

Saint-Denis on January 22, 2021

To: Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties  
Scientific Committee representative and SIOFA Observers  
Scientific Committee representatives,

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for the comments on the proposed provisional agendas and scheduling for the PAEWG3 and SERAWG3. Following requests for additional information, I have summarised the decisions from SC5 and MoP7 (attached) with their recommendations and requests to support the scientific work of SIOFA. I would also refer you to the Scientific Committee workplan (SC5 report, Annex I). In preparing the agenda for each meeting, the Chairs have attempted to take into account the Scientific Committee workplan, requests from MoP, as well as outcomes from the consultancies that will be presented to the meetings.

I note that there are a number of topics that would benefit from more extended discussions than allowed for in the agendas and scheduling, but I hope that we can make progress the most important issues at the meetings to allow us to make recommendations to MoP. For some of the less critical issues, we hope to at least introduce the topics and provide recommendations to allow intersessional work to progress.

I am very aware of the long hours and schedules that many delegations find themselves with given the difficulties resulting from the global pandemic. And I encourage any recommendations from MoP and SC HoDs on aspects of the agendas that may be undertaken by correspondence or deferred until 2022 to help optimise the time required for the WG meetings. In addition, I would encourage any commentary on aspects of the agenda that you may wish to include or may need to be increased in priority.

I look forward to your comments and please contact me if you require any additional information or comments.

Yours sincerely

Alistair Dunn

Meeting	Agenda	Topic	Item	SC Report para.	2020 decisions	2021 proposed
SC5	3	National annual reports	Annual report from Mauritius	9	Contact CP	Included in the SC6 agenda
	4	Current and historical status of fishing activities	The SC requested that the MoP provide clarification on the intended use of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint so the SC can provide methods for developing footprints for that purpose	49	Deferred to 2021	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
			The SC requested that the PAEWG prepare a paper outlining options for methodologies for different gear types and objectives, as well as options for addressing the aforementioned technical issues and the associated consequences/trade-offs, to facilitate the discussions of the MoP	50	Deferred to 2021	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
			The SC requested that the PAEWG develop a work plan, including timeframe to progress this work as quickly as possible, to address the issues identified in the PAEWG2 Report,	51		Included in PAEWG3 agenda
	5	Scientific data standards	Discussion on the templates for data submission was postponed to 2021 due to the reduced format of the 2020 Scientific Committee meeting.	Para 21	Deferred to 2021	Deferred to 2022
	5.2	Historical catch and effort d	t	55-	Ongoing	Included in SC6 agenda
			Cook Islands data submission issues with data confidentiality	58	Resolved	
			China light seine fishery- request for China to provide a template for inclusion in CMM2019-02	59	Ongoing	Unknown
	5.3	Annual Catch and Effort Data	SC requested Secretariat resolve data gaps and issues with CCPs	56	Ongoing	Ongoing
			Review CMM2019-02	63-65	Deferred to 2021	Potential for development of a workplan at SC6
			Chinese Taipei pelagic longline fishery- request for Chinese Taipei to provide a template for inclusion in CMM2019-02	66	Ongoing	Unknown
	5.4	Observer data	Update the SIOFA observer database	69	Ongoing	Secretariat to report to SC6
	6	VMEs	Discussion on VME mapping, VME indicator taxa, weight conversion of VME indicators, and the SIOFA standard protocols for future protected areas designation was postponed to 2021 due to the reduced format of the 2020 Scientific Committee meeting.		Deferred to 2021	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
	6.3.2	Encounter threshold level for trawl gears	The Scientific Committee noted that the MoP has tasked it with providing advice on what constitutes evidence of a VME encounter, particular threshold levels and indicator species for the implementation of CMM 2019/01 (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing). At SC4, the Scientific Committee reached consensus on a threshold for longlines, but not on trawl gears, and also recommended a response for VME encounters.	71	Deferred to 2021	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
			The PAEWG agreed to form a small working group comprising CCPs that participate in SIOFA trawl fisheries to work intersessionally to characterise, and if possible compile and analyse benthic bycatch data, with a view to exploring the potential to quantitatively inform the setting of a VME threshold for trawl gears in SIOFA, including reviewing the approaches that CCPs have used previously.	72	PAEWG expert group formed	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
			The Scientific Committee noted that the existing threshold values for trawl gears should be maintained as agreed by MoP6 (2019) (MoP6 Report, para 11bis) until the Scientific Committee provides advice for the setting of a new optimum value.	74	Deferred	Deferred
			The SC requested CCPs collect more data on VME indicator species	78	No progress	Deferred

	6.5	BFIA	The Scientific Committee noted the need to make further progress on improving individual impact assessments and developing a cumulative BFIA for SIOFA.	94	Project PAE2020-01 contracted	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
			The Scientific Committee requested that the PAEWG develop a work plan, with a timeframe, to progress the work and report to SC6, including : a. continuing intersessional correspondence regarding methods for assessing the cumulative SIOFA BFIA, and b. hiring a consultant to undertake the cumulative trawl and longline BFIA's.	100	Project PAE2020-10 contracted	Included in PAEWG3 agenda
	7	Stock assessment and ecological risk assessment	MoP5 requested that the SC provide advice based on MSY until specific reference points are adopted.	105	Project SER2020-01 contracted	Included in the SERAWG agenda
	7.7	Saya de Malha Bank species	Discussion on the SIOFA stock assessment framework and Saya de Malha Bank species was postponed to 2021 due to the reduced format of the 2020 Scientific Committee meeting		Deferred to 2021	Deferred to 2022
	7.3	Alfonsino	The Scientific Committee noted the possibility of hydro-acoustic data being a potential index of abundance or a basis to verify trends in CPUE data. The Scientific Committee recommended conducting a feasibility assessment of the cost-benefit of collecting acoustic, including clarifying target strength, vessel calibration, inter-vessel comparison and spatio-temporal coverage	111;113	Deferred to 2021	Planned to be initiated in 2021, and presented in 2022
			The SC requested the Secretariat progress the data catalogues.	112-113		
		Impact on dependant species	40. The Scientific Committee recommended the MoP: (a) request CCPs adopt a protocol for documenting all interactions with marine mammals for all longliner vessels operating in the SIOFA Area.a. request CCPs adopt a protocol for documenting all interactions (b) encourage CCPs to adopt operational actions to mitigate such interactions and report on the results of those actions at SC6 with marine mammals for all longliner vessels operating in the SIOFA Area.	134	Deferred to 2021	Ongoing
			The Scientific Committee considered the ERA on deepwater chondrichthyans, and recommended that until more rigorous estimates of fishing mortality can be derived, the ERA be updated every five to ten years, or whenever there is a substantial change in the fishery (e.g. large changes in catch and/or effort), and that these periodic updates be reflected in the SIOFA Scientific Committee workplan.	43	No further action required in 2020	No further action required in 2021
			Regarding CMM 2019/12 (Sharks), paragraph 4, the Scientific Committee requested the MoP to urgently consider additional precautionary measures to mitigate bycatch of deepwater chondrichthyans.	44	Deferred to 2022	Deferred to 2022
	7.8	Other teleosts	The SC noted that these ERA tools could be extended to cover other taxa in SIOFA, including marine mammals, marine reptiles, seabirds and other species of concern.	164		
	11.1	Draft CMM on fishing research and exploratory fisheries	The SC requested the EU engage with CCPs through intersessional discussions and further refine the proposals.	184		

Meeting	Agenda	Topic	Item	MoP Report para.	2020 decisions	2021 proposed
MoP7	3	Intersessional decision making	Note many CCPs suspended or had reduced Observer coverage during 2020	22-26		Agenda item at SC6
	5	Report of the Scientific Committee	Observers at SC and WG meetings	47		Revised procedures for invitations implemented
			Recommendations in SC5 mostly deferred due to reduced time format of meetings	52c		
			Recommended that recommended that if feasible, CCPs provide details on the use of fishing footprints in order to allow the next Scientific Committee to progress on the subject,	52d1	To be discussed at SC6	Included in the PAEWG3 and SC6 agendas
			Noted that Japan intends to provide comments and request for clarification of the intended use of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint (para 49) which forms the foundation of the discussion of the framework for scientific research (para 181)	52d2	To be discussed at SC6	Included in the PAEWG3 and SC6 agendas
			Acknowledging that the format this year did not allow enough time to properly examine the deepwater shark bycatch mitigation measures discussed by the SC, and that additional time is needed to review the implementation and effectiveness of CMM12, requested the SC further elaborate the bycatch mitigation measures specified in paragraph 155 of the SC5 report in order to provide a solid basis for informed decision-making;	52e	Deferred to 2021	Deferred to 2022
			Noted some CCPs emphasised the importance of CCP bottom fishing impact assessments meeting the BFIA, and recalled paragraph 75 of the MoP6 report which asks CCPs to address gaps in their BFIA to meet the BFIA;	52f	Deferred to 2021	Included in the PAEWG3 and SC6 agendas
			Noted that the EU will consider the recommendations in paragraphs 180 and 181 of the SC5 report [Draft CMM on Research Fishing] and that Japan plans to circulate during the intersessional period its suggestions in response to SC's request provided in these paragraphs, for consideration at MOP 8;	52h	Deferred to 2021	May be included at SERAWG and SC6 if relevant papers are submitted
			Noted the advice outlined in paragraph 119 on the alfonso stock assessment and requested the SC continues to work towards improving the alfonso stock assessment and noted that some CCPs requested the SC to annually review the alfonso catch and effort statistics, and if catch or effort changes significantly as determined by the SC from the previous fishing year, this shall trigger a review by the SC on the timing of a new assessment, and any additional measures required. The MOP requested the SC to provide advice on data collection requirements to strengthen future alfonso stock assessments at its ordinary meeting in 2021.	52i	To be discussed at SERAWG & SC6	May be included at SERAWG and SC6 if relevant papers are submitted
			Endorsed the recommendation in paragraph 170 of the SC5 report which states "[t]he Scientific Committee recommended that the MoP note the ongoing issues around data provision to the Secretariat that had delayed or constrained Scientific Committee work, including the ERA on other teleosts (SC5, paragraph 170); and recommended the MoP request CCPs facilitate timely provision of data to the Secretariat and Scientific Committee so that the Scientific Committee can undertake its work";	52j	Deferred to 2021	Potential for development of a workplan at SC6
			Endorsed the recommendation in paragraph 199 of the SC5 report which states "the SC initially recommended that 2.5 days be allocated for the PAEWG3 meeting, 2.5 days for the SERAWG3 meeting and 5 days for the SC6 meeting.";	52k	SC6	Meetings shortened due to global pandemic response
	11	Secretariat Administration	The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Secretariat Staffing be added as an action item for the budget discussions at the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties.	136	To be discussed at SC6	Included in the PAEWG3 SERAWG, and SC6 agendas