Number of boats and number of fishermen,
- (iii) The fishing bench, sea conditions and depth,
- (iv) The catch of the day, with the quantity of the different varieties of fish,
- (v) The cumulative total.

8. Conclusion :

This report is based on historical information from the Diego Star 2 available through the logbooks. No information is collected from observers.

A team of researchers is available during 2019, this device is already highlighted for the writing of this report.

6. Annexe :

Log book of the Diego Star 2 ship, counting the last quarter of 2019



Log Book SIOFA
DS2V19.pdf