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Accord relatif aux Pêches dans le Sud de l'Océan Indien

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Proposal for the Designation of the Comoros' lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory Fisheries

Proposed by Japan

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Abstract	
<p>This document briefly describes the proposed process through which could materialize the authorisation of the Comoros' lobster fishery which has been examined through MoP11, the extraordinary meeting (SC-EXTRA2) and the Intersessional decision 2024-II(see SIOFA CIRCULAR n° 2024-40). As its status of fishery has not yet been designated , in this paper, we recommend to provide the status of “new and exploratory fishery” to the Comoros' lobster fishery. Also, it is recommended to establish an interim monitoring measures until, in accordance with CMM17, the formal approval thereon as a new and exploratory fishery has been made in order for the Comoros to properly implement the requirements stipulated in SIOFA CIRCULAR n° 2024-40.</p>	

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² Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To designate the Comoros' lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory Fishery.● To provide an interim authorization of the Comoros' lobster fishery under the proposed designation process.● To establish an interim monitoring measures until MoP has formally approved the Comoros to conduct lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory Fishery in accordance with CMM17.

Proposal for the Designation of the Comoros' lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory Fisheries

Background

At MoP11 in June 2024, some CCPs expressed their concerns and stated that the Comoros was required to submit Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment (BFIA) on its lobster fishery before conducting it. In response, the MoP agreed that the SC will assess the BFIA regarding the Comoros' lobster fishery in an extraordinary SC meeting and provide recommendations and advice to the MoP.

At the 2nd SC Extraordinary Meeting (SC-EXTRA2) on 7th November 2024, the SC assessed the BFIA and advised to the MoP that the BFIA proposed by Comoros met the requirements of the SIOFA BFIA (Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment Standard).

Based on the recommendation by SC-EXTRA2, on 18th November 2024, Executive Secretary circulated SIOFA CIRCULAR n° 2024-36 that MoP Chairperson proposed the conditions for authorization of the Comoros' lobster fishery and requested the response from Official contacts. On 18th December 2024, Executive Secretary circulated SIOFA CIRCULAR n° 2024-40 that eight CCPs responded and all of these responded positively to this proposal. As a result, Comoros' lobster fishery approved to be authorized from 18th December 2024 to the timing when MoP12 reviews. In the same circular, MoP Chairperson requested CCPs to consider these comments at SC10 and intersessionally in order for the MoP12 to come up with appropriate recommendations.

At SC10 in March 2025, the SC noted that there were not enough time for Comoros to prepare and submit the logbook data as its fishing trip had only been completed recently, and therefore the SC agreed to review the data and the fishery after such data have become available. The status of the fishery, as was commented by some CCPs listed in SIOFA CIRCULAR n° 2024-40, is an issue to be considered in MoP12, but this was not discussed in SC10 thus there is no progress so far.

Proposals

1. The status of fishery and interim authorization for Comoros lobster fishery

The status of Comoros lobster fishery shall be a New and Exploratory Fishery with reference to the paragraph 3 of CMM 17. In order to conduct the lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory fishery, the Comoros shall complete the necessary procedures and get approval to conduct it in accordance with CMM17, and at the same time, the MoP should examine how this fishery could tentatively be authorised before providing such approval.

Therefore, it is firstly recommended that MoP applies New and Exploratory Fisheries to the Comoro's lobster fishery, as stipulated in CMM 17. Secondary, it is recommended that the MoP provides an interim authorization to the Comoros lobster fishery under the following transition process, so that the formal procedures to get approval to conduct this fishery will be completed in accordance with CMM 17 in a timely fashion.

- From MoP12 to the end of SC11 :

The Comoros' lobster fishery to be tentatively authorised under the current conditions (TAC, TAE).
- From the end of SC11 to MoP13 :

The Comoros' lobster fishery to be continuously authorised under the current conditions (TAC, TAE) until the reviews by MoP13, if SC11 reviews and adopts all documents and data, including "annual vessel catch and effort data", "observer data", reports required under the provisional monitoring measures (described in the following section, 2. Provisional Monitoring Measures), and other relevant documents required by CMM17. The Comoros also follow revised or new conditions if SC11 recommends any.
- After MoP13 :

The Comoros' lobster fishery to be authorised if MoP13 review the recommendations from SC11 and adopts them and formally approve to conduct this fishery as a New and Exploratory Fishery. The Comoros also follow revised or new conditions if MoP recommends any.

2 Provisional monitoring measures

It is recommended that the MoP should establish the following provisional monitoring measures with a view to properly monitoring and encouraging the compliance by the Comoro's lobster fishery to the current conditions (TAC, TAE) required by the intersessional decision, before its approval for the Comoros to conduct this proposed fishery as a new and exploratory fishery in accordance with CMM 17.

- In order to monitor the use of the TAC in a transparent manner, the Comoros shall send monthly catch reports of its lobster fishery to the Secretariat using the template in Annex I. The Secretariat will circulate this report to CCPs without delay.
- In order to monitor the use of the TAE in a transparent manner, the Comoros shall ensure the FV Rinascente to daily inform the Secretariat of the state of trap settings, including the position of traps (30' resolution), using the template in Annex II. The Secretariat will circulate this report to CCPs without delay.

Recommendations

- **To designate the Comoros' lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory Fishery.**
- **To provide an interim authorization of the Comoros' lobster fishery under the proposed designation process.**
- **To establish an interim monitoring measures until MoP has formally approved the Comoros to conduct lobster fishery as a New and Exploratory Fishery in accordance with CMM17.**

Annex I - Template for monthly catch reports of lobster fisheries.

Vessel name	
Vessel flag	
Month	
Catch live weight (Kg) (All crustacean species combined)	

Annex II - Template for daily lobster fisheries reporting to the Secretariat.

Reporting number	
Reporting date	
Vessel name	
Vessel flag	

Trap ID	Set start date	Set end date	Set position (30' resolution)
1			
2			
3			
4			