

Report of the Ninth Meeting
of the Parties to the
Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
(SIOFA)

Hotel le Récif, Saint-Gilles les Bains, la
Réunion / hybrid format

4 – 8 July 2022

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Agenda item 1 – Opening of the session

1. The SIOFA Chairperson, Mr Roy Clarisse (Seychelles), opened the meeting at 04:00 UTC and welcomed all delegates. The meeting was held in a hybrid format, with delegates attending in-person in Saint-Gilles les Bains, la Réunion, at the Hotel le Récif, or via videoconference.
2. The Chairperson invited Mr Éric Mévélec, Directeur de la mer Sud Océan Indien, representative of the Préfet de la région Réunion, to make a welcoming statement (Annex A).
3. The Chairperson made an opening statement (Annex B).
4. The Chairperson opened the floor for delegation introductions. The list of participants is available in Annex C.

Agenda item 1.1. Opening statements

5. Delegations were invited to provide opening statements. The opening statement provided by the Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fishers Association (SIODFA) is outlined in Annex D.

Agenda item 1.2. Practical arrangements for the meeting

6. The Executive Secretary explained the practical arrangements for the meeting.

Agenda item 1.3. Admission of observers

7. The Meeting of the Parties welcomed Comoros as a CNCP, and observers from India, South Africa, the United States of America, the Deep-Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC), the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) / Ecofish, the Joint Commission of the Seychelles-Mauritius Joint Management Area (JMA), and SIODFA.

Agenda item 1.4. Status of the Agreement

8. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) is the Depository of the Agreement. The FAO has provided an update on the Status of the Agreement in MoP-09-INFO-12 (Annex E), which confirms that there are 10 Contracting Parties, 1 Participating Fishing Entity and 5 signatories, including 1 Cooperating non-Contracting Party.
9. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the Status of the Agreement.**

Agenda item 1.5. Participation in decision-making

10. The Chairperson reminded the Meeting of the Parties that in accordance with Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, a contributor to the budget of the Meeting of the Parties, who at the time of the meeting is in arrears and that amount is equal to or exceeds the amount of contributions due from it for the preceding two full years or more, may not participate in the taking of decisions.
11. The Executive Secretary reported that all Contracting Parties and Participating Fishing Entities have paid their contribution for 2022. Therefore, all Contracting Parties and Participating Fishing Entities were entitled to participate in the taking of decisions during this meeting.

Agenda item 2 – Administrative arrangements

Agenda item 2.1. Adoption of the agenda

12. The Secretariat presented the revised provisional agenda (MoP-09-ADM-06). The Meeting of the Parties provided comments, based on which the Secretariat finalised the agenda. The agenda was adopted by the Meeting of the Parties (Annex F).
13. The Meeting of the Parties agreed to hold discussions under agenda item 6.3 on the cybersecurity audit, as well as the parts pertaining to the cybersecurity audit under agenda item 6.4 on the data and security-related workplan, as a closed session. The Meeting of the Parties agreed to hold discussions under agenda items 11.3.1, 11.4, and part of 11.5 on financial matters as a closed session.

Agenda item 2.2. Confirmation of Meeting Documents

14. The Executive Secretary advised that all meeting documents were available on the website and that the list of meeting documents is presented in MoP-09-ADM-05-rev7 (Annex G).
15. The European Union noted that the documents produced by the Compliance Committee and several documents related to administrative or financial matters had been labelled as restricted or confidential. The European Union noted that the Rules of Procedure do not include any provisions to suggest that documents produced by the Compliance Committee should be restricted and that, while Rule 20.2 of the Rules of Procedure provide that financial and administrative matters are to be discussed in a closed session, it does not require that the related documents be treated as restricted or confidential.
16. The Meeting of the Parties agreed, for the sake of transparency, to make publicly available a number of documents related to financial and administrative matters that were initially restricted (MoP-09-01 – 02; MoP-09-05 – 06; MoP-09-INFO-01 – 03; MoP-09-INFO-11; MoP-09-INFO-13), as they do not contain any sensitive information.

Agenda item 2.3. Appointment of rapporteurs

17. The Executive Secretary proposed Mr Alexander Meyer (Urban Connections, Tokyo) as rapporteur for the meeting.
18. The Meeting of the Parties agreed to appoint Mr Alexander Meyer as rapporteur.

Agenda item 3 – Intersessional decision-making

Agenda item 3.1. Review of intersessional decisions taken since MoP8

19. The Chairperson noted that, in accordance with Rule 13(12) of the Rules of Procedure, 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-09-INFO-05.
20. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the summary of intersessional decisions contained in MoP-09-INFO-05.**

21. Japan and the Cook Islands thanked the Meeting of the Parties for its cooperation and understanding for the extension of the derogation from the requirements of scientific observer coverage stipulated in CMM 2020/01 (Interim management of bottom fishing), para 39 (a).

Agenda item 3.2. Standardised template for the reporting of intersessional decisions

22. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-09-03, which outlined a draft standardised template for reporting intersessional decisions developed by the Secretariat as requested in paragraph 22 of the Report of the 8th Meeting of the Parties. The template includes information on how many Contracting Parties and Participating Fishing Entities took part in the decision, an aggregation of replies received, and the outcome of the decision.
23. The Meeting of the Parties provided comments and the Secretariat presented a revised version (MoP-09-03-rev1).
24. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the standardised template for reporting intersessional decisions (Annex H).**

Agenda item 4 – Report of the Sixth Compliance Committee meeting

25. The Compliance Committee Chairperson, Mr Johnny Louys (Seychelles), presented a summary of the report of the sixth meeting of the Compliance Committee (CC6), which was held in a hybrid format on 29 June – 1 July 2022.
26. The Meeting of the Parties reviewed the CC6 report.
27. Concerning paragraph 25 of the CC6 report, the Secretariat presented the overall compliance status of the implementation of each obligation by CCPs, as requested by the Compliance Committee. The Meeting of the Parties considered the information provided and determined that, while it was useful to conduct the exercise as a trial, summarising the overall compliance status for each CMM as a percentage did not provide enough context and was not worthwhile conducting on a regular basis going forward.
28. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 26 of the CC6 report and considered the provisional Compliance Report (pSCR; MoP-09-02) under agenda item 4.1.**
29. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraphs 27 and 33-39 of the CC6 report regarding proposed amendments to CMMs and considered the proposals forwarded by the Compliance Committee under agenda item 8.**
30. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 41 of the CC6 report regarding high seas boarding inspection (HSBI) reports from France Territories.**
31. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 54 of the CC6 report regarding the divergent views of CCPs on the applicability of CMM 2021/14 and the Compliance Committee's request for guidance.**
32. The Meeting of the Parties held further discussions on the applicability of CMM 2021/14. Some CCPs were of the view that the measure applies to all CCPs' vessels engaged or suspected to be engaged in fishing activities in the SIOFA Area, and

suggested, as a way forward, to amend the HSBI questionnaire to address the practical concerns of CCPs regarding conducting HSBI for vessels not targeting species under SIOFA's competence in the SIOFA Area. Other CCPs explained that amending the HSBI questionnaire would not address their concerns, which were of a more fundamental nature, namely that, as expressed at CC6, CMM 2021/14 only applies to those vessels targeting species under SIOFA's competence in the SIOFA Area and to those registered on the SIOFA authorised vessels list and that it does not and cannot apply to tuna vessels targeting tuna which are listed on the IOTC vessel registry and operating within the framework of IOTC.

33. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 58-60 of the CC6 report regarding the IMULA 1655 MTR and the IMULA 1783 MTR, paragraph 62 regarding the IMULA 1844 MTR, paragraph 64 regarding the Mariam 1, and paragraph 66 regarding the El Shaddai, and held further discussions under agenda item 4.2.**
34. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 68 of the CC6 report regarding the current SIOFA IUU vessel list and the list of cross-listed IUU vessels from other RFMOs, and that the Compliance Committee had not made any recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties to remove any vessel from the current IUU vessel list.**
35. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 69 of the CC6 report regarding the provisional SIOFA IUU Vessel List and the recommendation to include the vessels from the provisional IUU vessel list (MoP-09-01) to the SIOFA IUU vessel list, and held further discussions under agenda item 4.2.**
36. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 70 of the CC6 report stating that there were no reports of sightings of vessels without nationality to the Secretariat.**
37. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 73 of the CC6 report regarding the port inspections summary.**
38. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 76-77 of the CC6 report regarding entry/exit notifications and ENDORSED the recommendation to adopt a reporting period for entry/exit notifications that is aligned with the compliance assessment period, i.e. based on the calendar year.**
39. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraphs 78-79 of the CC6 report regarding transshipment and at-sea transfer reports and ENDORSED the recommendation to adopt a reporting period for transshipment and at-sea transfers that is aligned with the compliance assessment period, i.e. based on the calendar year.**
40. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 82 of the CC6 report regarding Comoros' request for renewal of CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 13.1.**
41. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 85 of the CC6 report regarding India's application for CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 13.2. The Meeting of the Parties NOTED India's presence at the meeting.**
42. Concerning paragraph 87 of the CC6 report regarding the vacancy of the position of the Vice Chairperson of the Compliance Committee, Japan proposed Mr Ichiro Nomura for the position until the conclusion of the 11th Meeting of the Parties.

43. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the proposal and AGREED to appoint Mr Ichiro Nomura (Japan) as Vice Chairperson of the Compliance Committee.**
44. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 90 of the CC6 report regarding potential collaboration between SIOFA and the IOC.**
45. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that the IOC has shared its strategic plan with the Secretariat, as requested by the Compliance Committee, and that the Secretariat has distributed this information to participants of the Meeting of the Parties via email.
46. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the report and recommendations of the CC6.**
47. **The Meeting of the Parties thanked Mr Johnny Louys for his smooth chairing of the meeting and his contributions to the work of the Compliance Committee.**

Agenda item 4.1. SIOFA Compliance Report (SCR)

48. The Chairperson noted that under paragraph 22 of CMM 2020/11 (Compliance Monitoring Scheme), the Meeting of the Parties is annually required to consider the pSCR and any comments from CCPs on their respective sections of the pSCR. The Meeting of the Parties shall adopt by consensus a Final SIOFA Compliance Report (fSCR) at its ordinary meeting in accordance with Article 8 of the Agreement and Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure. The fSCR shall be based on the template at Annex III of CMM 2020/11 and shall include the elements listed in paragraphs 22(a)-(g) of CMM 2020/11.
49. The Secretariat presented the pSCR adopted by the Compliance Committee in CC6 Report Annex E outlining the decisions of the CC6 on the provisional compliance status for each CCP, for review by the Meeting of the Parties.
50. Regarding the assessment of the status of Chinese Taipei's compliance with the obligations stipulated in paragraph 14 of CMM 2019/10 (Monitoring), Chinese Taipei explained that it did provide entry/exit notifications within 24 hours as required by the CMM but there were anomalies in its entry/exit notifications due to a technical issue caused by the service provider for the automatic notification system used by Chinese Taipei's vessels. Chinese Taipei further explained that it took immediate action to resolve the issue once it became aware of it but that it was not made aware of it until much later and was therefore unable to provide the corrected entry/exit notifications via an alternative method. The Meeting of the Parties recognised that the anomaly was a technical issue, but several CCPs were of the view that a flag CCP is responsible for ensuring that any issues with the services it has contracted do not prevent it from complying with its obligations and that CCPs could not relinquish this responsibility to their service providers. Furthermore, they pointed out that Chinese Taipei had other means of fulfilling the obligation in question, even if there were issues with the automatic notification system. Based on the discussion, Chinese Taipei accepted a status of "non-compliant" on this matter. The Meeting of the Parties recognised that Chinese Taipei's response, once it became aware of the issue, was exemplary as it took action promptly, made every effort to address the issue, and has fully resolved it. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the provisions of CMM 2020/11 (Compliance Monitoring Scheme) should be applied consistently going forward and that if any CCPs face issues of a similar nature and circumstances in future, they should be assessed as being non-compliant.**

51. Regarding the assessment of the status of Chinese Taipei's compliance with the obligations stipulated in paragraph 16 of CMM 2019/10 (Monitoring), Chinese Taipei explained that, when its longline fishing vessels operating in the Indian Ocean conduct at-sea transshipment with carrier vessels, there are IOTC observers onboard the carrier vessels, the observers submit their report to the IOTC Secretariat, and the IOTC Secretariat then distributes them to the flag CCPs concerned, which means it takes longer than 15 days to submit observer reports to the SIOFA Secretariat. Several CCPs pointed out the importance of applying the provisions of CMM 2020/11 consistently and that as this is a repeated instance of non-compliance over several years, the compliance status should be "critically non-compliant". Chinese Taipei explained that it had proposed a status of "non-compliant" in its self-assessment as there have been many similar instances in the past where, despite repeated instances of non-compliance, CCPs were deemed to have faced special circumstances and assessed a status of "non-compliant" rather than "critically non-compliant". However, based on the discussion, it accepted a status of "critically non-compliant" on this matter. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED that Chinese Taipei's non-compliance was only with subparagraph g of paragraph 16. The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to consistently assess the status of "critically non-compliant" for cases of "repeated non-compliance with an obligation for two or more consecutively assessed years", as provided in CMM 2020/11, without exception going forward.**
52. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the fSCR outlined in Annex I.**

Agenda item 4.2. Listing of IUU fishing vessels

53. The Secretariat presented the Provisional IUU Vessel List (MoP-09-01) that was adopted by the Compliance Committee and noted there were two vessels on that list, the IMULA 1844 MTR and the El Shaddai, for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties.
54. Regarding the IMULA 1844 MTR, some CCPs were of the view that there was a lack of evidence to indicate that the vessel targeted SIOFA fishery resources, that Sri Lanka has taken effective action by prosecuting the vessel, and that the vessel should remain on the Draft SIOFA IUU Vessel List to give Sri Lanka more time to provide further information to SIOFA. Other CCPs were of the view that it is the responsibility of the flag State to prove that a vessel suspected of IUU fishing has not done so, that Sri Lanka has not provided adequate information to SIOFA despite being given much time to do so, that it is not clear if the vessel is being prosecuted in relation to the presumed case of IUU fishing or an unrelated matter, and that the vessel has not met the conditions for removal from the Provisional IUU Vessel List as provided in paragraphs 14 and 15 of CMM 2018/06 (IUU Vessel List).
55. The Meeting of the Parties requested the Secretariat to contact Sri Lanka and encourage it to provide the relevant information.
56. The Secretariat contacted Sri Lanka and received the reply that Sri Lanka was unable to attend the meeting because of a scheduling conflict and that the charge that has been brought against the IMULA 1844 MTR is "Conducting fishing operations without a valid fishing operation in high seas".
57. Some CCPs were in favour of including the vessel on the final SIOFA IUU Vessel List. One CCP objected to the inclusion.

58. **The Meeting of the Parties was unable to reach consensus to include the IMULA 1844 MTR on the final SIOFA IUU Vessel List.**
59. **The Meeting of the Parties noted that the IMULA 1844 MTR would remain on the Draft SIOFA IUU Vessel List for consideration by the Compliance Committee at its next meeting.**
60. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to include the El Shaddai on the final SIOFA IUU Vessel List.**
61. The Secretariat presented the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List.
62. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED not to remove any vessel from the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List.**
63. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the SIOFA IUU Vessel List outlined in Annex J.**

Agenda item 5 – Scientific Committee (SC) and Report of the SC7

Agenda item 5.1. Presentation of the SC7 report

64. The Scientific Committee Chairperson, Mr Alistair Dunn, presented a summary of the report of the seventh Scientific Committee meeting (SC7), which was held virtually on 21 – 25 March 2022. The SC7 report is available as MoP-09-INFO-08.

Agenda item 5.2. Recommendations from SC7

65. The Meeting of the Parties reviewed the advice and recommendations of the SC7 report.
66. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 63 of the SC7 report regarding the annual national reports.**
67. Mauritius stated that it submitted its 2021 annual national report following SC7. Mauritius expressed its commitment to submit other outstanding reports as soon as possible. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the Parties that it has received the 2021 annual national report from Mauritius.
68. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 64 of the SC7 report regarding the Overview of SIOFA fisheries and the fishery and ecosystem summary reports.**
69. The Secretariat presented MoP-09-15-rev1, which provided the updated Overview of SIOFA fisheries. The Overview of SIOFA fisheries summarises the last years of available fisheries data, as well as illustrates broad temporal trends in the main fisheries within the SIOFA area. It contains confidential information that has been highlighted and that will be removed from the publicly available version of the document.
70. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the progress with the Overview of SIOFA fisheries document.**
71. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the proposal of the SC that two versions are created, a public and a restricted one.**

72. **The Meeting of the Parties revised and ENDORSED the document (MoP-09-15-rev2) and the dissemination of the public version of the Overview.**
73. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED paragraph 65 of the SC7 report regarding the independent audit of data security covering access, dissemination, and presentation of data. Upon considering CMM 2016/03 (Data Confidentiality), the Meeting of the Parties determined that the CMM may not need to be revised to enable the provision of finer-scale data for the purpose of scientific analyses, as it already defines finer-scale data and provides for the use of these data for the work of the SC and its working groups in paragraph 2e.**
74. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 171 of the SC7 report regarding the improvement of internal processes to ensure that consultants are provided with more up-to-date data and more time to conduct their work.**
75. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 172 of the SC7 report regarding Saya de Malha Bank.**
76. Mauritius and the Seychelles, as well as the JMA, reminded the Meeting of the Parties of the provisions of Article 77 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as follows: “The coastal State exercises over the continental shelf sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring it and exploiting its natural resources. [These] rights are exclusive in the sense that if the coastal State does not explore the continental shelf or exploit its natural resources, no one may undertake these activities without the express consent of the coastal State. ... The natural resources in [Article 77] consist of the mineral and other non-living resources of the seabed and subsoil together with living organisms belonging to sedentary species, that is to say, organisms which, at the harvestable stage, either are immobile on or under the seabed or are unable to move except in constant physical contact with the seabed or the subsoil.” Mauritius and the Seychelles stated that, based on the above Article, bottom trawling, which seriously impacts on the sedentary species, corals and seagrass on the seabed or in the subsoil, is not permitted to take place on the Saya de Malha Bank without the express approval of the JMA, through which Mauritius and the Seychelles exercise their sovereign rights over the continental shelf.
77. Several CCPs disagreed with the assertion by Mauritius and the Seychelles that they have the right to approve or veto bottom fishing over the extended continental shelf of the Saya de Malha Bank. They reminded the Meeting of the Parties that Article 78 of UNCLOS states: “The rights of the coastal State over the continental shelf do not affect the legal status of the superjacent waters. The exercise of the rights of the coastal State over the continental shelf must not infringe or result in any unjustifiable interference with ... rights and freedoms of other States.” These CCPs pointed out that, therefore, when Mauritius and the Seychelles claim rights to allow or disallow bottom fishing over the Saya de Malha Bank, it would affect the legal status of the superjacent water and interfere with the right to fish on the high seas. They further stated that the legitimate exercise of rights over the extended continental shelf should not preclude the legitimate right of SIOFA CCPs to access the high seas of the SIOFA Area in accordance with the established measures and that SIOFA has the mandate to manage fisheries in this area.
78. Mauritius stated that the rights in Article 78 of UNCLOS should not be read as conflicting with the rights of Mauritius and Seychelles as per Article 77 of UNCLOS,

which rights have been confirmed by the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

79. The JMA emphasised that it was not claiming rights over the superjacent waters, only the continental shelf and subsoil.
80. Thailand highlighted the importance of documenting species and fisheries effort distributions more precisely, both historically and in future, as well as understanding key elements of the ongoing fishing operations, to allow for evidence-based management decision-making and the formulation and implementation of appropriate management actions in the Saya de Malha Bank area, as endorsed by the SC.
81. The DSCC repeated its concern over the Saya de Malha Bank area, which is an ecologically important area having been designated as an ecologically or biologically significant area (EBSA) by the Convention on Biological Diversity.
82. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 173 of the SC7 report regarding seabird bycatch.**
83. The Meeting of the Parties discussed a proposal from France Territories for amending CMM 2019/13 (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) under Agenda Item 8. This proposal aimed to reflect the recommendation by the SC that pelagic longliners operating in the SIOFA Area follow IOTC Resolution 12/06 on reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in (pelagic) longline fisheries.
84. **Regarding paragraphs 174-175 of the SC7 report on the Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) designation process and the obtaining of shape files for the IMMA regions, the Meeting of the Parties requested the Secretariat to seek further information about the required steps for participation in the IMMA designation process and present the information to the SC8 meeting and the 10th Meeting of the Parties.**
85. The Science Officer informed the Meeting of the Parties that it has obtained the shape files for IMMA regions as requested by the SC, and that these files are available to CCPs upon request.
86. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 176 of the SC7 report regarding defining fisheries, target species and bycatch species.**
87. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 177 of the SC7 report regarding deep-water sharks.**
88. Australia and the Cook Islands expressed concern regarding the very high level of shark bycatch occurring in the Agreement Area, particularly in sub-area 2. They highlighted the urgent need for action, noting that deepwater sharks taken in demersal longline fisheries included the greatest number of high-risk species, that shark bycatch is much higher than the catch of reported target species, and that there appears to be deliberate targeting of sharks. Australia thanked the European Union for offering to host a workshop on deep-water sharks and stated its expectation that the outcomes of the workshop would be urgently implemented at the Meeting of the Parties to drastically reduce the amount of shark bycatch. Australia and the Cook Islands noted that the SC report calls on CCPs to consider implementing interim measures in areas where vessels are experiencing high shark bycatch and the Cook Islands encouraged the adoption of legally binding, rather than voluntary, measures.

89. The European Union stated that it shared the concerns of Australia and the Cook Islands regarding the high level of shark bycatch. The European Union explained that it is implementing voluntary measures to address the issue and intends to strengthen measures further, as described in MoP-09-INFO-15, through enhanced data collection, precautionary measures, and the funding of additional research. The EU called on all CCPs to make their shark catch data available for this purpose.
90. The Cook Islands noted that MoP-09-INFO-15 did not include information about two measures that most studies indicate are the most effective way to reduce shark bycatch, namely the use of non-wire traces on longline snoods, as discussed also at the SC, and the use of non-fish bait. The Cook Islands encouraged the European Union to include these methods in future analyses.
91. The European Union explained that it had given consideration to potential gear modifications but that it would not be feasible to implement such measures in the timeframe envisaged in MoP-09-INFO-15. The European Union stated that potential gear modifications that could mitigate shark bycatch should be examined at next year's workshop on deep-water sharks given that the SC had noted that more detailed discussions need to be held on this issue.
92. The DSCC echoed the concerns expressed by Australia and the Cook Islands regarding the level of shark bycatch and expressed its support for the proposal that the European Union's vessel use non-wire traces, such as nylon ones, which is a proven measure for reducing shark bycatch that is used in other fisheries.
93. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 178 of the SC7 report regarding ecological risk assessment.**
94. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 193 of the SC7 report regarding vulnerable marine ecosystem (VME) encounter thresholds.**
95. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 194 of the SC7 report regarding VME mapping consultancy.**
96. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 199 of the SC7 report regarding the trawl and longline cumulative bottom fishing impact assessment (BFIA).**
97. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 220 of the SC7 report regarding annual catch and effort data submission.**
98. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 221 of the SC7 report regarding electronic monitoring.**
99. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the requests in paragraph 222 of the SC7 report regarding the development of a SIOFA Observer Code of Conduct.**
100. **The Meeting of the Parties discussed the scope of the SIOFA Observer Code of Conduct that is to be developed by the SC and AGREED that it would apply to scientific observer duties and not any compliance-related duties, which would fall within the remit of the Compliance Committee.**
101. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 223 of the SC7 report regarding the harmonisation of scientific observers' programmes.**
102. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 224 of the SC7 report regarding the holding of discussions on data reporting related to seabird bycatch**

mitigation measures at the proposed seabird data collection and bycatch mitigation measures workshop.

103. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraphs 231-232 of the SC7 report regarding the Monaco Explorations scientific expedition.**
104. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that the research would be conducted by the AGULHAS-II, a vessel flagged to South Africa.
105. Mauritius informed the Meeting of the Parties that Mauritius and the Seychelles would engage in joint research with Monaco Explorations in October and November 2022.
106. **The Meeting of the Parties welcomed and expressed its support for the scientific expedition.**
107. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 254 of the SC7 report regarding the European Union's offer to host the SC8 and related meetings.**
108. **The Meeting of the Parties welcomed the offer and thanked the European Union.**
109. China suggested that, in light of continued uncertainty around the global COVID-19 situation, the meeting should be held in a hybrid format.
110. The Secretariat informed the Meeting of the Parties that the possibility of a hybrid format has been taken into account and is included in the funding considerations.

5.2.1. SIOFA bottom fishing footprint

111. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraphs 183-184 of the SC7 report regarding the SIOFA bottom fishing footprint**
112. The Science Officer presented MoP-09-12, which provided a historical and recent footprint map at 20' + 30' square resolution, which SC7 recommended the Meeting of the Parties to endorse in the interim, as well as another footprint map, obtained after checking CCPs footprints, as encouraged by SC7, and integrating these footprints with the existing map. The paper is intended to inform any additional discussion by the Meeting of the Parties on how to consider new fishing once the footprint map is agreed upon.
113. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the footprint recommended by SC7 in the interim.**
114. **The Meeting of the Parties REQUESTED that the SC work intersessionally to verify the footprint and resolve any potential discrepancies between the footprint produced by the Secretariat and the individual footprints produced by CCPs, discuss the results of the verification work at SC8, and present an updated footprint to the 10th Meeting of the Parties if necessary.**
115. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that any update of the footprint would include data up to and not beyond 2020.**
116. Mauritius expressed concern that its data were not incorporated in the footprint. The Science Officer clarified that the Compliance Committee determined that Mauritius' handline fishing does not constitute bottom fishing.
117. Mauritius, Seychelles, and the Joint Commission proposed that the area of the JMA should be displayed in the footprint. Support for the proposal was not received from other CCPs.

118. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to hold intersessional discussions on the policy aspects of operationalising the footprint and NOTED that the Cook Islands offered to lead the discussions.**
119. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to invite observers to participate in the discussions.**
120. The DSCC welcomed the development of the footprint. It urged CCPs to only undertake bottom fishing within the footprint. The DSCC also called on the Meeting of the Parties to develop a measure for new and exploratory fishing and to not allow any proposed bottom fishing outside the footprint until such a measure is in place.

5.2.2. Transparency and distribution of meeting documents

121. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 66 of the SC7 report regarding the proposed process for assessing and distributing SC meeting documents.**
122. The Meeting of the Parties considered MoP-09-10 which covered a broad range of issues associated with the distribution, access and publicization of Scientific Committee papers, including work prepared by consultants for the Scientific Committee.
123. The MoP welcomed the initiative to both improve the transparency of SC documents, to formalise the processes to request SC documents and to formalise the processes surrounding consultant scientific papers to ensure consistency with SIOFA's data confidentiality requirements.
124. **The MoP NOTED that any effort to operationalise access to SC papers needed to be consistent with CMM 2016-03. In that respect, the MoP NOTED that CMM 2016-03 on Data Confidentiality defined 'public domain data' and 'public domain catch and effort data', and agreed that, provided the conditions of paragraph 2(c) are met, any papers which displayed data meeting these definitions should be open to the public, publicly available on the SIOFA website and discussed in an open session. However, the MoP also NOTED that CMM 2016-03 requires that any papers displaying data at a finer scale of stratification would require permission before it could be displayed.**
125. **The MoP NOTED that finer scale data would be used for scientific analysis, and that the papers and presentation emanating from these analyses would need to display data at different scales, including through maps or images. The MoP also NOTED ongoing SC work concerning access to data. The MoP further NOTED that economic information or other sensitive information (such as data security information) may from time to time be presented in SC papers. The MoP AGREED it was important to balance transparency and data confidentiality and integrity.**
126. **The MoP AGREED it would be useful to develop a classification system for SC documents, as well as for other documents handled by the MoP more generally (including sensitive information or financial information) to determine how to handle documents of a more sensitive nature. However, the MoP also AGREED it was premature to determine which types of information or data would need to have restricted or confidential handling without advice from the SC.**
127. **Accordingly, the MoP AGREED to seek the following advice from the SC:**
 - 1) **Is the current definition of 'public domain data' and 'public domain catch and effort data' appropriate for public information, or could it be reduced to**

a finer scale (eg 1x1 degrees providing it is not possible to identify a single set)?

- 2) Is there merit in displaying finer levels of stratification, economic information with different controls – for example, different limitations on who can access papers that display finer scale data, where it is publicised or where it is discussed (open/closed sessions). What would the appropriate classifications be in this regard? Eg

Classification	Type of information or data	Access	Website access	Display in open or closed session?
<i>Tier 1: Public</i>	<i>Public domain data / public domain catch and effort data as defined in CMM 2016-03 Country-level economic information</i>	<i>Open access</i>	<i>Publicly available on SIOFA website</i>	<i>Open session</i>
<i>Tier 2: Restricted</i>	<i>1x1 degrees and does not identify a single fishing event;</i>	<i>CCPs? CCPs + Observers? External scientists under conditions?</i>	<i>Publicly available on SIOFA website? Restricted section of SIOFA website</i>	

- 3) Can economic information at the country-level be displayed provided it doesn't identify an individual company or other proprietary information?
- 4) What does the SC need to do with finer-scale data displayed in its Working Papers and Information Papers?
- 5) What problems, if any, has the SC or its observers encountered in terms of accessing SC papers or in the presentation and display of data in its papers?

128. The MoP **AGREED** to consider reviewing CMM 2016/03 at MoP10 on the basis of this advice. The MoP further **AGREED** that premise of Annexes A, C and G of MoP-09-10 could be revisited, if needed, in the context of the CMM review.

129. The MoP **ENDORSED** Annexes B, D, E and F of MoP-09-10, **NOTING** that these may also need to be reviewed in 2023.

5.2.3. Harvest Strategies

130. The Meeting of the Parties **ENDORSED** the recommendations in paragraph 170 of the SC7 report regarding the development of a harvest strategy roadmap.

131. The Meeting of the Parties **AGREED** that the holding of the harvest strategy pre-assessment workshop, as well as other workshops, should be done in a hybrid format to enable maximum participation, including by observers.

5.2.4. Management of Demersal Stocks

132. The Meeting of the Parties **NOTED** paragraph 92 of the SC7 report regarding the Walter's Shoal Ridge (WSR).

133. The Meeting of the Parties **NOTED** paragraph 93 of the SC7 report regarding the orange roughy stock assessments.

134. The Meeting of the Parties held further discussions on the stock assessment for the Long Eastern Ridge region.
135. Several CCPs noted that the next orange roughy stock assessment is scheduled to be held in the next 3-5 years and proposed holding the next stock assessment in 3 years' time.
136. France Territories expressed concerns and proposed that it would be important to also establish a catch limit for the management units in the Long Eastern Ridge region as a precautionary measure in the interim period before the next stock assessment.
137. The Cook Islands pointed out that the SC did not have confidence in the stock assessment for the Long Eastern Ridge region due to a lack of data. The Cook Islands further noted that in the WSR, the assessment and the future projections suggest that the stock status is and will continue to be healthy if catches remain at or below recent levels. It also pointed out that the fishery in the Long Eastern Ridge consists of only two vessels. The Cook Islands was therefore of the view that measures to constrain fishing levels are not urgently needed.
138. Japan expressed support for the Cook Islands' intervention.
139. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to hold the next orange roughy stock assessment in three years' time. With regard to the Long Eastern Ridge, the Meeting of the Parties agreed that the assessment should provide advice on whether and to what level fishing activity should be constrained, and whether catch and/or effort should be constrained.**
140. France Territories stated that the absence of data should not prevent the setting of limits on fishing levels as a precautionary measure.
141. The DSCC expressed its view that SIOFA should set precautionary catch limits for orange roughy until a reliable stock assessment is carried out and that there are options for setting precautionary catch limits based on the information presented in the SC report.
142. The Cook Islands informed the Meeting of the Parties that it has already changed the observer data collection protocols to collect additional age and growth data in this area (Long East Ridge) and suggested that the collection of such data over a few more years would hopefully provide better insight into the biology of the stock in that region and help to resolve some of the issues experienced in the 2022 assessment.
143. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 94 of the SC7 report regarding the orange roughy otolith-based age estimation work.**
144. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendations in paragraph 95 of the SC7 report regarding the orange roughy growth, length-at-age, and maturity estimates.**
145. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED paragraph 96 of the SC7 report regarding the orange roughy acoustic data processing project.**
146. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED paragraph 108 of the SC7 report regarding the William's Ridge (WR) toothfish fishery.**
147. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 109 of the SC7 report regarding Del Cano Rise.**

148. Several CCPs expressed concern regarding the occurrence of toothfish fishing outside the Del Cano Rise management area that is effectively unmanaged and stressed the need to assess catch outside the management area and to set catch limits for SIOFA Area 3b.
149. The European Union stated that paragraph 10 of CMM 2020/01 (Interim management of bottom fishing) does not impose any restrictions on the spatial distribution of bottom fishing effort by longline vessels and that the toothfish fishery outside the Del Cano Rise applies the same management measures as those inside the Del Cano Rise. The European Union was of the view that it would be useful to develop a more streamlined approach to managing toothfish across the Area. The European Union also informed the Meeting of the Parties that it has made available a grant to support the SC's work related to Patagonian toothfish population spatial structure.
150. The United States and the DSCC echoed the concerns expressed by several CCPs regarding reports of toothfish harvest occurring in areas outside the toothfish management areas of SIOFA. The United States pointed out that harvest in areas with no established catch limits has implications for stock management within SIOFA as well as transboundary stock management with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). The United States and the DSCC hoped that the Meeting of the Parties and the SC would take up this issue and establish management measures for the relevant areas.
151. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 110 of the SC7 report regarding the SC's intention to consider management arrangements for toothfish at SC8.**
152. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED paragraph 111 of the SC7 report regarding the CCAMLR-SIOFA workshop on the exchange of scientific Patagonian toothfish data, and ENDORSED the recommendations of the conveners' report (MoP-09-13) and the process for the exchange of scientific toothfish data between SIOFA and CCAMLR (Annex A and Annex B of MoP-09-13).**
153. The United States welcomed the holding of the workshop and its outcomes, and stated that it looked forward to productive exchanges between SIOFA and CCAMLR.
154. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 112 of the SC7 report and ENDORSED the toothfish tagging protocol outlined in MoP-09-INFO-09.**
155. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 114 of the SC7 report regarding alfonsino.**
156. France Territories expressed concern regarding the recent increase in the catch of alfonsino. France Territories highlighted the need to conduct a stock assessment as soon as possible and proposed implementing a catch limit or other management measures as a precautionary measure in the interim.
157. The Cook Islands pointed out that, while the recent increase in catch appears to be large, it has simply reverted from a historical low, when one vessel was fishing for only half a year, back to average levels. The Cook Islands agreed with conducting a stock assessment as soon as possible but did not think it was necessary to set a catch limit or other management measures.
158. Japan expressed support for the Cook Islands' intervention.

159. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to conduct a stock assessment of alfonso at SC8.**

Agenda item 5.3. Grants applications and other funding for SIOFA scientific work

160. The Secretariat presented the results of the application for EU funding to support the SC's activities. Two grants to support scientific research and the organisation of the 8th meeting of the SC were recently awarded to SIOFA, and the corresponding contracts signed between the Secretariat and the European Union. The Meeting of the Parties thanked the European Union for the support and funding.

Agenda item 5.4. Scientific Committee work plan and budget

161. The SC Chairperson presented MoP-09-11, which provided the draft SC workplan for 2022-2023, along with project priority scores assigned by SC Heads of Delegation.
162. The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the draft SC workplan.
163. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the SC Workplan as outlined in MoP-09-11-rev1.**
164. The DSCC welcomed the discussion on the intersessional work for the coming year but expressed concern that greater priority was not being placed on work related to VMEs.
165. The Meeting of the Parties discussed the arrangement of the SC and future schedule for SC meetings in light of the fact that the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Stock and Ecological Risk Assessment Working Group (SERAWG) and Vice-Chair of the Protected Areas and Ecosystems Working Group (PAEWG) remain vacant.
166. The Cook Islands proposed incorporating the discussions of the SERAWG and the PAEWG into a combined SC meeting in 2023 on a trial basis. Such a structure is employed by some other regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) and could be a more efficient process. It would also address the issue of the vacant Chair and/or Vice-Chair positions of the two working groups. Several CCPs expressed support for the proposal. The European Union and France Territories expressed hesitation as the proposal had not first been discussed by the SC. They requested that the SC assess this new arrangement and report on its effectiveness to the next Meeting of the Parties. The Cook Islands agreed that the SC's review would be important.
167. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to incorporate the discussions of the SERAWG and the PAEWG into a combined and extended meeting of the SC in 2023 on a trial basis. The Meeting of the Parties REQUESTED the SC to assess this alternative arrangement for organising its meetings, consider whether this or any other alternative arrangements without formal working groups may work more efficiently than the existing arrangement, and provide advice to the next Meeting of the Parties.**
168. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED that the Secretariat had already received an EU grant to fund the 2023 SC meetings and REQUESTED that the Secretariat confirm with the EU whether the revised meeting schedule could still be covered by the aforementioned grant.**
169. The European Union expressed concern regarding the lack of engagement of CCPs in the work of the SC. While the new arrangement may address the issue of the

vacant Chair and/or Vice-Chair positions in the SERAWG and PAEWG, it would not solve the more fundamental issue of how to enhance the involvement of CCPs in the work of the SC. The European Union encouraged all CCPs to participate actively in the work of the SC.

170. The Cook Islands observed that SIOFA is a small RFMO, which limits how much small delegations can realistically achieve, but what is important is to ensure that delegations can contribute substantively to the science. The Cook Islands suggested that an effective way forward may be to stagger or reduce the number of ongoing scientific processes.
171. Based on a request from the Meeting of the Parties, the SC Chairperson presented a summary of proposed Scientific Committee intersessional workshops for 2022 with tentative dates, leads, and workshop chairs (Annex K).
172. The Meeting of the Parties agreed to hold further discussions on the dates, leads and workshop chairs intersessionally.
173. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the recommendation in paragraph 257 of the SC7 report regarding extending the term of Mr Alistair Dunn as SC Chairperson.**
174. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED information paper MoP-09-INFO-10, which provided an update on progress from the SC on its advice to the Meeting of the Parties as required by SIOFA CMMs.**
175. **Following its review, the Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the report of the 7th meeting of the Scientific Committee (MoP-09-INFO-08).**
176. **The Meeting of the Parties expressed its thanks to the SC Chairperson, Mr Alistair Dunn, the SC Vice-Chairperson, Dr Sebastián Rodríguez Alfaro (European Union), and the Chair of the PAEWG, Mr Patrice Pruvost (France Territories).**
177. **The Meeting of the Parties also expressed special thanks to Dr Tom Nishida (Japan) for his many years of contribution to SIOFA as a member of the SC, formerly as the Vice-Chairperson of the SC, and as the Chair of the SERAWG and the former Stock Assessment Working Group.**

Agenda item 6 – Data and Security

Agenda item 6.1. Annual data submission report

178. The Data Officer presented MoP-09-INFO-07 regarding the data submitted by CCPs in 2021 (for 2020 fishing activities) according to the requirements of CMM 2021/02 on data standards.
179. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED information paper MoP-09-INFO-07.**

Agenda item 6.2. Examination of audit report on “SIOFA Access, dissemination and presentation of data”

180. The Consultant, Ross Analytics, presented MoP-09-08, which provided the results of the SIOFA independent audit of data security: access, dissemination and presentation

of data, and MoP-09-16, which included a draft standard operating procedure for data use and data requests.

181. The Meeting of the Parties held further discussions on the findings and recommendations of the audit report (MoP-09-08) during the drafting of the data and security work plan under agenda item 6.4.
182. The Meeting of the Parties reviewed the advice for a SIOFA standard operating procedure for data use and data requests.
183. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED a SIOFA standard operating procedure for data use and data requests (Annex L).**

Agenda item 6.3. Examination of audit report on “SIOFA Cybersecurity”

184. Orange Cyber Defense presented the cybersecurity audit report (MoP-09-09a), the proposed cybersecurity audit restitution plan (MoP-09-09b-rev1), the proposed SIOFA information security system protocol (MoP-09-09c), and the proposed procedure for securing SIOFA IT assets (MoP-09-09d).
185. The Meeting of the Parties held further discussions on the findings and recommendations of the cybersecurity audit (MoP-09-09a, MoP-09-09b-rev1, MoP-09-09c, MoP-09-09d) during the drafting of the data and security work plan under agenda item 6.4.

Agenda item 6.4. Data and security related draft work plan

186. The Data Officer presented MoP-09-07, which provided a data and security related draft work plan based on the findings of the data and cybersecurity audits, and the associated budget considerations.
187. The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the data and security related draft work plan (MoP-09-07-rev1). **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the finalised data and security-related work plan.**

Agenda item 7 – Interim bottom fishing measures

Agenda item 7.1. States or fishing entities that became CCPs before The Meeting of the Parties in 2017 –revision to measures established under paragraph 10 of 2020/01

Agenda item 7.2. States or fishing entities that became CCPs after The Meeting of the Parties in 2017 – approval of measures pursuant to paragraph 28 of 2020/01

188. No interim bottom fishing measures were submitted under agenda item 7.
189. The DSCC urged the Meeting of the Parties to replace the interim measure with a permanent measure that is aligned with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 61/105 and the FAO’s latest guidelines on VME.

Agenda item 8. Review and amendment of Conservation Management Measures (CMMs) currently in force

Agenda item 8.1. Amendment to CMM 2019/10 (Monitoring) proposed by Chinese Taipei

190. The Meeting of the Parties noted that Chinese Taipei had withdrawn its proposal during the discussions at CC6.

Agenda item 8.2. Amendments to CMM 2021/02 (Data Standards)

191. The Secretariat explained that the Compliance Committee had proposed amendments to both paragraph 5 and paragraph 8 of CMM 2021/02 and had merged these into one document, Annex F of the CC6 Report. The Compliance Committee recommended that the Meeting of the Parties adopt the proposed amendments to paragraph 8 and continue work on the proposed amendments to paragraph 5.
192. **The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the proposed amendments, and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 2021/02 (Annex M).**

Agenda item 8.3. Amendment to CMM 2019/07 (Vessel Authorisation) proposed by Korea

193. Korea presented MoP-09-18-rev1, its proposal to amend CMM 2019/07 (Vessel Authorisation). Korea noted that the Compliance Committee recommended that the Meeting of the Parties continue work on the proposed amendments.
194. **The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the proposed amendments, and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 2019/07 (Annex N).**

Agenda item 8.4. Other amendments and recommendations to CMMs following CC6 discussion

195. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the amendment to CMM 2018/06 (IUU Vessel List) outlined in Annex G of the CC6 Report (Annex O).**
196. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 2018/09 (Control) outlined in Annex H of the CC6 Report (Annex P).**
197. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 2019/12 (Sharks) outlined in Annex J of the CC6 Report (Annex Q).**

Agenda item 8.5. Amendment to CMM 2019/13 (Seabirds)

198. France Territories presented Annex K of the CC6 Report, a proposal to amend CMM 2019/13 (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) to reflect the recommendation made by the SC (SC7 Report, para 141) that “pelagic longliners operating in the SIOFA Area follow IOTC Resolution 12/06 on reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries”. France Territories noted that the Compliance Committee recommended that the Meeting of the Parties adopt the proposed amendments.
199. **The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the proposed amendments, and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 2019/13 (Annex R).**

Agenda item 9 – New CMMs

200. No proposals for new CMMs were received.

Agenda item 10 – Performance review of SIOFA

201. The European Union and the Cook Islands presented MoP-09-20, a joint proposal for a first review of SIOFA's performance over its first ten years, including terms of reference, to ensure that it achieves the objectives set out in Article 2 of the Agreement. The review is to be conducted in the 2022-2023 intersessional period. The European Union indicated that it would be able to provide funding for conducting the Performance Review, if it is approved by the Meeting of the Parties.
202. The DSCC welcomed the performance review process but suggested the process would be improved with the engagement of SIOFA observers through nominees on the review panel. The DSCC noted that the recent performance reviews undertaken by CCAMLR and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) had included a nominee on each organisation review panel. The nominees were each jointly nominated by the observers at each organisation. The proponents confirmed that MoP-09-20 already provided a way for observers to participate in the process.
203. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to conduct the first Performance Review of SIOFA.**
204. **The Meeting of the Parties revised and ADOPTED the terms of reference for the first Performance Review of SIOFA as outlined in MoP-09-20-rev1 (Annex S).**
205. **The Meeting of the Parties thanked the European Union for providing funding for the Performance Review.**

Agenda item 11 – Secretariat administration

Agenda item 11.1. Report on the Secretariat activities (since MoP8)

206. The Executive Secretary presented a report (MoP-09-INFO-01) on staff resources and Secretariat activities prepared in accordance with Rule 8.1(f) and 8.1(g).
207. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the report on the Secretariat activities in MoP-09-INFO-01.**
208. The Meeting of the Parties expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for its great efforts and high-quality work over the past year.

11.1.1. New premises for the Secretariat

209. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-09-INFO-04, which provided a report on potential new premises for the SIOFA Secretariat.
210. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the report on potential new premises for the SIOFA Secretariat in MoP-09-INFO-04 and encouraged the Secretariat to**

continue to work with authorities from the host country to identify suitable new premises as soon as possible.

Agenda item 11.2. Long-term plan scenarios for the structured development of the Secretariat's capabilities and budget

211. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-09-05, which provided a long-term plan for the structured development of the Secretariat's capabilities, as requested by the eighth Meeting of the Parties.
212. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the long-term plan for the structured development of the Secretariat's capabilities in MoP-09-05 and held further discussions under agenda item 11.4.**
213. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to retain the Data Officer position and strengthen the Secretariat by adding a Compliance Officer.**
214. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to strengthen the Secretariat with 6-month internships.**

Agenda item 11.3. Financial Status

11.3.1. Update on the 2020 fraud

215. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that China has paid its contribution for 2022 and continues to work with the Secretariat and the authorities to recover the funds for its 2019 and 2020 contributions and remit them to SIOFA.
216. China reiterated its commitment to work closely with the Secretariat to resolve the situation, which is progressing slowly due to the unprecedented and judicial procedures involved. China stated that it would notify the Secretariat once it has been able to recover the funds and remit them to the Secretariat as soon as possible. China stated that it would keep the Meeting of the Parties up to date on the situation and thanked it for its kind understanding. China informed the Meeting of the Parties that further details could be found in information paper MoP-09-INFO-14.

11.3.2. Financial report

217. The Executive Secretary presented a report on financial resources (outlined in MoP-09-INFO-02) 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-09-INFO-03), in accordance with Regulation 9.1 of the Financial Regulations and Rule 8(1)(f).
218. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the Report on Financial Resources provided by the Secretariat in MoP-09-INFO-02.**

11.3.3. External Auditor report

219. The external auditor, Mr Arnaud Fayol, confirmed that, in all material respects, SIOFA's financial position as at 31 December 2021 and its financial performance for the year then ended are in compliance with SIOFA Financial Regulations.
220. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the annual financial statements and the Auditor's report presented in MoP-09-INFO-03.**

Agenda item 11.4 SIOFA Budget

11.4.1. Mid-year budget tracking paper with the actual expenditure

221. The Secretariat was requested, at the eighth Meeting of the Parties, to prepare a mid-year budget tracking paper with the actual expenditure at future Meetings of the Parties.
222. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED the mid-year budget report provided by the Secretariat in MoP-09-INFO-11.**
223. **During its discussions on the mid-year budget report, the Meeting of the Parties NOTED the need for greater clarity on how entitlements and allowances for staff members who remain in a duty station but under a separate contractual arrangement should be treated, and the potential need to amend the SIOFA Staff Regulations to clarify any ambiguity on this matter.**
224. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to hold further discussions intersessionally.**
225. **The Meeting of the Parties REQUESTED the Executive Secretary to consult with the United Nations Secretariat regarding United Nations practice in such cases and to provide advice to inform the Meeting of the Parties' intersessional discussions.**

11.4.2. 2023 provisional budget

226. The Secretariat presented the draft SIOFA 2023 budget in MoP-09-06-rev2. CCPs requested clarifications and modifications to the draft 2023 budget, and the Meeting of the Parties incorporated those changes in the 2023 budget as outlined in Annex T.
227. With regard to the calculation of the annual contribution, one CCP pointed out that when a CCP does not provide any catch information, the Secretariat should consider its catch based on the average of its previous four years or the catch in the previous year.

11.4.3. 2024 forecast budget

228. The Secretariat presented the 2024 forecast budget in MoP-09-06-rev2. CCPs requested clarifications and modifications to the 2024 forecast budget, and the Meeting of the Parties incorporated those changes in the 2024 forecast budget as outlined in Annex T.

11.4.4. Adoption of the budget

229. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the 2023 budget (Annex T), in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.7.**

Agenda item 11.5. Procedure for the appointment of SIOFA Executive Secretary

230. The European Union and the Cook Islands presented MoP-09-21-rev1, a joint proposal for establishing a procedure for the appointment of a SIOFA Executive Secretary.
231. **The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the proposal as outlined in MoP-09-21-rev2. The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the procedure for the appointment of a SIOFA Executive Secretary (Annex U).**
232. Following the adoption of the procedure, the Meeting of the Parties held a closed session attended only by Heads of Delegation to engage in preliminary discussions on reappointing the incumbent Executive Secretary or initiating the process as agreed for appointing the Executive Secretary.

The Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties confirmed that, after discussions, the Executive Secretary indicated his interest for a second term.

233. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to reappoint the incumbent Executive Secretary, Mr Thierry Clot, for another term.**
234. The Executive Secretary sincerely thanked the Meeting of the Parties for his reappointment. He also expressed his gratitude for the support he had received during his current term from CCPs and the Secretariat, as well as the temporary staff who had assisted with the organising of the CC6 and the ninth Meeting of the Parties.

Agenda item 11.6. Discussion on SIOFA Staff Regulation

235. The Executive Secretary noted an error in the statutory holidays described in Annex A of the Staff Regulations and proposed that they be amended. Specifically, Annex A suggests that Ascension Day falls on May 8, when in fact Ascension Day and May 8 are separate holidays and should be listed as such.
236. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the proposed amendment to the Staff Regulations (Annex V).**
237. The Executive Secretary sought clarification from the Meeting of the Parties that Regulation 11 of the Staff Regulations allows him, with the approval of the Meeting of the Parties or the SIOFA Chairperson, to recruit temporary personnel to conduct a specific task and that such tasks need not be related to the holding of meetings.
238. The Meeting of the Parties advised that Regulation 11 permits both the hiring of temporary staff to support the Secretariat and the contracting of services from service providers, and that there needs to be a consistent and clear understanding of the distinction between the two. The Meeting of the Parties suggested that, if further clarity is needed, it could review and consider amending the Regulation at its next meeting.

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

Agenda item 12.1. Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC)

239. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that the SIOFA Secretariat attends meetings of SWIOFC where possible. At a recent plenary meeting of SWIOFC, the SIOFA Executive Secretary and the SWIOFC Executive Secretary invited SWIOFC participants who are also coastal states of the SIOFA Area to participate in SIOFA.

Agenda item 12.2. CCAMLR

240. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that collaboration between SIOFA and CCAMLR continues to be active, including the holding of a joint workshop on the exchange of scientific toothfish data as outlined in MoP-09-13.

Agenda item 12.3. IOTC

241. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-09-22, a draft instrument for collaborative arrangements between the IOTC and the SIOFA Meeting of the Parties received from the IOTC.
242. **The Meeting of the Parties reviewed the document and expressed disappointment that it does not align with its intention to conclude a non-legally binding arrangement and does not contain the content included in the letter of intent (LOI) that the Secretariat sent to the IOTC following the eighth Meeting of the Parties (Annex P, MoP8 Report).**
243. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to seek to conclude a cooperative arrangement with the IOTC, and not the FAO, that is aligned with the aforementioned LOI or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is similar to the MOUs that SIOFA has concluded with CCAMLR and the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), i.e. an equal partnership.**
244. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to work intersessionally with the IOTC on the draft text and tasked the Secretariat to liaise with the IOTC Secretariat to this end.**

Agenda item 12.4. FAO ABNJ Deep-seas Project

245. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that the Secretariat is in communication with the FAO ABNJ Deep-seas Project and staying up to date on the latest developments.

Agenda item 12.5. FAO Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN)

246. The Executive Secretary informed the Meeting of the Parties that the Secretariat will attend the 9th meeting of RSN in September 2022.

Agenda item 12.6. FIRMS

247. The Data Officer informed the Meeting of the Parties that he attended a Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) technical workshop virtually and that work to define the data provision arrangements between SIOFA and FIRMS is ongoing.

Agenda item 13 –Cooperating non-Contracting Parties

248. The Meeting of the Parties annually considers applications for the status of cooperating non-Contracting Party (CNCP), 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.
249. In 2021, consistent with Rule 17(1), the Executive Secretary wrote to the following non-Contracting Parties who undertake fishing activities in the Agreement Area to invite them to cooperate with the Meeting of the Parties by acceding to the Agreement or applying to the Meeting of the Parties for the status of a CNCP: Tanzania, Somalia, Mozambique, Madagascar, Kenya, Maldives, and South Africa.

250. The Meeting of the Parties acknowledged that Comoros had written to the Secretariat on 10 May 2022 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-09-14).
251. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Comoros qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2022. The Meeting of the Parties requested Comoros to strengthen its efforts to fulfil the SIOFA reporting and other requirements.**
252. Comoros thanked the Meeting of the Parties for renewing its CNCP status and expressed its intention to strengthen its efforts to fulfil SIOFA requirements, as requested by the Meeting of the Parties. Comoros also expressed its appreciation for the Secretariat's support and welcomed suggestions from CCPs for ways in which it can strengthen its compliance with the Agreement and the CMMs.
253. The Meeting of the Parties acknowledged that India had written to the Secretariat on 2 May 2022 to apply for CNCP status (MoP-09-25). The Compliance Committee noted that India did not participate in the CC6 meeting and could not respond to questions regarding its application. The Compliance Committee was therefore unable to assess the application.
254. India took the opportunity to make an opening statement (Annex D).
255. In response to a query from the European Union, India explained that it intends to fish for SIOFA fishery resources in the future, but has not determined which species would be targeted and currently lacks the capacity to do so.
256. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that India qualifies for CNCP status in 2022. The Meeting of the Parties welcomed India's participation in SIOFA as a CNCP and encouraged it to make thorough efforts to fulfil the obligations under the Agreement and the SIOFA CMMs.**
257. India thanked the Meeting of the Parties and reiterated its commitment to fulfilling the obligations under the Agreement and the SIOFA CMMs.

Agenda item 14 – Application of Art.13.4(e) of the Agreement

258. The Cook Islands presented MoP-09-23, a proposal for an amendment to Regulation 3.4 and a new Annex I to the Financial Regulations to enable the adoption of the guidelines referred to in Financial Regulation 7.9 to administer funds dedicated for the purposes outlined in Article 13.4 of the Agreement.
259. The Meeting of the Parties reviewed and revised the proposal. **The Meeting of the Parties ENDORSED the amendment to Regulation 3.4 and the addition of a new Annex I to the SIOFA Financial Regulations (Annex W).**

Agenda item 15 – Future Chairing arrangements

Agenda item 15.1. Chairperson Scientific Committee and co-Chairpersons of its working groups

260. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to extend the term of Mr Alistair Dunn as SC Chairperson.**

Agenda item 15.2. Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Compliance Committee

- 261. **The Meeting of the Parties NOTED that Compliance Committee Chairperson, Mr Johnny Louys, is entering the second year of his second term.**
- 262. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED to appoint Mr Ichiro Nomura as Vice Chairperson of the Compliance Committee.**

Agenda item 15.3. Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties

- 263. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Mrs Geereesha Topsy-Sonoo (Mauritius) would serve as its Chairperson and Ms Soobin Shim (Korea) would serve as its Vice-Chairperson from the conclusion of the ninth Meeting of the Parties to the conclusion of the 10th Meeting of the Parties.**

Agenda item 16 – Any other business

- 264. China raised a question regarding the boundaries of the SIOFA Area and reiterated its interest in bringing its fleets operating in the Sea of Arabia, just north of the SIOFA Area, under the management of an RFMO in order to ensure long-term conservation and sustainable utilisation of fishery resources in this region.
- 265. The Meeting of the Parties suggested that China submit a more detailed inquiry in writing.

Agenda item 17 – 2023 meeting arrangements

- 266. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the seventh meeting of the Compliance Committee will take place from 28 June to 30 June 2023 and the 10th Meeting of the Parties will take place from 3 to 7 July 2023.**
- 267. **Mauritius confirmed its intention to host the seventh meeting of the Compliance Committee and the 10th Meeting of the Parties.**
- 268. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that the joint MoP-SC workshop on harvest strategy pre-assessment will take place from 17 to 18 March 2023, the workshop on deepwater sharks in the SIOFA Area will take place from 20 to 21 March 2023, and the eighth meeting of the SC will take place from 22 to 31 March 2023, in Tenerife, Spain.**

Agenda item 18 – Adoption of the report

- 269. **The Meeting of the Parties ADOPTED the report of its ninth ordinary meeting at 12:35 p.m. UTC, 8 July 2022.**

Agenda item 19 – Meeting closure

270. The Meeting of the Parties recognised the exemplary work of the rapporteur and the interpreters for their contribution to the success of this meeting. The Meeting of the Parties thanked the Secretariat for the organisation and the smooth running of the meeting. The Meeting of the Parties thanked the Chairperson for his excellent chairing of the meeting.
271. The meeting was closed at 12:35 p.m. UTC, 8 July 2022.