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6th Meeting of the SIOFA Scientific Committee (SC6)
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(online)

Japan's comments on the purposes of the SIOFA bottom fishing
footprint and the framework for scientific research¹

Relates to agenda item: 6.5

Working paper ☒ Info paper ☐

Delegation of Japan

Abstract

In accordance with paragraph 52 di2. and 52 h of MoP7 Report, Japan provides comments for the purposes of clarifying the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint and the framework for scientific research. Japan believes that the primary purpose of the footprint is to identify the spatial extent of existing fishing grounds thereby define new fishing grounds, so that the framework for scientific research and other relevant issues can be clarified. To accomplish these purposes, Japan requests the SC to further consider identified points in order to have clearer definition of the bottom fishing footprint and the framework for scientific research.

¹ Scientific research could include fishing surveys, exploratory fishing, BFIA, VME mapping and other associated activities.

Recommendations *(proposals and working papers only)*

The SC should

- i. adopt a definition of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint as the one with a spatial resolution by 1°×1° grid including multiple finer resolutions, in order to utilize maximum available historical fishing effort data from CPCs;
- ii. provide a composite (common) footprint including all gear types from the view point of practicality; and
- iii. use all fishing effort data with no depth constraint in order to make the footprint practical.

2. The SC should

- i. adopt the definition of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint (existing fishing grounds) before initiating discussion on the framework for scientific research and other associated issues;
 - ii. identify thereafter new fishing grounds and consider scientific research (such as exploratory fishing, surveys, BFIA, etc.) and other associated activities; and,
 - iii. establish criteria to transform new fishing grounds to existing fishing grounds through the exploratory fishing (refer to SEAFO-CM30/15), which is considered as one of the above mentioned associated activities.
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Japan's comments on the purposes of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint and the framework for scientific research

At SC5, the SC requested the MoP to provide clarification on the intended use of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint and on the intended purpose of the framework for scientific research (SC5 Report, paragraph 49 and 181). MoP7 could not provide any clarification due to the limitation of time, but noted that Japan had an intention to make comments and request for these clarifications (MoP7 Report, paragraph 52 d2. And 52 h.). Taking this opportunity of the SC6, Japan is pleased to provide its comments to address these important topics.

1. Bottom fishing footprint

a) Purpose of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint

With regard to the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint, Japan believes that the footprint should be used for identifying the spatial extent of existing fishing grounds. Without clear definition of existing fishing grounds, it is impossible to define new fishing grounds. Clear definitions of both existing and new fishing grounds are essential to consider scientific research framework (such as BFIA, fishing surveys, exploratory fishing etc.). As the first step, the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint should be defined considering the following points.

b) Points to be accomplished in reference to the purpose

The SC should

- i. adopt the definition of the footprint with a spatial resolution by $1^{\circ} \times 1^{\circ}$ including multiple finer resolutions, in order to utilize maximum available historical fishing efforts from CCPs;
- ii. provide a composite (common) footprint including all different types of gears from the viewpoint of practicality; and
- iii. use all fishing effort data with no depth constraints in order to make the footprint practical.

2. Framework for scientific research

a) Purpose of the framework for scientific research

Japan believes that the primary purpose of the framework for scientific research is to define the footprint (existing fishing grounds) and thereby identify new fishing grounds duly taking into account of the different nature of VMEs distributed in the two fishing grounds.

For example, fishing surveys could be conducted in order to compare VME indicator species distributed in new fishing grounds with those distributed in existing fishing grounds.

b) Points to be accomplished in reference to the purpose

In order to effectively define the framework for scientific research, SC should

- i. adopt the definition of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint before initiating discussion on the framework for scientific research (fishing surveys, exploratory fishing, BFIA etc);
- ii. consider thereafter scientific research such as fishing surveys, exploratory fishing, BIFA and other associated activities; and,
- iii. establish criteria to transform new fishing grounds to existing fishing grounds (for example, SEAFO-CM30/15), which is considered as one of the above mentioned associated activities.