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SC-10-INFO-02

SIOFA Secretariat support to the SC and MoP in 2024-2025

The SIOFA Secretariat

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Abstract	
This paper presents a summary of the work undertaken at the SIOFA Secretariat to support the requests of the SIOFA Scientific Committee and the SIOFA Meeting of the Parties in 2024-2025.	

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Introduction

This paper attempts to provide a simple and schematic summary of the work undertaken at the SIOFA Secretariat to support the requests of the SIOFA Scientific Committee and the SIOFA Meeting of the Parties around scientific matters.

The paper uses tables, links and a “traffic light” color system to rapidly visualize the status of the tasks assigned to the Secretariat, with the aim to identify tasks that warrant further attention from the Scientific Committee. The following table provides an explanation of the color coding system.

Task completed	
Task ongoing	
No action taken so far	

Tasks explicitly assigned by SC and MoP

The following table contains a list of tasks that were assigned to the Secretariat by either the SIOFA Scientific Committee or the SIOFA Meeting of the Parties around scientific matters (including their references), with a short description of the actions undertaken and the status of the task.

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
SC9	44	The Seychelles agreed to provide documentation on its weight conversion for sea cucumber to the Secretariat.	Data Officer	No data on the sea cucumber fisheries was transmitted to the Secretariat, as Seychelles considered this is not a SIOFA fisheries, and therefore a weight conversion factor would be useless
SC9	57	The SC requested the Secretariat to notify members of the SC of any developments relating to such informal technical groups in order to enable SC members to more easily monitor progress and potentially provide input	Science Officer	No informal technical groups foreseen in 2024/2025, but this was well-noted

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
SC9	76	The SC recommended that the MoP endorse the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries 2024 (SC-09-14-Rev1) and requested the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed after MoP11 recommendation, see https://siofa.org/publications
SC9	85	The SC recommended that the Secretariat work to link catch/effort and observer data at the fishing operation level (haul by haul, tow by tow, etc.)	Data Officer	Completed to the extent possible (about 86% of the observed events)
SC9	90	The SC recommended that the MoP endorse the SIOFA Ecosystem Summary 2024 (SC-09-15-Rev1) and requested the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed after MoP11 recommendation, see https://siofa.org/publications
SC9	112	The SC requested the Secretariat investigate and retrieve historical data that is held by CCAMLR that could be added to the SIOFA database.	Data Officer	Tagging data was retrieved from Uruguay (2009) and catch data from Ukraine (2004). Additional Japanese historical data could (2010, 2013) be retrieved thanks to CCAMLR and Japan. Older TOP tagging data from Spain and Uruguay still need to be investigated.
SC9	113	The SC requested the SIOFA Secretariat to submit relevant contents of this paper [SC-09-26-Rev1] on its behalf to the CCAMLR Scientific Committee meeting in 2024 (SC-CAMLR-43).	Science Officer	The paper was submitted on behalf of SIOFA, submission has been arranged in May 2024
SC9	117	The SC thanked the Secretariat for its comprehensive update on the implementation status of the data and security audit recommendations. The SC requested that the Secretariat continue to provide similar reports at future meetings of the SC	Data Officer/Executive Secretary	Completed. See paper SC-10-29
SC9	121	The SC requested the Secretariat to provide a document with the data scheme of the SIOFA databases, similar to Figure 1 (Main table relationships in the three main database tables) in MoP-09-08, to each meeting of the SC, noting that this would help the SC better understand these data, as well as facilitate the work of consultants and others who are accessing and utilising SIOFA data for their analyses.	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-30

SC-10-INFO-02 - SIOFA Secretariat support to the SC and MoP in 2024-2025

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
SC9	124	The SC requested the Secretariat to add a subsection to the website where technical resources could be downloaded, such as identification guides, handbooks, manuals, sampling protocols, and data submission forms.	Data Officer	Completed in May 2024 (https://siofa.org/science/observers-resources) see SIOFA SC Circular 2024-07
SC9	127	The SC requested the Secretariat to distinguish between CCP requests, SIOFA consultant requests, and public/external requests in future summary reports [of data/documents release requests].	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-31
SC9	128	The SC requested the Secretariat to review the data request/release process, identify potential ways in which the process could be streamlined and improved, and present a paper with its ideas at the next SC meeting.	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-31
SC9	200	The SC requested the Secretariat to carry out the necessary administrative procedures to extend the end date of the EU grant for this project [SIOFA-SEAs].	Science Officer	Completed, new EU agreement variation signed in April 2024
SC9	205	The SC requested that the Secretariat obtain a copy of the code to conduct the SIOFA trend analysis and upload it to the SIOFA Secretariat GitHub repository	Science Officer	Completed, code (with confidential data removed) uploaded to GitHub in June 2024
SC9	206	The SC requested the Secretariat to update the toothfish catch estimates using the analysis code described in paper SC-09-35. The SC requested that from 2025, the Secretariat would run these analyses annually, using all data available from the previous year and providing estimates by Management Units. The Secretariat should provide analysis outputs to CCPs prior to the deadline for the submission of working papers to the SC using the data from the most recent available year	Science Officer	Completed, information preliminary submitted to relevant CCPs in December 2024, see paper SC-10-23
SC9	221	The SC recommended that the MoP endorse the SIOFA fisheries summary toothfish 2024 and make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed after MoP11

SC-10-INFO-02 - SIOFA Secretariat support to the SC and MoP in 2024-2025

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SC9	222	The SC requested that the Secretariat add tagging rate required and achieved and the tag overlap statistics achieved, where possible, in next year's update [of the Toothfish Fisheries Summary]	Science Officer	Completed November 2024, see Section 7.2.1 of the toothfish summary 2025 (paper SC-10-18)
SC9	223	The SC requested that the Secretariat separate out the biological data summaries by species in next year's fishery summary for toothfish.	Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-18
SC9	231	The SC requested that the Secretariat separate out the biological data tables and figures by species in next year's fisheries summary for oilfish and escolar.	Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-19
SC9	235	The SC requested that the Secretariat separate out the biological data tables and figures by species in next year's fishery summary for hapuka.	Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-20
SC9	236	The SC recommended that the MoP endorse the SIOFA fisheries summary for hapuka (<i>Polyprion</i> spp., hapuku wreckfish <i>P. oxygeneios</i> , wreckfish <i>P. americanus</i>) 2024 and make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024
SC9	240	The SC recommended that the MoP endorse the SIOFA fisheries summary for common mora (<i>Mora moro</i>) 2024 and make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024
SC9	279	The SC requested that the Secretariat continue to report IOTC bycatch for species that are managed by SIOFA.	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-32

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
SC9	288	The SC requested that the Secretariat, once it has established a linkage between the Observer database and the Catch Effort database, provide a summary of incidental bycatches [of seabirds] reported from the vessel logbooks and the observer logbooks. The SC requested that the Secretariat identify any potential data gaps, potential improvements that could be made for data collection and reporting by CCPs, and potential amendments to CMM 02(2023) that would clarify what information should be collected from the two types of logbooks	Science Officer/Data Officer	Summary completed, to the extent possible, in the SIOFA Ecosystem Summary 2025, see paper SC-10-15. Additional accounts by fisheries are in the fisheries summaries. Data gaps identified in paper SC-10-INFO-03
SC9	322	For the next data submission (deadline 31 May 2024), the Secretariat will update the data submission templates to accommodate the changes in CMM 02(2023).	Data Officer	Completed in April 2024
SC9	323	The SC requested that once the Secretariat has been able to link the Observer and Catch Effort databases, it should add a column indicating the percentage of effort that has observer data associated with it to the table of data submitted per CCP and main gear in future summaries of CCP data submissions.	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-INFO-03
SC9	325	The SC requested the Secretariat to present a paper to SC10 describing the SIOFA databases structure to provide some insight to people receiving data from the Secretariat regarding the data.	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-30
SC9	347	The SC requested that the Secretariat and participating CCPs identify and document any issues with the new [observer] forms, and that these be summarised for consideration at a SC workshop on the observer forms.	Data Officer/CCPs	Completed, see WS2024-OBS2 Workshop and papers WS2024-OBS2-02 and WS2024-OBS2-03
SC9	368	The SC noted the recommendation in paragraph 52 of the WS-2024-OBS report and requested the SC Chairs and the Secretariat to present a document describing the status of progress towards establishing and operating a SIOFA observer programme and outstanding issues at SC10.	SC Chairs/Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-27

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
SC9	378	The SC requested that the Secretariat include the following additional information in next year's summary of lost gears: a. the subarea where the gears from a particular fishery were lost. b. the percentage of gears lost. c. information from past years	Data Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-INFO-05
SC9	396	The SC requested that the DSF Project work with the SIOFA Secretariat to assess the interest level among SIOFA CCPs to engage in: a. partnering in stock assessment/rapid change work with DSF Project/ICES. b. working with FAO on stock status for SOFIA 2026. c. planning a joint R.V Fridtjof Nansen cruise in the SIOFA Area. d. identifying opportunities for training/capacity development.	FAO/Science Officer	In progress, Support provided for b, c and d so far. Agreement between FAO and ICES for the component a is still being defined.
CC8	39	The CC agreed that the appropriate future procedure would be for the Secretariat to prepare a working paper summarising all recommendations from the most recent SC meeting that are of relevance to the CC.	SC Chair/Science Officer	Action to be taken after SC10
WS2024-HSS	13	The Workshop noted the usefulness of paper WSHSPA-2023-01 for tracking SIOFA's progress in developing harvest strategies. The Workshop recommended that the Secretariat regularly update this information and present it to future meetings and workshops where harvest strategies are to be discussed.	Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-28
MoP10	45	The MoP NOTED paragraph 13 of the WS2024-HSS Conveners report regarding the usefulness of paper WSHSPA-2023-01 for tracking SIOFA's progress in developing harvest strategies and TASKED the Secretariat to regularly update this information and present it to future meetings and workshops where harvest strategies are to be discussed.	Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-28

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
MoP11	80	The MoP ENDORSED the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries (MoP-11-07 rev2), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	83	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 90 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA ecosystem summary (MoP-11-08), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	84	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 168 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for orange roughy (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>) 2024 (MoP-11-09), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	85	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 190 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for alfonsino (<i>Beryx spp.</i>) 2024 (MoP-11-10), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	86	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 221 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for toothfish (<i>Dissostichus spp.</i>) 2024 (MoP-11-11), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	87	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 232 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for oilfish (<i>Ruvettus pretiosus</i>) and escolar (<i>Lepidocybium flavobrunneum</i>) 2024 (MoP-11-12), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
MoP11	88	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 236 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for hapuku (<i>Polyprion</i> spp., hapuku wreckfish <i>P. oxygeneios</i> , wreckfish <i>P. americanus</i>) 2024 (MoP-11-13), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	89	The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 240 of the SC9 report, ENDORSED the fishery summary for common mora (<i>Mora moro</i>) 2024 (MoP-11-14), and REQUESTED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.	Science Officer	Completed in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/publications
MoP11	109	The MoP NOTED that the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen has conducted research cruises in the Agreement Area in the past, REQUESTED that the Nansen Programme share data and key reports arising from these past research cruises, and TASKED the SC to review these data and reports.	Data Officer	In progress. See paper SC-10-33
	157	the Secretariat and the SC Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons will draft terms of reference for consultancies to advance this work [on harvest strategies through the SIOFA-PAM project]	Science Officer	Completed in August 2024
MoP11	237	The MoP reviewed and ADOPTED amendments to the Terms of Reference of the SC regarding dates for the submission of documents as described in MoP-11-44 rev1.	Science Officer/Data Officer	Updated ToR published in July 2024, see https://siofa.org/science/scientific-committee
MoP11	246	The MoP TASKED the Secretariat with developing a paper on options for facilitating and addressing the capacity building needs of CCP developing states to be considered by the next SC, CC, and MoP meetings. The scope of the paper should encompass a broad range of areas as commented by the SC in relation to recommendation 6 of the SIOFA Performance Review.	Science Officer	Completed, see papers SC-10-24 and SC-10-25

Report	Paragraph	Task	Lead	Action
MoP11	247	The MoP RECOMMENDED the establishment of a standing agenda item on the implementation of Article 13 of the Agreement. The MoP TASKED the Secretariat, in preparation for the next SC, CC, and MoP meetings, to develop a paper that outlines the existing mechanisms to provide support to developing States and other relevant information relating to Article 13.	Executive Secretary/Science Officer	Completed, see papers SC-10-24 and SC-10-25
MoP11	288	Provided the BFIA for lobster trap fishing is received, the MoP AGREED on the following process regarding Comoros BFIA:		
MoP11	a.	The Secretariat will provide support to Comoros in the development of the BFIA .	Science Officer	Completed in August 2024
MoP11	b.	The SC may assess the BFIA in an extraordinary meeting as per the RoP, to be held virtually, and provide recommendations and advice to the MoP.	Science Officer	Meeting held on 7 November 2024
MoP11	c.	The MoP may use an intersessional decision, as per the RoP, to evaluate the BFIA and consider any future participation of that vessel in that fishery.	Executive Secretary	An intersessional decision request was transmitted through SIOFA Circular 2024/36 in November 2024
MoP11	d.	The MoP and SC Chairpersons will closely consult with CCPs on the timelines for this process to minimise the additional burden placed on them.	MoP Chair/SC Chair	Consultation done via email during October 2024
MoP11	303	The MoP thanked SIODFA for its offer to provide its archives. The MoP noted the usefulness of the documents in the archive, some of which pre-date SIOFA's existence, and believed that they would be beneficial for SIOFA to have.	SIODFA/MoP/ Data Officer	The MoP did not provide any instruction or recommendation
SC-EXTRA2	38	The SC requested the Secretariat to assist Comoros in the preparation of their submission to SC10.	Science Officer	A meeting was held in November 2024 with the Comoros Advisor to illustrate the request and process. An email with detailed references and help summary was sent following up on that meeting.

Recurring tasks in the SIOFA SC Workplan and Budget 2024-2028 (MoP-11-06-Rev1)

Tasking	Lead	Status
Annual report of VME encounters	Data Officer	Completed (paper SC-10-INFO-07)
Summary of SIOFA data	Data Officer	Completed (paper SC-10-29, SC-10-30, SC-10-31)
Update fisheries overview	Science Officer	Completed (paper SC-10-14)
Update ecosystem summary	Science Officer	Completed (paper SC-10-15)
Update fisheries summaries	Science Officer	<p>Completed, the following summaries have been updated</p> <p>SC-10-16 SIOFA Fisheries Summary: orange roughy (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>) 2025</p> <p>SC-10-17 SIOFA Fisheries Summary: alfonsino (<i>Beryx</i> spp., <i>B. splendens</i>, <i>B. decadactylus</i>) 2025</p> <p>SC-10-18 SIOFA Fisheries Summary: toothfish (<i>Dissostichus</i> spp., <i>D. eleginoides</i>, <i>D. mawsoni</i>) 2025</p> <p>SC-10-19 SIOFA Fisheries Summary: oilfish (<i>Ruvettus pretiosus</i>) and escolar (<i>Lepidocybium flavobrunneum</i>) 2025</p> <p>SC-10-20 SIOFA Fisheries Summary: hapuka (<i>Polyprion</i> spp., hapuku wreckfish <i>P. oxygeneios</i>, wreckfish <i>P. americanus</i>) 2025</p> <p>SC-10-21 SIOFA Fisheries Summary: common mora (<i>Mora moro</i>) 2025</p>

SIOFA Scientific project management

The SIOFA Executive Secretary is responsible for the administrative side of project management (i.e., contracting of consultants and payments). For each project, an Advisory Panel is formed by the SC Chairs to provides technical guidance to the project and reviews its outputs. The SIOFA Science Officer prepares draft contracts, coordinates the activities of the consultants, aids the project manager (usually the SC Chair) and the project Advisory Panel with the output review process, and generally ensures the smooth flow of the project from contracting to completion, including publication.

Starting in 2023, the SIOFA Data Officer created a [public database of scientific projects on the SIOFA website](#). The database lists all current and past projects and for each project displays key information (e.g., start and end dates, budget, consultants etc.) and contains the final report produced by each project. This database is periodically updated by the SIOFA Science Officer.

The following table details the projects that were completed or are active since the last annual SC meeting, for a full history of SIOFA scientific projects please refer to the [public database of scientific projects on the SIOFA website](#).

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status
PAE2022-MPA1		Protocols to designate and evaluate MPAs	18,000 €	EU SIOFA-SEAs	Completed (SC-10-39)
SER2022-TOP2		Toothfish population spatial structure	34,000 €	EU SIOFA-SEAs	Completed (SC-10-38)
SEC2022-OBS1		Harmonisation of Scientific Observer programmes	48,000 €	EU SIOFA-SEAs	Completed (SC-10-37)
DWS-2023-02		Identification and trends in Deepwater Sharks	12,000 €	MoP	Draft Report Completed (SC-10-43)

SC-10-INFO-02 - SIOFA Secretariat support to the SC and MoP in 2024-2025

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status
ORY-2024-01	Stephen Brouwer (COK)	Orange roughy stock assessment (2024-2025)	50,000 €	MoP	Draft Report Completed (SC-10-42)
PAM-2024-01	(Lead TBD)	Development of the SIOFA Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF)	50,000 €	EU SIOFA-PAM	In progress
PAM-2024-02	(Lead TBD)	Determination of Biological Reference Points (BRPs) for key SIOFA fish stocks	30,000 €	EU SIOFA-PAM	In progress
PAM-2024-03	(Lead TBD)	Development of Harvest Strategies for key SIOFA fish stocks	40,000 €	EU SIOFA-PAM	In progress
PAM-2024-04	(Lead TBD)	Expert Review Panel for the Development of the SIOFA Precautionary Approach and Management Projects	30,000 €	EU SIOFA-PAM	In progress
ALF-2024-01	Takehiro Okuda, Stephen Brouwer	Alfonsino age protocol development	15,000 €	MoP	In progress

Note that projects that are not managed by the Secretariat, but rather driven by CCPs using their funding, are not included in this paper.

Coordination with other RFMOs, FAO, other institutions

The Secretariat is tasked by the SC and the MoP to coordinate with other relevant RFMOs and to implement SIOFA's actions relative to commitments with FAO (the FAO FIRMS and DSF II Projects).

Tasking	Source of task	Actions undertaken to date	Progress status
CCAMLR toothfish tag data exchange	SC	The Secretariat (Data Officer) exchanged data with the CCAMLR Secretariat in August/September 2024. The Secretariat (Science Officer) further coordinated with CCAMLR on a joint submission and on data availability (see paper SC-10-22).	Completed (recurring)
RFMO coordination	SC/MoP	The Secretariat (Science Officer) participated in annual meetings of IOTC (WPEB20, in person), and CCAMLR (SC-CAMLR-43, virtual).	Completed (recurring)
FAO Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) Coordination	Partnership Arrangement	The Science Officer participated to the 9 th FAO-FIRMS technical workgroup (TWG) meeting in December 2024. The Science Officer completed the annual submission of data to FAO-FIRMS, and relative update of the SIOFA FIRMS factsheets, in July 2024 https://firms.fao.org/firms/search/institution/siofa/en with an update sent in December 2024	Completed (recurring)
FAO Deep-sea Fisheries Project (DSF II) Coordination	Partnership Arrangement	The Science Officer cooperated and participated in various FAO-DSF II meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project meetings: virtual in June 2024 - Workshop on observer training in December 2024 - Steering committee meeting in January 2025. - EAF Symposium in Rome in March 2025 The Science Officer coordinated the provision of a report on commitment of SIOFA resources to the DSF project (June 2024), and various actions related to the project. FAO-DSF II and the SIOFA Secretariat (Science Officer) coordinated on a paper submission to MoP11 and SC10 (paper SC-10-59) on the Nansen cruise 2025 in SIOFA.	Completed (recurring)

Extra tasks

The Secretariat is tasked by the SC and the MoP to coordinate with other relevant RFMOs and to implement SIOFA's actions relative to commitments with FAO (the FAO FIRMS and DSF II Projects).

Tasking	Source of task	Actions undertaken to date	Lead	Progress status
Bonus	Science Officer	Update VME guide and list of taxa in Annex 1 of CMM 01	Science Officer	Completed. See paper SC-10-26
Bonus	Science Officer	Convert SC report graphs into colorblind friendly palettes	Science Officer	Completed, see all SC reports
Bonus	Steve Brouwer	Update FAO codes list (check that overarching codes like ALF and TOT are present) within the Overview	Science Officer	Completed, see paper SC-10-14
Bonus	SC8 task	Retrieve Monaco Exploration data	Science Officer/Executive Secretary	Reminder mail sent in October 2024 by the Science Officer, the JMA and Mauritius responded that the data is still under a moratorium period and would not be transmitted. No information was provided on the length of the moratorium period.
Bonus	MoP/SC Chair/Science Officer	Include discard analysis in summaries	Science Officer	Completed for all fisheries summaries