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

Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Parties

to the

Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

(SIOFA)

17 – 20 November 2020

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Agenda Item 1 – Opening of the meeting

1. The 7th Meeting of the Parties to SIOFA was opened by correspondence on 17 November 2020. Consistent with the RoP Rule 6(1)(b), it is the Chair's responsibility to declare the meeting open. The Chair declared the opening of the meeting in her Opening Statement (Annex A).
2. The Meeting of the Parties **welcomed** China as the newest Contracting Party to the Agreement.
3. The list of participants is available in MoP-07-03 Rev2 (Annex B).

1.1 Opening statements

4. Delegations were invited to provide opening statements in writing, and they are outlined in AnnexC.

1.2 Admission of observers

5. The Meeting of the Parties **noted** paper MOP-07-03 Rev2 (Annex B), which lists the observers participating in this meeting.
6. The Meeting of the Parties **welcomed** the United States of America as new non-Contracting Party Observers, and the Environmental Justice Foundation as a new non-governmental organisation observer. The Meeting of the Parties also **welcomed** the following long-standing observers to SIOFA: UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, the Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fishers Association and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition.

1.3 Status of the Agreement

7. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the Depositary of the Agreement. The FAO has provided an update on the Status of the Agreement in MoP-07-14 Rev 1 (Annex D), which confirms that there are 15 signatories to the Agreement, 10 of which are Contracting Parties.
8. **The Meeting of the Parties noted the Status of the Agreement.**
9. **The Meeting of the Parties noted that there are 10 Contracting Parties, 1 Participating Fishing Entity, and five signatories, including one Cooperating non-Contracting Party.**

1.4 Participation in decision-making

10. On 13th August, the Executive Secretary advised the Meeting of the Parties by a letter (ref. 2020-08-12-1/SIOFA-ES) of a financial fraud concerning China's assessed contribution. The Executive Secretary advised in this letter that correspondence from the Secretariat providing bank details was intercepted and changed to a bank in Poland. The MoP has been advised that the matter is being investigated by relevant authorities and the Secretariat has implemented internal changes to improve security. The Secretariat and China have cooperated closely to resolve this issue.
11. In September, the Executive Secretary proposed in a circular 2020/12 some precautionary measures following the SIOFA Fraud attempt.
12. This issue meant that although China has made payment of its 2019 and 2020 contribution, the SIOFA official account has not received it for reasons purely outside of their control.

13. Rule 14 (1) of the Rules of Procedure provides that a contributor to the budget is not able to participate in the taking of decisions by the MoP if, at the time of the meeting, the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of contributions due from it for the preceding two full years.
14. However, Rule 14(2) grants the Meeting of the Parties the right to permit such a contributor to participate in the taking of decisions if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the contributor.
15. **In view of this, the Meeting of the Parties:**
 - a. **Noted with concern the financial fraud that has occurred with China's contribution.**
 - b. **Welcomed the steps taken by the Secretariat to improve SIOFA's security.**
 - c. **Requested that the Secretariat provide regular updates on this situation, including a full report to the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties.**
 - d. **Agreed that, if the funds cannot be recovered by the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties, that the MoP determine at that time an appropriate course of action for managing these arrears.**
 - e. **Agree to permit China to participate in the taking of decisions for this Meeting of the Parties, noting that the issue is ongoing, the issues leading to the non-payment of contributions were outside China's control, and China's active efforts to cooperate with authorities to recover the funds.**

Agenda Item 2 – Administrative arrangements

2.1 Adoption of the agenda

16. The Meeting of the Parties **agreed** to exceptionally adopt the meeting agenda in advance of this meeting in circular 2020/21. The agenda was finalised during a Heads of Delegation meeting on 12 November 2020 and is outlined in MoP-07-01 Rev3 (Annex E).

2.2 Confirmation of meeting documents

17. The Secretariat highlighted the table of agenda items and related papers in MoP-07-05 Rev9 (Annex F).

2.3 Appointment of rapporteurs

18. The Secretariat has engaged Ms. Jana Aker, of the NAFO Secretariat, as rapporteur for this meeting. The Meeting of the Parties **agreed** to appoint Ms. Aker as rapporteur for this meeting.

Agenda Item 3 – Intersessional decision making

19. The Chair noted that, in accordance with Rule 13(12), if any decision is taken intersessionally, the Executive Secretary shall include an agenda item on decisions taken at the following Meeting of the Parties. The decisions that were taken intersessionally were outlined in MoP-07-12 Rev1 (Annex G).

3.1 Review of COVID intersessional decisions

20. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, SIOFA has made a series of intersessional decisions relating to the observer coverage provisions under paragraph 39(a) of CMM 2019/01.
21. The Meeting of the Parties **noted** that those CCPs that benefited from the derogation have done so in accordance with the conditions outlined in the decision.

22. Japan noted that Meeting of the Parties agreed to suspend observer coverage provisions until 31 January 2021, as described in SIOFA Circular 2020/15, provided certain conditions are met (as outlined in relevant decisions and summarised in MoP-07-12 Rev1).
23. Australia noted that it had worked in good faith to make responsible COVID decisions. Australia noted it has supported decisions to derogate from provisions of CMMs in RFMOs where the derogation is proportionate, justified, time-bound and developed collaboratively where possible; and taken the view that a derogation should not replace a CCP's best efforts to comply. Australia expressed that it understood the reasons for derogating from the requirement for 100% observer coverage in demersal trawl fisheries but considered it important to make COVID-safe decisions and prioritise the health and safety of crew and observers; and to take action to prevent the spread of COVID on fishing vessels. Australia expressed that it also considers it is important to prioritise the mental health of crew and observers and crew, meaning that extended trips at sea to prevent returning home are not necessarily the best outcome for all involved. Australia emphasised that it is important to take steps to make fishing COVID-safe to get observers back to work. Australia also stated that it considers SIOFA needs to focus on developing robust MCS tools to enable independent monitoring and verification because in the absence of observers, fishing could occur unchecked in protected areas (particularly in the absence of VMS data being submitted) or move-on rules would not be followed.
24. The Cook Islands recognised the support for the intersessional decision relating to CMM 2019/01, para 39, as a necessary response to the practical challenges relating to the health, safety and welfare of our fisheries observers and vessel crews caused by the covid19 pandemic. The Cook Islands referred to the Compliance Committee report which includes a report of their efforts to continue with scientific monitoring, in spite of these intersessional decisions. With the ongoing uncertainty about when the resumption of normal observer activities might occur, the Cook Islands envisaged that further intersessional decisions will need to be made and noted that other industry relies on them to provide avenues to continue their fishing operations, and to minimise the broader economic, health and operational impacts of the pandemic, where possible. The Cook Islands expressed hope that the flexibility in the duration of application, and rationalising of the administrative workload could be supported in future decisions, as it prioritises its efforts and resources to national responses, particularly the health and economic security. The Cook Islands expressed its commitment to maintaining robust scientific monitoring programmes within SIOFA, and its appreciation for the consideration and support for the measures SIOFA has had to take this year.
25. The EU noted the intersessional decisions suspending scientific observer coverage on board trawl vessels flagged to two CCPs, in derogation from paragraph 39(a) of CMM 2019/01. As data collection by scientific observer is essential for the work of the Scientific Committee and other subsidiary bodies, the EU welcomed the efforts by the concerned CCPs to nevertheless ensure 100% scientific observer coverage on their trawl vessels. The EU also noted that the concerned CCPs have reported on the measures implemented during the derogation period, as required by relevant intersessional decisions. The EU expressed its readiness to examine the need for further extensions depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic evolves. In this regard, the EU considered that the burden on CCPs to request renewal of the derogation via new intersessional decisions is not unreasonable in view of the importance of data collection by scientific observers.
26. The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition noted their understanding of the decisions taken in relation to COVID-19, but wished that it not be taken as a precedent and asked the Meeting of the Parties to consider options to include observers in discussions concerning such decisions in the future.

3.2 Review of all other intersessional decisions

27. The Meeting of the Parties worked, via intersessional decision, to create a merit-based recruitment process to appoint a new Scientific Committee Chairperson, Mr. Alistair Dunn.
28. The Meeting of the Parties also worked to find a new Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties and committed to resolve the long-standing challenge in finding chairpersons. The Meeting of the Parties thanked Ms. Kerrie Robertson for serving as the Chairperson for MoP7.
29. Additional intersessional decisions were taken in relation to 2020 meeting arrangements for the Scientific Committee, the Compliance Committee, and the Meeting of the Parties.
30. Australia noted the high volume of intersessional decisions made by the Meeting of the Parties relating to meeting dates/consultation, recruitment of the Scientific Committee Chair and the Meeting of the Parties Chairperson role and thanked the Chair for her consultative approach to developing the Meeting of the Parties meeting agenda/modalities. Australia also noted that while it was necessary to conduct business by email, it also meant that the Meeting of the Parties is less transparent than when it is making decisions in a physical meeting. Australia emphasised the importance of transparency which is emphasised in the Agreement itself. Australia requested that the Secretariat treats all responses equally and ensures that all responses are circulated rather than some selectively circulated. Australia requested that the Secretariat ensures that decisions are transmitted to the correct contacts and that all circulars are given a unique reference ID and made available on the restricted part of the website to ensure decisions and outcomes can be easily traced.
31. The Chairperson recognised the high degree of cooperation within the Meeting of the Parties to ensure critical business was progressed.

Agenda Item 4 – Report of the Compliance Committee

32. The Chair highlighted the report of the 4th Compliance Committee (CC4) meeting that took place from 09-11 November 2020 (MoP-07-34).
33. The Meeting of the Parties reflected on the request from the Compliance Committee in Paragraph 27 of the CC4 Report to clarify the treatment of NGO information under CMM 2018/06.
34. The European Union stated that paragraph 6 of CMM 2018/06 is very clear and requires the Secretariat to draw up the draft IUU Vessel List on the basis of the information received pursuant to paragraphs 2 or 26 of CMM 2018, and any other information at its disposal. The EU noted that latter includes any information received from external actors, such as NGOs or industry and that while such actors did not necessarily have access to the same type and quality of information as CCPs (e.g. VMS data), this should not prevent them from submitting to SIOFA other types of relevant information. The European Union further noted that the flag State is given the opportunity to provide comments on such information, in view of the fact that paragraph 6 requires this information to be transmitted to all Contracting Parties, CNCs and PFEs, as well as to non-Contracting Parties with vessels on the draft IUU Vessel List, at least 60 days before the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties.
35. The Meeting of the Parties discussed how to provide the clarification that the CC4 was seeking but was unable to reach a consensus.
36. The Meeting of the Parties reflected on the recommendation from the Compliance Committee in Paragraph 24 of the CC4 Report to encourage South Africa to participate in SIOFA and comply with all SIOFA CMMs. The Meeting of the Parties discussed this further under Agenda Item 8.

37. **The Meeting of the Parties endorsed the recommendation outlined in paragraph 25 of the CC4 report to request Mauritius to comply with all SIOFA CMMs, including 2019/07.**
38. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the Chairperson of the MoP should write a letter to Mauritius making Mauritius aware of the Meeting of the Parties' decision.**
39. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the report and recommendations of the CC4 outlined in MoP-07-34.**
40. The Meeting of the Parties thanked the Chair of the Compliance Committee, Mr. Johnny Louys.

4.1 Adoption of HSBI annexes (Questionnaire, Flag and Inspector Card)

41. The Compliance Committee recommended that the Meeting of the Parties adopt the proposal for the SIOFA Inspection Flags outlined in MoP-07-35.
42. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the proposal for the SIOFA Inspection Flags outlined in MoP-07-35**
43. France (on behalf of its Overseas Territories) offered to lead intersessional work on the HSBI questionnaire.
44. **The Meeting of the Parties thanked France (on behalf of its Overseas Territories) for the offer and requested that CCPs submit contacts and comments on the HSBI questionnaire by 31 January 2021.**

Agenda Item 5 – Report of the Scientific Committee

45. The Chair noted that the Scientific Committee held its 5th meeting virtually from 7-31 July 2020, and the report of the Scientific Committee (SC5) is outlined in MoP-07-18, with specific advice to the Meeting of the Parties presented in Agenda Item 13. In addition, the Protected Areas and Ecosystems Working group (PAEWG) met on 26 May and 16 June 2020, and the Stock and Ecological Risk Assessment Working Group (SERAWG) met on 18, 23, and 25 June 2020.
46. France (Overseas Territories) expressed its support for the adoption of a relatively small-scale spatial resolution that better allows for locating the areas where a significant fishing effort has been deployed, such as the one presented in paper PAEWG-02-11. France (Overseas Territories) also expressed its support for the adoption of a protocol to document interactions with marine mammals such as described in papers SC-05-21 and SC-04-INFO-06. France (Overseas Territories) also expressed support for the adoption of operational measures to mitigate marine mammal interactions, such as the following actions for longline fishing vessels subject to killer whale interactions, in order to reduce the risk of spreading depredation behaviour: stop hauling and buoy off the line when killer whales are sighted, steam away at least 30 nautical miles, not haul any line within a radius of 30 nautical miles around the initial observation point, and restart hauling of the buoyed-off line once killer whales are absent.
47. Australia noted the importance of ensuring that SIOFA SC/WG meetings are opened to observers and noted with concern that administrative difficulties prevented this from happening at some SC/WG meetings in 2020. Australia hoped that these issues could be resolved for future meetings. Australia also expressed its appreciation for the update on the 2019 agreed consultancies but encouraged consultancy processes to commence in a more timely way in future, as they are important for meeting specific CMM taskings.
48. Australia further noted that while some SC report recommendations had been noted, it would be useful to commence intersessional discussions on those recommendations.
49. The EU thanked Australia for its generous voluntary contribution to hire a consultant to lead the developing of a cumulative BFIA and supported the process proposed for

conducting the work. The EU encouraged all CCPs to engage in the process and to provide the necessary data in a timely manner.

50. The EU expressed its support for conducting a feasibility assessment of collecting acoustic data in paragraph 111 of the SC report, noting that the synergies between voluntary contributions and grants, on the one hand, and the SIOFA budget on the other hand, could allow a preliminary assessment of the main topics. The EU also expressed support for the time frame described in paragraph 153 (the ERA for SIOFA deepwater chondrichthyans to be updated every five to ten years) and expressed its appreciation to the PAEWG, SERAWG and SC Chairs for providing the updated research priorities acknowledging that funding should focus on identified MoP priorities, while assuring synergies among different sources of funding.
51. The EU expressed support for the SC recommendation in paragraph 119 of its report concerning the need to take a cautious approach when applying the results of the stock assessment for Alfonsino in light of the uncertainties around the stock assessment. Considering the funding available for scientific development and the SC planned activities in the next years, the EU noted its expectation that the SC continue to work towards improving the stock assessment, in particular by addressing the uncertainties, in order to obtain robust scientific advice from the SC for this stock as soon as possible.
52. **The Meeting of the Parties reviewed the report and advice of the SC5. Following this review, the Meeting of the Parties:**
 - a. **ADOPTED the report of the 5th meeting of the Scientific Committee at MOP-07-18;**
 - b. **Considered the recommendations from the Scientific Committee to the MOP given in the consolidated advice in Agenda item 13 of the SC5 report and summarised in the Scientific Committee Chair's paper to the MoP (MOP-07-31[info]);**
 - c. **Due to time constraints and although some CCPs expressed broad support for these recommendations, agreed to defer the recommendations outlined in paragraphs 49, 134 and 155 of the SC5 report to MoP8;**
 - d. **Concerning the recommendation outlined in paragraph 49:**
 - i. **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,**
 1. **endorsed the request that the PAEWG prepare a paper outlining the options for different methodologies of different gear types and objectives as well as options for addressing the pending technical issues and associated consequences/trade-offs to facilitate discussions of the MoP8;**
 2. **Noted that Japan intends to provide comments and request for clarification of the intended use of the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint (para49) which forms the foundation of the discussion of the framework for scientific research (para181)**
 - e. **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;**
 - f. **Noted some CCPs emphasised the importance of CCP bottom fishing impact assessments meeting the BFIAS, and recalled paragraph 75 of the MoP6 report which asks CCPs to address gaps in their BFIAs to meet the BFIAs;**

- g. **Noted that the recommendations in paragraphs 99, 111, 153 and 189 concern individual CCPs in terms of their contribution to SC and possibly concern the SIOFA budget and could be considered under Agenda Item 11;**
 - h. **Noted that the EU will consider the recommendations in paragraphs 180 and 181 of the SC5 report 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;**
 - i. **Noted the advice outlined in paragraph 119 on the alfonsino stock assessment and requested the SC continues to work towards improving the alfonsino stock assessment and noted that some CCPs requested the SC to annually review the alfonsino 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 alfonsino stock assessments at its ordinary meeting in 2021.**
 - j. **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”;**
 - k. **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.”;**
 - l. **Noted that some CCPs emphasised the importance of both consultancies and CP/PFE driven contributions to drive forward the SC Work Plan;**
 - m. **Thanked Dr Ilona Stobutzki for her outstanding contribution to the work of the Scientific Committee;**
 - n. **Thanked Dr Patrice Pruvost and Mr Lee Georgeson for their work as Chairs of the SC working groups, and Dr Tom Nishida for his role as Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee and his ongoing work as a Chair of an SC working group;**
 - o. **Noted that the MOP undertook a recruitment process in September/October 2020 to trial an independent SC Chair, and welcomes Mr Alistair Dunn to the role of SIOFA SC Chair;**
 - p. **Confirmed the ongoing appropriateness of the Scientific Committee Terms of Reference, noting these are reviewed annually, and that paragraph 3 on the election of the Chair and Vice Chair may need further consideration in the future.**
53. The Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fisheries Association provided a statement relating to the allocation of funds to work on application of acoustics to alfonsino stock assessment, outlined in Annex H and a statement on expanding knowledge on the deepwater sharks of the Agreement Area, also outlined in Annex H.
54. The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition noted that nylon snoods are a proven mitigation measure and it encourages CCPs to use them as soon as possible and report to SC-6 as to their experiences.

Agenda Item 6 – Interim bottom fishing measures

55. The Chair highlighted that this is a standing agenda item for the Meeting of the Parties.

6.1 States or fishing entities that became a CCP before the MOP in 2017 – revision to measures established under paragraph 10 of CMM 2019/01

56. The Chair highlighted Paragraph 10 (1) of CMM 2019/01, which permits CCPs to establish and apply interim bottom fishing measures to their flagged vessels. All existing measures were disclosed at the 4th Meeting of the Parties and were compiled and made available on the SIOFA website and noted that there have been no updates to these measures since 2017. The Chair noted that Paragraph 10(3) of CMM 2019/01 sets out a process for States or fishing entities that became a CCP before the MoP in 2017 to modify their individual bottom fishing measures. The Chair invited the CCPs to notify the MoP at this time of any updates they have made to their interim bottom fishing measures established under paragraph 10 of CMM 2019/01.
57. Australia noted that paragraph 10(3) of CMM 2019/01 Conservation and Management Measure for the Interim Management of Bottom Fishing in the Agreement Area (Interim Management of Bottom Fishing) provides for CCPs to revise established measures provided that any amendments made are consistent with the requirements of paragraph 10(1). Revisions to measures shall be notified to the Secretariat within 30 days of the amendment and shall be disclosed at the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties. Australia implemented revised measures on 30 September 2020, notified the Secretariat of the revised measures on 30 October 2020, and provides the following disclosure to the Meeting of the Parties in relation to the revised measures. The key changes from the previously disclosed measures (2017) are: an updated bottom fishing impact assessment accounting for intended longline fishing activity for Patagonian toothfish on Williams Ridge, and potting for lobsters within Australia’s historical fishing footprint, and the consequent management measures arising from this. Australia’s measures are detailed on the Interim Bottom Fishing Measures page of the SIOFA website. Australia will continue to provide updates as revisions are made as per paragraph 10(3) of CMM 2019/01.
58. The Cook Islands provided the following information in accordance with CMM 2019/01, paragraph 10(2) for measures applied in relation to paragraph 10(1)a. of the same measure, as follows:
- a. The Cook Islands has set an annual effort limit whereby we require all vessels to remain below 664 days at sea. This level corresponds to our maximum annual effort over the period 1st January 2001 -31st December 2012.
 - b. Cook Islands vessels only fish on known historical tracks. Cook Islands vessels are not permitted to fish outside the footprint set out in the Cook Islands BFIA.
 - c. The Cook Islands has developed an advanced encounter protocol to include holistic management approaches set by the Ministry of Marine Resources which include the interim VME encounter threshold under CMM19/01 section 12(b). The Cook Islands requires vessels that encounter VME indicator species above this threshold to cease bottom fishing activities within two nautical miles either side of a trawl track extended by two nautical miles at each end as set out under CMM19/01 section 13a. Bottom fishing activities in the encounter area will not be permitted by any vessels. Until the Meeting of the Parties decides based on the advice of the Scientific Committee whether the area shall remain closed to all or some gears.
 - d. The Marine Resources Act, 2005 specifies penalties for breaches of licensing conditions, which includes the requirement for vessels to avoid Protected Areas or BPAs. In accordance with paragraphs 45 and 46 of CMM 2019/01, all Cook Islands trawl vessels adhere to the closure to bottom fishing of the five protected areas

specified in Annex 3 of CMM 2019/01. Furthermore, an additional seven protected areas have been identified by the Cook Islands that are closed to bottom fishing by Cook Islands flagged vessels.

- e. The Cook Islands maintains 100% observer coverage on its trawl vessels, except for the period that the intersessional decisions for the derogation from CMM 2019/01, paragraph 39(a), applies commencing 31st March 2020. Furthermore, MMR continuously monitors Cook Islands flagged vessels operating in the SIOFA Agreement Area using VMS and AIS.
59. The European Union notified the MoP that it has not revised its interim bottom fishing measures. The EU noted that it had provided an update of the preliminary assessment of bottom fishing impact for the EU fisheries in the SIOFA Area (SC-05-19) at the 5th meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC05). The EU noted the SC's comments in this regard (paragraph 84 of the meeting report, MOP-07-18) and will address these at the next meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC06).
 60. France (on behalf of its Overseas Territories) notified the MoP that the 2017 regulation has been updated in 2019 following MoP6. The new regulation is *Arrêté du 22 novembre 2019 transposant les recommandations de l'accord relatif aux pêches dans le Sud de l'océan Indien adoptées en 2019*. France (Overseas Territories) noted that most of the interim bottom fishing measures pertaining to CMM 2019/01 para 10 previously in force remain mostly unchanged, this evolution aimed at taking into account the measures adopted in 2019. The following obligations described in para 10(1)b are applicable for FR(OT):
 - a. "limits on its bottom fishing effort and/or catch": effort limitations (number of authorizations and fishing days) remain the same (articles 5 & 6 of the *arrêté*), catch limits have been introduced in 2019 in accordance with the adoption of CMM 2019/15 on the Management of Demersal Stocks (article 7 of the *arrêté*);
 - b. "limits on spatial distribution": fishing areas according to historical catches remain unchanged (annex 1 of the *arrêté*);
 - c. "provisions to ensure its bottom fishing will not have significant adverse impacts on VMEs": annex 6 (of the *arrêté*) has been updated in accordance with the provisions of CMM 2019/01 on VMEs;
 - d. "provisions ensuring that any vessel flying its flag is not authorised to fish in any areas that the Meeting of the Parties has decided to close to fishing": provisions of the *arrêté* remain unchanged, all fishing activities must comply with SIOFA regulations.
 61. Japan notified the Meeting of the Parties that there was no update in its fisheries management measures in relation to the interim bottom fishing measures.
 62. Thailand notified the Meeting of the Parties that Thailand interim bottom fishing measures as "The Department of Fisheries Thailand Notification on Requirement and Regulations of Overseas Fishing Vessels which are Operating in the Area under the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) B.E. 2562 (2019)" was sent to the secretariat on 18 March 2019 and has disclosed on the SIOFA website since MOP6 meeting. Thailand interim bottom fishing measures according to CMM 2019/01 para 10 unchanged from disclosed on SIOFA website at the MOP6 meeting. The measures described in para 10(1)a, as following;
 - a. limits on its bottom fishing effort and/or catch
 - i. Clause 5: All authorised fishing vessels shall have been allocated the days for fishing which not more than eighteen thousand and six hundred (18,600) days/year.
 - b. constraints on the spatial distribution of its bottom fishing effort
 - i. Clause 7: Trawls shall be authorised to fish only in the area as shown in the Appendix of this Notification.

- c. Ensure no significant adverse impacts on VMEs
 - i. Thailand submitted Bottom Fishery Impact Assessment (BFIA) to the secretariat since 2018 and it has been published on SIOFA website.
 - d. Ensure no fishing in closed areas
 - i. Clause 10: Prohibited fishing areas appeared in the Appendix of this Notification
63. Thailand noted the Interim Bottom Fishing Measures A Compilation by Contracting Party that disclosed on SIOFA website are not showing Thailand Interim Bottom Fishing Measures. Therefore, Thailand would like to require the secretariat to include Thailand interim bottom fishing measures in the Interim Bottom Fishing Measures A Compilation by Contracting Party and disclose on SIOFA website.
 64. The Chair thanked CCPs for their updates and also invited the delegations who have not yet disclosed any measures, to disclose any bottom fishing measures that they may have recently applied, if they have been applied.
 65. Mauritius and the Seychelles noted that the position of the state parties to the SIOFA in relation to the jurisdiction of Mauritius and Seychelles in the Joint Management area (JMA) as per the provisions of article 77 of UNCLOS. It reiterates its position that the JMA has sovereign rights over the natural resources as specified in article 77 (4) of UNCLOS. With regard to bottom trawlings in the JMA, it expresses its objection to this practice since it has direct damaging effect on the living resources of the seabed. A detailed communication shall be forwarded to the SIOFA Secretariat in due course.
 66. The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition provided a statement relating to Interim Bottom Fishing Measured under this agenda item, and the statement is outlined in Annex I.

6.2 States or fishing entities that became a CCP after the MOP in 2017 – approval of measures pursuant to paragraph 28 of CMM 2019/01.

67. The Meeting of the Parties **noted** that there were no measures submitted for approval at this meeting.

Agenda Item 7 – SIOFA Compliance Report

68. The Chair noted that under paragraph 22 of CMM 2018-11, the Meeting of the Parties is annually required to consider the Provisional Compliance Report (pSCR) and any comments from CCPs on their respective sections of the pSCR. The Meeting of the Parties shall adopt by consensus a Final Compliance Report (fSCR) at its ordinary meeting in accordance with Article 8 of the Agreement and Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure.
69. The Chair highlighted the provisional SIOFA Compliance Report (pSCR) in MoP-07-33 outlining the decisions of the CC4 on the levels of compliance for each CCP.
70. The meeting of the Parties noted that a status of ‘not assessed’ was assigned to Australia, Cook Islands and Thailand in respect of paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01. Australia provided VMS data; the Cook Islands and Thailand did not provide VMS data. The Compliance Committee requested the Meeting of the Parties to provide clarity on what is required under paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01.
71. The EU considered that paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01 does not require the submission of VMS data by CCPs to the Secretariat until such time as the MOP adopts a dedicated CMM establishing a SIOFA VMS. The EU also noted that, in the absence of any cross-referencing between paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01 and paragraphs 4-14 of CMM 2019/10, the relationship, if any, between these provisions is unclear. The EU further noted that there appeared to be inconsistencies in the way in which the pSCR assesses some but not all CCPs engaging in bottom fishing in the SIOFA Area in relation to paragraph 44.

72. The EU recalled the agreement at MOP5 to develop a SIOFA VMS. Accordingly, the EU noted it had submitted a proposal to MOP6 for a new CMM to establish a SIOFA VMS and a revised version of that proposal to MOP7 (MOP-07-21). The EU encouraged all CCPs to engage actively and constructively on this important matter during the intersessional period in view of establishing a SIOFA VMS as soon as possible. In view of the above, the EU considered that the rows concerning the assessment of paragraph 44 should be removed from the fSCR. The EU suggested that paragraph 44 be deleted from CMM 2019/01. Alternatively, the EU expressed its willingness to consider amending paragraph 44 to establish a clear obligation on all CCPs whose vessels bottom fish in the SIOFA Area to provide VMS data to the Secretariat, on the basis of the existing requirements set out in paragraphs 8 and 11 of CMM 2019/10, and to remove any obsolete references to the Data Standards (CMM 02/2018).
73. Australia noted that consistent with Australia's statement on this issue in the Compliance Committee meeting, Australia does not consider this the proper use of Not Assessed. Australia considered that its compliance should be assessed notwithstanding unresolved differences in view between CCPs about what is required under paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01. The VMS reports requirement in paragraph 44 specifies only that the VMS reports be submitted in an electronic format in accordance with any VMS CMM and data standards CMM adopted by the Meeting of the Parties. Australia considered that a rating of Compliant was appropriate for Australia on the basis that Australia has submitted the VMS data for its vessels in electronic format in accordance with CMM 2019/02 on data standards.
74. France (on behalf of its Overseas Territories) noted that they agree that this provision might need clarification as it might contradict (at least in the format that is required) CMM 2019/10. The provision is unclear both on the requirement to submit a VMS report and on the format that is required, since the obligation imposed to respect "any VMS CMM and data standards CMM" might not be clear enough to be binding – or at least not to be subject to different interpretations. France (Overseas Territories) noted its view that CMM 2019/10 is much clearer to assess the submission of VMS reports (cf para 8b and the table format), and agreed with the Chair's proposal that paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01 could be removed. France (Overseas Territories) noted that it does not seem necessary to adapt it/change the wording/cross-reference it with CMM 2019/10, since binding provisions are already in place in CMM 2019/10. France (Overseas Territories) also noted that if the MOP amends CMM 2019/10 in the future and its provisions related to VMS, para 44 of CMM 2019/01 would again become obsolete. Therefore, it appears easier to have all VMS obligations stated and clarified in the same CMM.
75. The Meeting of the Parties took note of the different views expressed on the interpretation of paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01. Noting that there was no consensus on this issue, and in order to avoid future issues arising on this point, the Chair proposed in MoP-07-45 the deletion of Paragraph 44 in CMM 2019/01.
76. Australia expressed that its view remained that there is an obligation under paragraph 44 of the measure to provide VMS reports, and recognized the difference of opinion with other CCPs. Australia agreed that if there is not a consistent interpretation of an obligation then the utility of the provision is diminished. On that basis, Australia accepted the deletion of paragraph 44 of CMM 2019/01.
77. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the revisions to the Conservation and Management Measure 2020/01 Interim Management of Bottom Fishing in the Agreement Area outlined in MoP-07-45 (Annex J).**
78. The European Union noted that some references in Annex 1 of CMM 2018/11 – Compliance Monitoring Scheme to other CMMs were not referencing the most up to date CMMs. The

European Union proposed to make the appropriate changes to CMM 2018/11 to make the appropriate updates.

79. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the revisions to Annex 1 to CMM 2020/11 Compliance Monitoring Scheme outlined in Annex K.**
80. In relation to CMM 2019/10, Chinese Taipei noted that it maintained its position that the CMM 2019/10 entered into force without taking into account the longstanding practice and management of pelagic longliner transshipment established in the RFMOs, which results in two different sets of transshipment measures in the Indian Ocean. Chinese Taipei noted that requiring fishing vessel operators to comply with the inconsistent regulations in transshipping while operating in the Indian Ocean would pose a great impact on the industry, in particular during recent challenging time of the pandemic. Among the CCPs of the SIOFA, it noted it is probably the only one with pelagic longline fisheries operating in the Agreement Area at this stage. Despite that, Chinese Taipei fishing vessels authorized to operate in the SIOFA Area are in fact authorized to fish in the IOTC as well as the CCSBT areas, which means all transshipment operations are fully compliant with the Resolutions of the IOTC and the CCSBT, as applicable, and their domestic regulations. In other words, the transshipment operations are monitored by their Fisheries Agency, the Regional Observer Programme and other RFMOs in the Indian Ocean and are therefore in line with relevant RFMOs and domestic regulations. Chinese Taipei expressed regret to learn that they are assessed as “non-compliant” in the transshipment in the Compliance Report s. It is the current CMM that prevents us from submitting the carrier vessels that are not flying their flag, which is allowed in accordance with IOTC and CCSBT resolutions. Chinese Taipei expressed that this leads to the challenging situation for them. For this reason, Chinese Taipei advised it will put forward an amendment to this CMM and/or relevant CMM next year. In the meantime, Chinese Taipei would like to propose that the MoP consider the following interim arrangement so that this CMM could be smoothly implemented until MoP8: *A CCP with pelagic longline fisheries may submit to the Secretariat a list of the carrier vessels not flying its flag but included on the IOTC or the CCSBT Record of Authorized Vessel; the Secretariat will maintain and administer a list of interim authorized carrier vessel. The CCP is responsible for the reporting obligations on behalf of the carrier vessel's flag authority.*
81. The Meeting of the Parties were not able to support the proposal from Chinese Taipei for the interim arrangement for the CMM, noting that the proposal was a derogation from the existing CMM. The MoP noted that all vessels operating in the SIOFA Agreement Area are required to be authorized on the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels.
82. The Meeting of the Parties also noted the ‘not assessed’ status assigned to Japan, the Seychelles and Comoros for paragraph 31 of CMM 2018/06 in the Provisional compliance Report. The Meeting of the Parties **agreed** to remove the rows relating to the assessment of paragraph 31 of the Final Compliance Report as there was no evidence that the binding provision of that paragraph had been breached. The Meeting of the Parties **requested** that the compliance report template be revised to accurately reflect the obligation under paragraph 31 of CMM 2018/06 and **agreed** that voluntary provisions should not be included in the CMS.
83. The Meeting of the Parties noted the status of ‘not assessed’ assigned to Thailand and noted Thailand’s explanation of the practical difficulties it encountered complying with the relevant annexes of CMM 2018/02 for handline methods. The Meeting of the Parties **requested** the SC examine the format for handline at its next meeting and make appropriate recommendations to MOP8.
84. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the final Compliance Report (fSCR) outlined in MoP-07-44 Rev1 (Annex L).**
85. The Meeting of the Parties recognized that the compliance monitoring scheme is still in its early days and that the Meeting of the Parties continues to work with the Secretariat to

ensure that SIOFA has a fully functioning compliance monitoring process. The Meeting of the Parties agreed to continue to work together to ensure that its application of this process under the CMM improves over time.

Agenda Item 8 – Listing of IUU vessels

86. The Chair highlighted the provisional IUU vessel list in MoP-07-32 that was submitted by the Compliance Committee and noted there were three vessels for consideration to be listed on the SIOFA IUU vessel list.
87. In relation to the Abishak Putha 3, the Compliance Committee Chair explained that the Secretariat received information that the vessel was operating in the SIOFA Agreement Area and not on the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels. Available information suggested that the vessel was flagged to Sri Lanka and the Secretariat contacted authorities in Sri Lanka who confirmed the vessel was not flagged to Sri Lanka, resulting in the flag State being unknown and the vessel presumed to be Stateless. Noting that the available information indicates that the vessel may still be operating under the flag of Sri Lanka, **the Meeting of the Parties REQUESTED that the Secretariat further investigate with Sri Lankan authorities on this matter.**
88. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to include the Abishak Putha 3 on the SIOFA IUU vessel list with an unknown flag State.**
89. In relation to the Mariam 1, the Compliance Committee Chair explained that the Secretariat received information from the Environmental Justice Foundation that the vessel was operating in the SIOFA Agreement Area and not on the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels. The Secretariat contacted the flag State (Mauritius), which confirmed the vessel activity and noted the claim to historical rights in the concerned area where the fishing activity took place. The CC4, during their deliberations, noted that the legal information had not been provided by Mauritius to support the claim for historical rights, and agreed to include the vessel on the provisional IUU vessel list.
90. Mauritius stated that vessels flagged to Mauritius have been operating on the Saya de Malha Bank since colonial times and strongly opposed the Mariam 1 vessel being included in the provisional IUU vessel list as it has not carried out any IUU activities. Mauritius noted that the vessels have been reporting all required data to Mauritius and the licencing systems for the Saya de Malha Bank have been in place since the 1990's. Mauritius also stated that it strongly opposed NGO's proposing vessels for consideration on the IUU vessel list, noting the CMM specifies CPs, CNCs, and PFEs can propose vessels for consideration on the IUU vessel list. Mauritius noted that there is no consensus and thus the Mariam 1 vessel cannot be listed in the IUU vessel list, and requested that Mariam 1 should be given the same treatment as El Shaddai and be discussed at the next Meeting of the Parties.
91. Some CCPs expressed that in line with CMM 2018/06, CPs, CNCs, and PFEs can propose vessels for consideration on the IUU vessel list. Furthermore, some CCPs also questioned, according to Rules of Procedure, whether the Secretariat is not entitled to draft IUU vessels list. China also noted that EJF only requested the Secretariat to investigate the vessel.
92. Some CCPs noted that the information provided by the Environmental Justice Foundation was confirmed by Mauritius and reiterated that Mauritius has not yet provided any information supporting its claim of historic fishing rights.
93. Australia expressed its support for the inclusion of the Mariam 1 on the IUU Vessel List as Mauritius has not demonstrated that the fishing activities were not IUU or that effective action has been taken in response to the IUU fishing activities in question. Australia noted that for the purposes of the IUU Vessel List, Mauritian fishing licences are not relevant as a matter of international law as the vessel was fishing for 'fisheries resources' as defined in Article 1(f) of the Agreement in the SIOFA Area and is not on the SIOFA Record of

Authorized Vessels. For Australia, at a minimum, effective action requires that Mauritius revokes the fishing permit until it includes the vessel on the SIOFA Record of Authorized Vessels and that Mauritius provides assurances that it will only authorise fishing by its vessels in the SIOFA Area in a manner consistent with SIOFA CMMs. Australia noted Mauritius' claims of historical rights on the Saya de Malha Banks. Australia stated that it has not seen any information in relation to the basis for those claims, and that it does not acquiesce to Mauritius' claims. Australia noted that Mauritius has undertaken to provide this information for the last two years.

94. The European Union agreed with Australia and expressed its support for the inclusion of the *Mariam 1* on the IUU Vessel List, noting that the information received from the EJF was confirmed by Mauritius. The EU also requested that Mauritius provide a timeline of when they intend to submit the information relevant to this issue so that it can be reviewed by the MoP.
95. Thailand, supported by France (Overseas Territories) requested that Mauritius provide information on their intention on the vessel. Thailand requested that Mauritius clarify whether it intends to work quickly to add the vessel to the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels, and its intentions for other vessels operating under the Mauritius flag.
96. France (on behalf of its Overseas Territories) echoed the comments made by Australia and the EU and agreed that Mauritius should update the MoP as to whether they intend to authorise the vessel to fish in 2021.
97. Mauritius noted it required more time to review internally before it could report on a decision to authorise the vessel in 2021.
98. The Chair noted that no consensus could be found on the decision to add the vessel *Mariam 1* to the SIOFA IUU vessel list and proposed as a compromise to include the vessel on the 2021 draft SIOFA IUU vessel list and to request Mauritius to provide the Meeting of the Parties with updated relevant information on this vessel.
99. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to include the *Mariam 1* on the 2021 draft SIOFA IUU Vessel List.**
100. **Mauritius committed to provide updated information on the status of this vessel and the information requested by the Meeting of the Parties. Mauritius undertook to provide this information to the next regular Meeting of the Parties (MoP8).**
101. In relation to the *El Shaddai*, the Compliance Committee Chair explained that the Secretariat received information from a CCP that the vessel was operating in the SIOFA Agreement Area without being included on the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels. The Secretariat contacted the flag State (South Africa), and the response from South Africa was received following the closure of the CC4 meeting. The Secretariat reported that South Africa provided a response to the Secretariat on 16 November 2020 (outlined in MoP-07-40 Rev1) indicating that they will be conducting an investigation into the matter and provide a report to SIOFA with the result of their investigation.
102. Some CCPs indicated that, with the updated information from South Africa, and the information from the vessel operator that they were operating under CCAMLR regulations, they could no longer support adding this vessel to the IUU vessel list until South Africa provided the results of their investigation. They further drew the attention of the Meeting of the Parties that the initial action to be taken by the Meeting of the Parties should be to officially seek cooperation from South Africa, noting that Paragraph 4 of Article 17 of the Agreement obliges CPs to individually or jointly request non-Contracting Parties whose vessels fish in the Area to cooperate fully in the implementation of SIOFA conservation and management measures.
103. Some CCPs expressed concern with the proposal not to add the vessel to the IUU vessel list, noting that the procedure outlined in the CMM 2018/06 is clear and requires the vessel to be included in the IUU vessel list. They also noted with concern that this vessel was

engaged in IUU fishing and that South Africa, as the flag State, had improperly authorised the vessel to fish in SIOFA despite its obligations under article 8 of UN Fish Stocks Agreement and despite not cooperating formally with SIOFA. These CCPs reiterated their expectation that South Africa respect SIOFA's rules. Those CCPs also noted that if more information were received from South Africa in the interim, the Meeting of the Parties could take an intersessional decision to de-list the vessel if the results of the investigation warrant such action.

104. Australia expressed its support for the inclusion of the El Shaddai on the IUU Vessel List as South Africa has not yet demonstrated that effective action has been taken in response to the IUU fishing activities in question. For Australia, effective action requires that South Africa revoke the fishing permit and further, and importantly, that South Africa cooperate with SIOFA before authorising its vessels to fish in the SIOFA Area. Australia noted that the operator of the vessel has endeavoured to demonstrate its compliance with the domestic regulations by South Africa and these circumstances are unfortunate for the vessel. Australia reiterated that Article 8 of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement obliges South Africa to cooperate with SIOFA in order for it to authorise its vessels to fish in the SIOFA Area.
105. The European Union expressed its support for listing the El Shaddai on the IUU Vessel List. The EU noted that it proposed this vessel for listing on the basis of the information they had collected, confirming the vessel was releasing tags in the SIOFA Agreement Area, and that the vessel activities were confirmed by the vessel operator. Although the EU welcomed South Africa's commitment to investigate the matter, the vessel should be included on the IUU Vessel List pending the outcome of the investigation and demonstration by the flag state that the conditions set out in paragraph 14 of CMM 2018/06 are met and that suitably documented information is submitted in accordance with paragraph 28 of CMM 2018/06. Finally, the EU noted that in 2020 the Executive Secretary had written to South Africa and other non-Contracting Parties who undertake fishing in the Agreement Area to cooperate with the Meeting of the Parties but that South Africa had not replied.
106. The Chair noted that no consensus could be found on the decision to add the vessel El Shaddai to the SIOFA IUU vessel list, and proposed a compromised way forward to include the vessel on the 2021 draft SIOFA IUU vessel list and encourage the Secretariat to write a letter to the South African authorities and request a response from them within 45 days of receiving the letter.
107. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the vessel El Shaddai (flag State: South Africa) be included on the 2021 draft SIOFA IUU vessel List.**
108. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the Secretariat send a letter to the South African authorities, with the MoP7 report enclosed, requesting a response within 45 days of receipt that includes the following:**
 - a. **A reminder to South Africa of the Rules of SIOFA,**
 - b. **A request that South Africa cooperate with SIOFA,**
 - c. **A request for South Africa to apply for Cooperating non-Contracting Party status in SIOFA,**
 - d. **A reminder of South Africa's obligations under the UN Fish Stocks Agreement,**
 - e. **A request that South Africa not authorise its vessels to fish in the SIOFA Area under its domestic legislation until such time as it is cooperating with SIOFA and is complying with its CMMS, noting that the vessel will need to be included on the Record of Authorised Vessels and that CMM 2020/01 requires that States or fishing entities that join or cooperate with SIOFA after the MOP in 2018 submit measures for approval before authorising fishing.**
109. The Chair noted the recommendation from the CC4 relating to the updated information for the Cobija (formerly Cape Flower). The Meeting of the Parties also discussed the procedure

for updating vessel particulars for vessels currently on the IUU vessel list, noting such changes should be implemented by the Secretariat when the information becomes available and that MOP approval was not required.

110. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to update the name of the vessel Cape Flower to Cobija and the flag State to unknown.**
111. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the Secretariat should make updates to vessel particulars concerning vessels in the IUU vessel list when the information is received and advise the Meeting of the Parties when any updates are made.**
112. The Chair highlighted the list of cross-listed vessels in part 2 of MoP-07-32 and noted that the list was not developed following the procedure outlined in paragraph 25 of CMM 2018/06.
113. **The Meeting of the Parties emphasised the importance of the cross-listing process is in the fight against IUU fishing and noted that the procedure was not followed in this instance and strongly encouraged the Secretariat to follow the procedure outlined in paragraph 25 of CMM 2018/06 in the future.**
114. China expressed their determination to fight IUU fishing, but raised a concern that China has not legal basis to take any legal action against a vessel on RFMO IUU vessel lists that China has not joined .
115. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to include the list of cross-listed vessels outlined in part 2 of MoP-07-32 Rev1 on the IUU vessel list.**
116. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the final IUU Vessel List outlined in MoP-07-32 Rev1. (Annex M)**

Agenda Item 9 – Review and amendment of CMMs currently in force

9.1 Amendment of CMM 2017/08 on port inspections

117. The European Union presented its proposal in MoP-07-17 Rev2 to amend SIOFA CMM 2017/08 establishing a Port Inspection Scheme and noted that the proposal was discussed in the Compliance Committee meeting, and forwarded to the Meeting of the Parties for consideration and adoption.
118. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the revisions to the Conservation and Management Measure 2020/08 establishing a Port Inspection Scheme (Port Inspection) outlined in MoP-07-17 Rev2 (Annex N).**

9.2 Review of annual catch on Williams Ridge

119. **The Meeting of the Parties noted the paper on the catch level in Williams Ridge outlined in MoP-07-15.**
120. The European Union presented its proposal to amend CMM 2019/15 on the Management of Demersal Stocks outlined in MoP-07-43 and noted the purpose of the proposal was to provide clarity on the understanding of the measure as regards the provisions for the Williams Ridge toothfish fishery. CCPs worked with the EU to further clarify the text of the proposal and the European Union thanked CCPs for their cooperation. The Cook Islands proposed that the CMM be amended to request the SC to assess the *Beryx splendens* stocks in 2022, if it determines in 2021 that suitable data exists to make that assessment, and to provide advice on a regular assessment schedule for future years.
121. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the revisions to the Conservation and Management Measure 2020/15 on the Management of Demersal Stocks outlined in MoP-07-43 Rev2 (Annex O).**

Agenda Item 10 – New CMMs

10.1 New CMM for SIOFA VMS

122. The European Union presented their proposal in MoP-07-21 for a Conservation and Management Measure for the establishment of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the SIOFA Area, and noted that this was a revised proposal following comments received following MoP6. The European Union acknowledged that the virtual format of the meeting was not conducive to discussing items of such complexity and importance and invited CCPs to provide comments on this proposal in writing. The European Union also proposed to continue work during the intersessional period on the basis of a paper setting out options for the design and implementation of a future SIOFA VMS.
123. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that CCPs commit to providing contact names for the working group by 20 December 2020 and submit comments to the European Union on the proposal for a CMM for the establishment of the Vessel Monitoring System in SIOFA, outlined in MoP-07-21 and recommended that the European Union, with support from the SIOFA Secretariat, lead the intersessional work on this proposal in advance of the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties.**

Agenda Item 11 – Secretariat Administration

11.1 Report on Financial Resources

124. The Chair noted that Regulation 9.1 of the Financial Regulations and Rule 8(1)(f) requires the Executive Secretary to provide a report on financial resources (outlined in MoP-07-07) to the Meeting of the Parties with an overview of the budget position, annual financial statements and any funds held in reserve (outlined in MoP-07-06). **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the reports from the Secretariat.**
125. The Chair noted that the external auditor is due to complete the first three-year term with SIOFA on 31 December 2020. The Meeting of the Parties, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1, is required to select and engage an independent external auditor for a three-year term with the option of renewal for a further three years. The Secretariat recommended the renewal of the current SIOFA auditor. The European Union sought clarification on whether quotes were requested from other auditors during this process. The Secretariat confirmed that no additional quotes were requested. The Meeting of the Parties strongly encouraged the Secretariat to request additional quotes in future processes.
126. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to renew the current SIOFA auditor for an additional three-year term.**
127. **The Meeting of the Parties also noted and thanked the European Union and Australia for their financial contributions towards SIOFA scientific work.**

11.2 Adoption of the budget

128. The Scientific Committee Chair presented the SC5 update on research activities and the proposed budget for 2021 and 2022 research activities outlined in MoP-07-36.
129. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to include the proposed budget for Scientific Committee 2021-2022 research activities in the SIOFA 2021 budget.**
130. The European Union also noted that they will be providing €200 000 of funding to progress the work of the Scientific Committee in SIOFA for 2021/2022, but that the administrative arrangements are still being finalized.

131. The Meeting of the Parties and the Scientific Committee Chair thanked the European Union for the funding, and the Scientific Committee Chair noted that once the funding becomes available, a plan will be developed for it, which could be discussed intersessionally or at the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties.
132. The Secretariat presented the Draft SIOFA 2021 budget in MoP-07-09. CCPs requested clarifications and modifications to the draft budget and the Secretariat incorporated those changes into MoP-07-09 Rev 5.
133. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that if physical meetings cannot take place in 2021, then the funding can be diverted into supporting virtual meetings (i.e. costs of closed captioning).**
134. During the discussion of the budget, several CCPs reflected on the need to address a long-term staffing solution within the Secretariat, noting the Secretariat is understaffed given the current workload.
135. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to task the Secretariat to draft a proposal to be presented at the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties outlining the staffing needs of the Secretariat, outlining the roles and skills that are required, and taking into account the needs of all SIOFA subsidiary bodies and the MoP.**
136. **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.**
137. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that meeting hosts provide the Secretariat with additional support for physical meetings when they are able.**
138. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the budget and assessed contributions outlined in MoP-07-09 Rev5 (Annex P) in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.7.**

11.3 Report on Staff Resources and Secretariat Activities

139. The Secretariat presented their report on staff resources and Secretariat activities in MoP-07-08 Rev1. CCPs expressed concerns and requested clarification on some of the points outlined in the report and offered comments to the Secretariat. The Secretariat incorporated the comments received into MoP-07-08 Rev4b.
140. **The Meeting of the Parties noted the report on staff resources and Secretariat activities in MoP-07-08 Rev4b.**

11.4 Amendment to the Staff Regulations

141. The Secretariat presented their proposal to amend the Staff Regulations to allow for the recruitment of an intern to the SIOFA Secretariat, as outlined in MoP-07-10 Rev1. The Secretariat also proposed a policy for internships in Annex 3 of MoP-07-10 Rev1.
142. The Secretariat noted this proposal was in response to requests to complete internships with the SIOFA Secretariat, but also that an intern would provide increased capacity for the Secretariat to complete its work.
143. Some CCPs noted that internship placements should be merit based and take into account the needs of the Secretariat. It was also noted that while internships could supplement the capacity of the Secretariat, this should only be considered on an interim basis to address the immediate capacity needs of the Secretariat, pending the presentation by the Secretariat of a staffing needs proposal at the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties.
144. Several CCPs provided extensive written comments to the Secretariat in advance of and during the meeting identifying concerns with the proposal. Changes were made to the proposal during the meeting to address CCPs' concerns.
145. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to adopt the changes to the Staff Regulations outlined in MoP-07-10 Rev4 (Annex Q) to allow for the recruitment of an intern to the SIOFA Secretariat.**

146. The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the Policy for Internships (Annex R).

11.5 Procedure for recruiting consultants

147. France (on behalf of its Overseas Territories) presented a proposal to revise the SIOFA Consultant Recruitment Procedure in MoP-07-13. CCPs thanked France (Overseas Territories) for the proposal and offered to work with them in the margins of the meeting to revise the proposal. France (Overseas Territories) explained that the purpose of the proposal was to ensure that national research institutions are not unduly prevented from undertaking SIOFA consultancies and to ensure that conflicts of interests are appropriately managed. The Meeting of the Parties also discussed general improvements that could be made to the process.

148. The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the proposal to revise the SIOFA Consultant Recruitment Procedure in MoP-07-13 Rev4 (Annex S).

Agenda Item 12 – Cooperation with other RFMOs, international bodies and other relevant matters

149. The Chair noted that Article 16 of the Agreement emphasises the importance of cooperation with other organisations and that SIOFA can benefit greatly from external cooperation. The Chair noted the importance for SIOFA to maintain strong and steady cooperation with regional and multilateral partners.

12.1 Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC)

150. The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the information paper provided by SWIOFC in MoP-07-23.

12.2 CCAMLR

151. The Chair noted that SIOFA has signed a cooperative arrangement with CCAMLR. CCAMLR has also agreed to further strengthen the activities concerning toothfish under the Arrangements with SPRFMO, SIOFA and SEAFO, in particular on toothfish tagging research, the CCAMLR Catch Documentation Scheme for *Dissostichus* spp. in respect of toothfish caught in SEAFO/SIOFA/SPRFMO waters and the provision of reciprocal links to each other's IUU vessel lists on their websites.

152. The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the information paper provided by CCAMLR in MoP-07-30.

153. CCPs also noted the importance of the cooperation between SIOFA and CCAMLR, as well as other regional and multilateral organisations on matters of mutual interest.

154. Australia noted that cooperation between CCAMLR and SIOFA is particularly important given SIOFA's toothfish fisheries and indicated that it considered that SIOFA should work towards implementing arrangements of a similarly high standard for its toothfish fisheries as are in force for CCAMLR given the shared populations of toothfish.

155. The European Union also noted the importance of close cooperation with CCAMLR and proposed that the MoP discuss in more detail at its next meeting how and in which areas it can intensify its cooperation with CCAMLR.

156. The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to consider at its next meeting how and in which areas it can intensify its cooperation with CCAMLR.

12.3 FAO ABNJ Deep-Sea Fisheries Project

157. The Chair noted that SIOFA has had a long-standing interest in the FAO ABNJ Deep-Sea Fisheries under the Ecosystem Approach (DSF) project and has previously provided expert advice to its steering committee.
158. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the information paper provided by the ABNJ Deep-Seas Fisheries Project in MoP-07-26.**
159. CCPs also noted the importance of this project and that SIOFA will benefit from this work.

12.4 FAO Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS)

160. The Chair noted that the SIOFA-FIRMS Partnership Arrangement was signed by the SIOFA Executive Secretary and by the Director of the FAO Fisheries Division on behalf of the FIRMS partners on the 21st of August 2020.
161. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the information paper provided by FIRMS in MoP-07-27.**
162. The European Union noted that they will be providing a grant of 200 000 euro to SIOFA to support its scientific work in 2021 and 2022 to reinforce, among others, the Secretariat's data systems and processes. Considering the relevance of the grant for the FIRMS, the EU encouraged the SIOFA Secretariat to cooperate closely with FAO in this regard.

12.5 FAO Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN)

163. The Executive Secretary noted that the SIOFA Secretariat has participated in the RSN since the establishment of the Secretariat and CCPs encouraged the Secretariat to continue its participation in the RSN.
164. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the information paper provided by FAO on behalf of the RSN, including the scope of the RSN and the benefit of SIOFA's participation in the RSN in MOP-07-20.**

12.6 Other matters of interest

165. **The Meeting of the Parties REQUESTED that the Secretariat engage with the IOTC Secretariat to develop a bilateral cooperative arrangement for consideration at the next MoP, particularly in relation to MCS and in understanding species which are taken as bycatch in the IOTC Area of Competence but which are fisheries resources under the SIOFA Agreement.**

Agenda Item 13 – Cooperating non-Contracting Parties

166. The Meeting of the Parties annually considers applications for cooperating non-Contracting Parties, consistent with Rule 17 of the SIOFA Rules of Procedure, including to determine whether existing CNCPs qualify to retain their status. The Compliance Committee also ordinarily reviews these applications from a technical compliance perspective.
167. In 2020, consistent with Rule 17(1), the Executive Secretary wrote to the following non-Contracting Parties who undertake fishing in the Agreement Area to cooperate with the Meeting of the Parties: Tanzania, Somalia, Mozambique, Madagascar, Kenya, Maldives, and South Africa.
168. CNCP applications are required to be submitted 60 days in advance of the ordinary Meeting of the Parties. No CNCP applications (new or renewals) were received in accordance with that timeframe.
169. The Meeting of the Parties noted that Comoros had expressed interest on 7 November 2020 in retaining CNCP status (CC-04-02 and MoP-07-29). The Compliance Committee

recommended that the Meeting of the Parties determine that Comoros qualifies to retain its CNCP status, and requested the Secretariat to obtain more information from Comoros in relation to Rule 17 paragraph 4 and Comoros to submit a statement of its commitments as a CNCP each year that it wishes to retain its CNCP status. The Chairperson and the Compliance Committee Chairperson have cooperated to prepare a working paper proposing revisions to Rule 17 of the ROP to ensure this is achieved, which is outlined in MoP-07-39.

170. The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Comoros qualifies to retain its CNCP status and requested Comoros to improve its implementation of and compliance with SIOFA CMMs and to provide the missing reports and data.

171. The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the revisions to Rule 17 of the RoP to ensure that CNCPs are required to annually apply, outlined in MoP-07-39 (Annex T).

Agenda Item 14 – Future Chairing arrangements

14.1 Amendments to the Rules of Procedure

172. The Chair presented draft amendments to the Rules of Procedure to stabilise the approach for selecting a Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties in MoP-07-19. The Chair highlighted that the proposal was developed through consultations between the Meeting of the Parties in June 2020 in response to the difficulty in appointing a Chairperson for the Meeting of the Parties. The proposed amendment concerned Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure and included an annual rotational system for Contracting Parties (with review period) in reverse alphabetical order, and a variation on this option that permitted Contracting Parties to bilaterally agree to swap places in the rotational system. The proposal proposed only a change in process, not a change in the balance of rights.

173. Many CCPs strongly supported the proposal, citing the need to find stability for SIOFA and the importance of the role of Chairperson.

174. Chinese Taipei expressed concerns with the proposal noting that their interpretation of the SIOFA Agreement allows both Contracting Parties and Participating Fishing Entities to fully participate in SIOFA, including as Chair.

175. The Meeting of the Parties considered whether Participating Fishing Entities should have the right to Chair the MoP. Some CCPs suggested that it was not appropriate for Participating Fishing Entities to chair the MOP, and many CCPs emphasised the importance of finding a solution noting that the Chair's proposal does not change the balance of rights, just the process for appointing a Chairperson. One CCP noted that the ROP had been carefully negotiated with the future participation of Chinese Taipei in mind and that Rule 5 had not provided for Participating Fishing Entities to chair for a reason.

176. Following extensive discussions, the Chairperson presented an amended proposal (MoP-07-19_Rev2) aiming to address the concerns raised by Chinese Taipei. Under this proposal, the Meeting of the Parties would have discretion to make additional or other decisions concerning the process for the Chairing arrangements in the future. Many CCPs supported this amended proposal

177. The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED amendments to Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure (Annex U) and noted that this provided the MoP with the discretion to make additional or other decisions concerning the process for the Chairing arrangements in the future.

178. The Chair thanked the Meeting of the Parties for their cooperation on reaching consensus on a way forward.

Agenda Item 15 – 2021 meeting arrangements

179. The Meeting of the Parties typically meets in late June/early July annually for 5 days, preceded by a meeting of the Compliance Committee for 3 days. The Scientific Committee and its working groups typically meet in March. It is challenging to schedule RFMO meetings given the uncertainty of COVID. However, the Meeting of the Parties agreed to secure dates for the next SIOFA meetings, and to return to normal scheduling.
180. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the CC5 will take place from 01 to 03 July 2021 and the MoP8 will take place from 05 to 09 July 2021.**
181. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to make a decision by 30 April 2021 on whether the meeting will be held in person or virtually, noting the dates would remain the same.**
182. **The Meeting of the Parties noted that the Scientific Committee AGREED to meet in the first half of March 2021.**

Agenda Item 16 – Meeting close

183. The Chair thanked all of the participants for their positive cooperation and constructive engagement in this year's meeting, noting the challenges of a virtual format. The Chair expressed her appreciation to the Secretariat, Observers, and the Rapporteur.
184. The Chairperson closed the final video conference at UTC 13:18.
185. The Meeting of the Parties expressed its warm thanks and appreciation for the outstanding work and guidance provided by the Chair throughout this meeting.
186. The Executive Secretary thanked the Chair for her guidance throughout the year and this meeting.
187. The Chairperson closed the meeting by circular n°2020-24-5 at 13:32 on 20th November 2020.

List of Annexes

Annex	Title
Annex A	Opening statement from the Chairperson
Annex B	MoP-07-03 Rev2 List of MoP7 participants
Annex C1	Opening Statement from the Cook Islands
Annex C2	Opening Statement from Chinese Taipei
Annex C3	Opening statement on the Agreement for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)
Annex C4	Opening statement from the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF)
Annex C5	Opening statement from the United States of America
Annex C6	Opening statement from the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC)
Annex D	MoP-07-14 Rev Status of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
Annex E	MoP-07-01 Rev3 Provisional Agenda
Annex F	MoP-07-05 Rev9 Table of Agenda items and papers
Annex G	MoP-07- 12 Rev1 Report on Intersessional Decisions
Annex H1	Statement from SIODFA funds for acoustics for alfonsino for agenda item 5
Annex H2	Statement from SIODFA on deepwater sharks for agenda item 5
Annex I	Statement from the DSCC on Agenda Item 6
Annex J	Amendment to CMM 2020-01 Interim Bottom Fishing Measures
Annex K	Amendment to CMM 2020-11 for a Compliance Monitoring Scheme
Annex L	Final SIOFA Compliance Report
Annex M	Final SIOFA IUU Vessel List
Annex N	Amendment to CMM 2017-08 on Port Inspection
Annex O	Amendment to CMM 2020-15_rev2on demersal stocks
Annex P	SIOFA 2021 budget
Annex Q	Amendment to the Staff Regulations
Annex R	Policy for Internships
Annex S	SIOFA Consultant Recruitment procedure
Annex T	Amendment to Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure
Annex U	Amendment to Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure