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# Observer training manual project for project OBS-2025-03

Delegation of France Overseas Territories

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<b>Abstract</b>	
During Scientific Committee Workshop on Scientific Observer Forms (WS2024-OBS2) in November 2024 the subject of SIOFA's observer's manual was raised but discussions were incomplete due to the lack of time. This document presents some key elements to complete the discussion.	

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<sup>2</sup> Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

## Recommendations

That SIOFA Scientific Committee:

- **Considers** this document in discussions for SIOFA's observer's manual
- **Considers** a MOODLE platform to host the manual

# Observer training manual project for project OBS-2025-03

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During WS2024-OBS2 the paper WS2024-OBS2-01 “Draft project description for project OBS-2025-03 *Development of a SIOFA scientific observer data collection manual*” was presented and welcomed by participants (see paragraph 31 to 36 of the WS2024-OBS2 convener report).

Due to the lack of time during the meeting it was not discussed extensively therefore we would like to submit some suggestions regarding the interest of a specific observer training manual.

- This document must not only cover fish but also crustaceans and molluscs and this should be reflected in chapters like biological measurement and tagging.
- It would be beneficial to have a section in each chapter to explain to observers what are the data used for and how so that they better understand what they are doing.
- CCAMLR’s tagging protocol has been updated recently after the meeting of a dedicated workshop and it should be referred to as a stand alone document rather than including parts of it in the SIOFA observer’s manual.
- The sampling gear list could be implemented by other members and their experience, a section with maintenance (like cleaning tagging guns for example) should be added.

Suggestion of items to include:

- What is SIOFA, how does it work so that observers understand their role better
- Which are the other RFMO in relation with SIOFA and how
- What’s the history of fishing in the SIOFA area, who is fishing what and how, it does not need to be a long chapter but just providing a minimum background
- Location determination and navigation: how to read a map, depth on a sonar, fully understand latitude and longitude, speed in knots, distance in miles, bearing etc
- Recording meteorological and oceanographic data
- Basics of anatomy of a fish, molluscs and crustaceans to help in using the identification guides etc
- Description of all the types of gear, not restricted to the ones currently and legally used but also historical and IUU gear, picture library or drawings etc would help greatly.
- Photo-identification guidelines (France OT can provide a chapter for this)
- How to take photos at sea (fish etc)
- Data confidentiality and security: how to avoid losing all data
- Mitigation methods, comprehensive description of the different systems and how it works etc
- Conversion factors: description of the different products and ways to cut

France has started to use a fantastic tool for observer's training and manual named MOODLE, it is an internet platform with a lot of advantages:

- It's easy to upload and update documents
- It is accessible online by participants
- Documents can be downloaded by users

We prepared a very brief example of the introduction of our observer training in English for this meeting, it is accessible here [PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAM: INTRODUCTION | EDU MNHN](#)

France presented its observer program to SIOFA in 2021, this document is available on SIOFA's website and contains elements that can help building the observer's training manual.

<https://siofa.org/sites/default/files/documents/meetings/WHSOP1-INFO-06-French-Observer-program.pdf>