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**MOP-12-08-Rev1**

# SIOFA Scientific Committee Workplan 2025-2029 and Budget

The SIOFA Scientific Committee

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<b>Distribution</b>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <sup>1</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> Closed session document <sup>2</sup> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This paper presents the SIOFA Scientific Committee Workplan for 2025-2029 and Budget, and includes tables of current activities, as well as planned and potential projects that could be included in the SC workplan for future years.</p>

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

### Recommendations

The SIOFA Scientific Committee recommended that the MoP:

- **considers** the SIOFA Scientific Committee Workplan 2025–2029 and Budget.
- **suggests** amendments as required.
- **endorses** the SIOFA Scientific Committee Workplan 2025–2029 and Budget.

# SIOFA Scientific Committee Workplan 2025-2029 and Budget

## 1. Introduction

This report provides a draft of the SIOFA Scientific Committee workplan for the period 2025 to 2029 and lists the scientific projects, workshops, and activities for the Scientific Committee to consider at its annual meeting.

In 2022, the MoP requested that the Scientific Committee develop a 3–5 year workplan with an associated budget ([MoP8 report](#), para. 194). Since 2023, the SC has provided a medium term workplan that describes the recent completed projects, current projects, and proposed projects for future years.

The draft plan includes current projects from the SC9 workplan endorsed by MoP11. In addition, the draft plan has been updated with recent developments and the status of current projects.

This paper also recalls the guidelines for the development of the workplan which were adopted at SC8 ([SC8 Report](#), Annex O) and given as Annex A, and the method for prioritising projects as Annex B.

## 2. Status of SIOFA Science Projects (2024–2025)

In 2023, the Secretariat created a public database of scientific projects on the SIOFA website (<https://siofa.org/science/sc-works>). The 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 updated and maintained by the SIOFA Science Officer.

~~Table 1~~ [Table 1](#) details the projects that were completed or have been active since SC8. For a full summary of SIOFA scientific projects please refer to <https://siofa.org/science/sc-works>.

*Table 1: SC workplan projects that have been completed or have been active since SC9. (Budgeted amounts are N/A for projects that are directly funded by CCPs).*

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status
SER2022-TOP2		Toothfish population spatial structure	34,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-SEAs	Completed (SC-10-38)
PAE2022-MPA1		Protocols to designate and evaluate MPAs	18,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-SEAs	Completed (SC-10-39)
SEC2022-OBS1		Harmonisation of Scientific Observer programmes	48,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-SEAs	Completed (SC-10-37)
ORY-2023-01	COK (Steve Brouwer)	Age and growth of orange roughy	40,000 €	MoP	Completed
ORY-2023-02	COK (Steve Brouwer)	Orange roughy acoustics	25,000 €	MoP	Completed
DWS-2023-02	SIODFA (Paul Clerkin)	Identification and trends in Deepwater Sharks	12,000 €	MoP	In progress (SC-10-423)
ORY-2024-01	SoFISH/Hoyle Consulting Ltd	Orange Roughy Stock Assessment	50,000 €	MoP	In progress
PAM-2024-01	ADIRA Consulting	Development of the SIOFA precautionary approach framework	50,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-PAM	In progress
PAM-2024-02	SoFISH/Hoyle Consulting Ltd	Determination of Biological Reference Points (BRPS) for keys SIOFA fish stocks	30,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-PAM	In progress
PAM-2024-03	SoFISH/Hoyle Consulting Ltd	Development of harvest strategies for key SIOFA Fish stocks	40,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-PAM	In progress
PAM-2024-04	Anne-Elise Nieblas-Sylvain Bonhommeau/Nathan Walker	Expert review panel for the development of the SIOFA precautionary approach and management projects	30,000 €	EU grant SIOFA-PAM	In progress

### 3. SIOFA SC Workplan (2025–2029)

#### 3.1 Recurring (annual) activities

A number of recurring annual activities are planned for each year. These include requests from the MoP and Scientific Committee for papers to be submitted to the Scientific Committee or MoP annual meetings. These are listed in [Table 2](#).

*Table 2: Recurring (annual) activities*

Summary Title	Lead	Provider	Notes
Proposed 3-5 yr. Scientific Committee budget	SC Chair	SC Chairs committee	This paper
Review of VME indicator taxa list	SC	SC Delegations	When requested by CCPs
Annual report of VME encounters	Data Officer	Secretariat	Secretariat summary on any VME encounters have been submitted by CCPs
Annual review of VME encounters	SC	SC	
Summary of SIOFA data	Data Officer	Secretariat	Secretariat summary of the available data at SIOFA, including a scheme of the linkages in the database
Update fisheries overview	Science Officer	Secretariat	Secretariat fisheries overview report
Update ecosystem summary	Science Officer	Secretariat	Secretariat ecosystem summary report
Update fisheries summaries	Science Officer	Secretariat	Secretariat fisheries summaries reports (ORY, ALF, TOT, HAU, OIL/LEC, CYO, RIB, TAK). Note that there are different timelines for each species
Toothfish trend analysis for the purpose of setting catch limits	Science Officer	Secretariat	Secretariat summary of catch estimates of CCPs based on the previous years' data
<a href="#">Review of BFIA updates</a>	<a href="#">SC</a>	<a href="#">SC Delegations</a>	<a href="#">The SC to review any BFIA submission</a>
<a href="#">Review of New and Exploratory Fisheries Fishing Operation Plans</a>	<a href="#">SC</a>	<a href="#">SC Delegations</a>	<a href="#">The SC to review any New and Exploratory Fisheries Fishing Operation Plans submissions</a>

#### 3.2 SIOFA SC requests to CCPs and the Secretariat 2025-2026

SIOFA SC9 requested CCPs and the Secretariat to perform the tasks in [Table 3](#), related to the production of papers to be presented to the next annual meeting of the SC, noting that workloads may result in some of these tasks not being completed by that time.

*Table 3: SC requests to CCPs and the Secretariat for the 2024-2025 period.*

Lead	Summary Title
Secretariat - Data Officer	Review of the data request/release process
Secretariat - Data Officer	The SC requested the Secretariat to present a paper to SC10 describing the database structure associated with the IOTC data and if and how these data could be accessed by consultants and CCPs through the SIOFA system
Secretariat - Science Officer + SC Chairs	Status of progress towards establishing and operating a SIOFA observer programme
CCPs - Australia	IOTC standards for EM systems and associated processes for EM data to be considered equivalent to observer data
CCPs - Australia	Shark ERA with updated distribution maps
CCPs - Australia	Skate tagging protocol
CCPs - China	Data submission forms for squid jigging vessel logbooks and observer logbooks
CCPs – EU/France OT	Evaluation of the toothfish monitoring program based on tagging
CCPs – Chinese Taipei	CPUE standardisation for its oilfish fishery and preliminary biological parameters for oilfish

### 3.3 SC focus topics planned for SC meetings

Focus topics are special agenda items where the SC invests some extra time and might invite experts to provide additional information.

For 2026 (SC11), the SC has identified the following focus topics:

- Focus session on Precautionary Approach and Management (Harvest Strategies)

### 3.4 SC Workshops undertaken since SC9, and planned for the 2025-2026 period

*Table 4: SC Workshops undertaken since SC9.*

Workshop code	Lead	Summary Title
WS2024-HSS	SC Chair	MoP-SC Workshop on Harvest Strategies (hybrid)
WS2024-OBS2	SC Chair	Scientific Observer Form Workshop (virtual)
WS2024-PAD	AUS/Trent Timmiss	Workshop on protected area designation (virtual)
WS2025-PAM	SC Chair	Precautionary Approach and Management (virtual)

*Table 5: SC Workshops planned for the 2025-2026 period.*

Workshop code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source
WS2025-PAM2	SC Chair	Precautionary Approach and Management 2 (virtual)	-	SIOFA-PAM
WS2025-HSS	SC Chair/MoP Chair	Third Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies	1,000	MoP
WS2025-DWS	EU	Virtual SC Workshop on the impact of using alternative trace types on the bycatch rate of sharks and target species	-	-
WS2025-ORS	SC Vice Chair/EU	Window of Opportunity - Research Vessels In SIOFA	-	-
WS2026-EMS	EU	Workshop on the Development of E-Monitoring Standards	-	-

#### 3.4.1 WS2025-PAM2: Workshop on Precautionary Approach and Management 2

**Description:** Scientific Committee workshop on the development of a Precautionary Approach Framework and management in SIOFA

To be held in July/August 2025 (before WS2025-HSS)

**Objectives:**

1. Linked to the objectives of the SIOFA-PAM EU Grant
2. Details to be filled in at SC10

**Budget:** None

**Funding source:** EU SIOFA-PAM

**Workshop outputs:** Provide a summary report which will be presented to SC11 (2026)

**Lead:** SC Chair (Alistair Dunn)

### 3.4.2 WS2025-HSS: Third Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies

*Description:* The 1<sup>st</sup> Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies Management Objectives (WS2023-HSMO) was held on 7-8 November 2023 and the outcomes were discussed further and built upon at SC9.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies (WS2024-HSS) took place on 29 June 2024 progressing on the management objectives, performance indicators and the future workplan.

After MoP11, the SIOFA Project “Precautionary Approach and Management (SIOFA-PAM)” has advanced on the Development of the SIOFA Precautionary Approach Framework, the determination Biological Reference Points (BRPs) for key SIOFA fish stocks and the development of harvest strategies for key SIOFA fish stocks.

Considering the Harvest Strategies timeline (Annex D of WS2024-HSS) and the regular dialogue between the MoP and the SC needed for the development of harvest strategies (Para 73, MoP10 Report), the SC10 recommends that a third Joint MoP-SC Workshop on the Development of Harvest Strategies takes place during July or August 2025 (WS2025-HSS) to address the final stages of the SIOFA-PAM project.

The aim of the third Joint Meeting of the MoP and Scientific Committee on the Development of Harvest Strategies (WS2025-HSS) is to promote a science-management dialogue on the development of harvest strategies for SIOFA stocks facilitating the iterative process of decision making in relation to SIOFA harvest strategies by the MoP.

To be held in August 2025.

#### *Objectives:*

The WS2025-HSS would have the following objectives:

- a) To guide the final steps of the SIOFA Precautionary Approach Framework.
- b) To identify Harvest Control Rules for toothfish and orange roughy.
- c) To drive the process of harvest strategy development and guide the scientific work.

*Budget:* EUR 1,000 (rapporteur and report)

*Funding source:* MoP

*Workshop outputs:* Provide a Convener report which will be presented to MoP13 and SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* SC Chair/MoP Chair

### 3.4.3 WS2025-DWS: Virtual SC Workshop on the impact of using alternative trace types on the bycatch rate of sharks and target species

*Description:* The SC noted that the proposed trial (DWS-2024-02) on the impact of using alternative trace types on the bycatch rate of sharks and target species has just started but did not occur in time for the SC10 to analyse its results.

The SC agreed to hold a half-day virtual workshop in 2025 after the completion of the trial to discuss the outcomes of the project DWS-2024-02 and the final results obtained from tagging deepwater sharks in the Indian Ocean.

*Objectives:*

The aim of the Workshop on the impact of using alternative trace types on the bycatch rate of sharks and target species (WS2025-DWS) is:

1. To assess the results of the (DWS-2024-02) trial on the impact of using alternative trace types on the bycatch rate of sharks and target species.
  - a. Presentation of results
  - b. Discussion
  - c. Recommendations
2. To assess the final results obtained from the project “Tagging deepwater sharks in the Indian Ocean”.
  - i. Presentation of results
  - ii. Discussion
  - iii. Recommendations

The working papers will be made available at least two weeks before the Workshop WS2025-DWS takes place.

*Budget:* None

*Funding source:* None

*Workshop outputs:* Provide a Convener report which will be presented to SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* The EU will act as a Convener of the WS2025-DWS.

#### 3.4.4 WS2025-ORS: Window of Opportunity - Research Vessels In SIOFA

*Description:* The SC has identified along the years, research and scientific needs that could be met using research campaigns such as: the “possible use of tags for research on alfonso fisheries... Consideration should be given to using research vessels instead” (SC6, Para 99) or regarding VMEs mapping “the SC RECOMMENDED that the MoP NOTE: that the data scarcity in the Indian Ocean calls for urgent research exploration in areas beyond national jurisdiction” (SC7, Para 194). Particular



attention was given to the development of a specific “research cruise CMM that is separate from the process that is proposed for exploratory fisheries” (SC9, Para 103-106).

From November 2023 to March 2024, two Chinese fisheries scientific research vessels, “Lanhai 101” and “Lanhai 201”, conducted comprehensive fisheries resource surveys in the SIOFA area. Similarly, in the past years, the Monaco Explorations in late 2022 lead the scientific expedition in Saya De Malha Bank, and more recently the R.V. Dr Fridtjof Nansen is planning a research campaign in the SIOFA Area in 2025.

Considering climate-change information would also be useful when trying to identify windows of opportunity for research cruises.

The SC10 has agreed to hold a half-day virtual workshop in 2026 aimed at identifying research opportunities in support of SIOFA scientific activities when research vessels are planning research cruises in the SIOFA area.

*Objectives:*

The aims of the Workshop on Window of Opportunity - Research Vessels In SIOFA are:

1. To identify knowledge gaps and research needs in SIOFA.
2. To identify future research cruises in the SIOFA Area.
3. To explore the administrative steps to include the research needs in SIOFA into the research cruise plan.
4. To identify a realistic schedule in line with the research cruise plan.

*Budget:* None

*Funding source:* None

*Workshop outputs:* Provide a Convener report which will be presented to SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* The SC Co-Chair, Dr. Zhou Fang (China) and Dr. Sebastián Rodríguez Alfaro (European Union) will act as Conveners of the Workshop.

### 3.4.5 WS2026-EMS: Workshop on the Development of E-Monitoring Standards

*Description:* The SC has addressed the development of electronic monitoring (EM) in the last SC meetings (SC9, Paras 371-3716; SC8, Paras 313; SC7, Paras 203-209) supported by the outcomes of the Workshop on the Harmonisation of Scientific Observers Programmes (WHSOP) held in 2021 and the Study “Establish a framework for scientific observation of SIOFA fisheries (SEC2022-OBS1).

The SC10 has recommended the use of the IOTC e-monitoring standards as a basis for SIOFA development of e-monitoring standards for other gear types. The SC10 also welcomed the offer from the DSF Project, FAO, to provide support to the SIOFA e-monitoring standards discussions thru the outcomes of the FAO Workshop on E-Monitoring to be held virtually at the end of 2025.

The SC10 agreed to hold a half-day virtual workshop in early 2026 after the completion of the FAO E-Monitoring workshop.

*Objectives:*

The aim of the Workshop on the development of E-Monitoring Standards is:

1. To discuss how E-monitoring could be implemented across the range of fisheries managed by SIOFA taking into consideration various cost/effort trade-offs, particularly for developing countries.
2. To discuss other monitoring sampling gears.
3. To assess the outcomes of the FAO E-Monitoring workshop and SIOFA's CCPs experiences on the E-Monitoring implementation.

*Budget:* None

*Funding source:* None

*Workshop outputs:* Provide a Convener report which will be presented to SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* The EU will act as a Convener of the WS2026-EMS.

## 4. Projects in the 2025-2029 Workplan

Projects that were planned at the last SC and have been already initiated are listed in [Table 1](#)~~Table 1~~. Note that some of these would likely be ongoing projects in subsequent years.

Project that were planned at the last SC and that could be initiated in the upcoming years are listed below in Tables 6-10.

*Table 6: 2025 projects identified in the SC10 workplan (black). Priority indicates the priority assigned by SC10.*

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
DWS-2024-01	EU (Roberto Sarralde)	Quantitative assessment of Portuguese dogfish catch and determination of the level of sustainable catch (a continuation of DWS-2023-01)	In kind	EU internal funding	Ongoing	-
ALF-2024-01	JPN (Takehiro Okuda)/COK (Stephen Brouwer)	Alfonsino age protocol development	Already allocated in 2024	MoP	Ongoing	-
ALF-2025-01	JPN (Takehiro Okuda) / <a href="#">COK (Stephen Brouwer)</a>	Alfonsino age and growth	25,000 €	MoP	Planned	6.10
CLI-2025-01	AUS (Trent Timmiss)	Assessment of SIOFA Species and Ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts	25,000 €	MoP	Planned	3.50
NAN-2025-01	FAO (Anthony Thompson)/SIOFA Secretariat (Marco Milardi)/FR-OT (Alexis Martin)/Paul Clerkin	Nansen cruise in the SIOFA area	None needed	FAO Nansen	Planned	None needed
OBS-2025-01	FR-OT (Nicolas Gasco/Charlotte Chazeau)	Development of a SIOFA scientific observer data collection manual	15,000 €	MoP	Planned	6.60

*Table 7: 2026 projects in the SC10 workplan (black) and potential projects that will be developed and prioritized at SC1~~10~~<sup>12</sup> (red). Priority scores indicated are from SC10 and may be updated at SC11.*

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
ALF-2026-01	JPN (Takehiro Okuda)	Alfonsino stock assessment (was formerly scheduled for 2025)	50,000 €	MoP	Planned	7.80

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
ALF-2026-02	JPN (Takehiro Okuda)	Alfonsino acoustics	10,000 € (+55,000)	MoP + (COK)	Planned	5.00
SAI-2026-01	TBD	Development of management options for preventing SAls on VMEs with a focus on the precautionary approach, spatial management measures, move-on rules, and identifying risks for determining appropriate measures	25,000 €	MoP	TBD	TBD
HSS-2026-01	TBD	Further development of Harvest Strategies including additional objectives such as bycatch, fisheries impacts, benthic impacts, etc., as part of harvest strategies	20,000 - 40,000 €	MoP	TBD	TBD
<a href="#">BFA-2026-01</a>	<a href="#">TBD</a>	<a href="#">Update to the SIOFA cumulative BFIA</a>	<a href="#">TBD</a>	<a href="#">TBD</a>	<a href="#">TBD</a>	<a href="#">TBD</a>

Table 8: 2027 planned projects in the SC10 workplan that will be developed and prioritized at SC11 (red).

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
ALF-2027-01	TBD	Development of harvest strategies for alfonsino and other primary SIOFA species including stock monitoring and the evaluation of performance indicators	20,000 - 40,000 €	MoP	TBD	TBD
OIL-2027-01	Chinese Taipei	Update on the oilfish/escolar CPUE	In kind	National funding	TBD	TBD
BPA-2027-01	COK / JPN / AUS	Develop draft management, research and monitoring plan for BPAs	In kind	National funding	Planned	TBD
OBS-2027-01	TBD	Development of an accreditation process for SIOFA scientific observer programmes	5,000 – 10,000 €	MoP	TBD	TBD
OBS-2027-02	TBD	Documentation describing how the SIOFA scientific observer program is structured and run	5,000 – 10,000 €	MoP	TBD	TBD

Table 9: 2028 planned projects in the SC10 workplan that will be developed and prioritized at SC11 (red).

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
BYC-2028-01	TBD	Bycatch definitions	15,000 €	TBD	Planned	TBD
ORY-2028-01	COK (Stephen Brouwer)	Orange roughy acoustics	TBD	MoP	TBD	TBD
ORY-2028-01	COK (Stephen Brouwer)	Orange roughy ageing	TBD	MoP	TBD	TBD

Table 10: 2029 planned projects in the SC10 workplan that will be developed and prioritized at SC11 (red).

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
ORY-2029-01	COK (Stephen Brouwer)	Orange roughy stock assessment (2028-2029)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
BPA-2029-01	TBD	BPA monitoring (evaluate the impact of the closures)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

## 5. Project descriptions

### 5.1 2025/26 projects

#### 5.1.1 DWS-2024-01: Quantitative assessment of Portuguese dogfish catch and determination of the level of sustainable catch (a continuation of DWS-2023-01)

*Description:* This Project aims to address Recommendation number 2 of the SIOFA Performance Review “The Panel recommends that SIOFA CCPs task the Scientific Committee with assessing the status of key shark stocks in the Area and that their status be kept under constant review over the coming years”. This recommendation was considered by the MoP as a High priority and therefore, the project aims to provide a Preliminary quantitative assessment of Portuguese Dogfish determining the level of sustainable catch.

*Objectives:*

*Budget:* -

*Funding source:* EU internal funding

*Project outputs:* Provide a report to the SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* EU (Roberto Sarralde)

#### 5.1.2 ALF-2024-01: Alfonsino age protocol development

*Description:* Recent work on alfonsino otoliths has shown that the techniques used to estimate age from otoliths have severely underestimated the age of these fish (SC-09-29). As such a new ageing technique is needed. This requires the development of a protocol for ageing, training some ages in this technique and then testing the technique on a sample set of otoliths.

Key to this process is to get a number of fish agers involved from multiple labs so that all otoliths from the region can be aged using the same techniques.

*Objectives:*

1. Develop a protocol for ageing sectioned otoliths of alfonsino.
2. Age a selection of otoliths from a length stratified sample of fish.
3. Compare ages between workshop participants.

*Budget:* EUR 15,000 (estimated at EUR 50 per otolith + expert time for training agers and some report development time). Otoliths for this work will be supplied by the Cook Islands.

*Funding source:* MoP (funding for this was already secured in 2024)

*Project outputs:* Provide reports which describe the analyses and ageing protocol to the SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* JPN (Takehiro Okuda)/COK (Stephen Brouwer)

### 5.1.3 ALF-2025-01: Age and growth of alfonsino

*Description:* This project will contribute to the 2026 assessment and build on the work undertaken by Krusic-Golub K. and Robertson S.G. (2020), Brouwer et al. (2020), and Brouwer et al. (2021) to develop growth and maturity curves for alfonsino (*Beryx splendens*) in the Western and Eastern stocks of the Southern Indian Ocean, using otoliths collected and held by the Cook Islands and Japan. The results from the bomb radiocarbon ageing project (SER2022-BYS2) and the 2024 development of a new ageing protocol should be used.

The development of this project is dependent upon the completion of the alfonsino ageing protocol project (ALF-2024-01).

*Objectives:*

1. Select 20 otoliths for each 5 cm length bin for both male and female fishes caught at each of the Western and Eastern stocks (about 400 otoliths in total).
2. If otolith weight proves to be a useful tool to estimate age a larger sample can be processed using otolith weight to estimate age.
3. Develop sex separated and combined sex growth curves for alfonsino for both stocks and combined area SIOFA growth curves.
4. Use the biological sampling to develop maturity curves in both areas.
5. Provide growth curve parameters suitable for use in a stock assessment for the stocks.

*Budget:* EUR 25,000 (estimated at EUR 50 per otolith + some report development time) for ageing of otoliths from CCPs other than Japan. (In this project, otoliths collected by Japan will be processed and aged by Japanese scientists and incorporated into growth and maturity analysis).

*Funding source:* MoP

*Project outputs:* Provide reports which describe the analyses to the SC11 (2026) or SC12 (2027)

*Lead:* JPN (Takehiro Okuda)

### 5.1.4 CLI-2025-01: Assessment of SIOFA Species and Ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts

*Description:* This project will assess SIOFA primary, secondary, bycatch species and vulnerable ecosystems for level of vulnerability to climatic change at various temporal scales, using appropriate risk characterization processes. It will identify those species and ecosystems most likely to require consideration in SC assessment processes within the next ten and twenty years.

*Objectives:*

1. Identify target, bycatch, species and ecosystems potentially vulnerable to climate change.
2. Collate information on the potential impacts of climate change on SIOFA species and ecosystems, including ocean acidification.
3. Develop process to characterize risk (probability and magnitude of consequences) under different timescales.
4. Assess species and ecosystems against the risk characterization.

*Budget:* EUR 25,000

*Funding Source:* MoP

*Outputs:* Final project Report to SC11 (2026)

*Lead:* AUS (Trent Timmiss)

#### 5.1.5 NAN-2025-01: Cooperation between the FAO DSF project, SIOFA (RFMO) and the fishing industry (Sealord, SIODFA) in the southwestern Indian Ocean through a joint cruise with the EAF-Nansen Programme

*Description:* The primary aim is for the *R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen* is a Norwegian research vessel operated by Institute of Marine Research (IMR), Bergen, and flagged to Norway, operating for the FAO EAF-Nansen programme, to work alongside a commercial fishing vessel (the *F/V Will Watch*) for both independent and comparative analyses. This proposed cruise in the southwestern Indian Ocean will require:

- 1) Acoustic capabilities for monitoring populations of orange roughy, alfonsino, and other fish living on or close to the seafloor around the seamounts. Also to undertake comparative acoustic work of target strength estimation.
- 2) CTD profiler - sound velocity adjustment for acoustics
- 3) Deep sea fishing capabilities to validate acoustic signals. A benthic-pelagic trawl for biological sampling (may in part be better undertaken by the commercial vessel).
- 4) Echosounding capabilities for seafloor profiling. A Simrad multibeam (EM710) and single-beam (EK60) echosounders or similar.
- 5) Deep sea ROV capabilities for seafloor surveys. Towed 'CAMPOD' video rig, pan-tilt HD camera, two 400-W strobe lights, 10×10-cm laser pointers, and a backward-looking camera.
- 6) Deep sea benthic sampling capabilities. A Van Veen grab
- 7) Shark identification guide testing capabilities. New style deepwater shark identification keys for training purposes (to be developed by the DSF Project)

*Objectives:* -

*Budget:* In kind

*Funding source:* FAO Nansen Programme

*Project outputs:* This project is expected to present preliminary research cruise results to the SIOFA SC (expected SC11)

*Lead:* FAO (Anthony Thompson)/SIOFA Secretariat (Marco Milardi)/FR-OT (Alexis Martin)/Paul Clerkin

#### 5.1.6 OBS-2025-01: Development of a SIOFA scientific observer data collection manual

*Description:* Development of detailed biological sampling requirements for primary and secondary species in all SIOFA fisheries.

The content of this manual must cover sampling of “fish” (Chondrichthyes and bony fishes), crustaceans and mollusks, as well as VME indicator taxa. A paragraph explaining the context, why observers are asked to collect this information and how it is used shall be included in every chapter.

In terms of format, this could be made available on a MOODLE or equivalent platform hosted by the Secretariat, chapters would be written through the use of the tool “book” in which, text, photos and animated images can be inserted. Videos and screencast shall be used to better illustrate the manual.



Chapters would be structured to have as little as duplicate text as possible, for example a chapter on how to identify a fish with a key would be followed by the different ID guides clearly labeled by area. Consultant would have an account with a “teacher” status to upload material on the Moodle platform. The content should also be able to be downloaded so that observers can use it offline.

*Objectives:*

Development of an Observer Manual that describes the detailed methods and processes that can be used by all Observers in SIOFA fisheries, including the following contents:

- a. Introduction: history of SIOFA, members, species caught (how and where), links with other RFMOs,
- b. SIOFA Scientific Observer roles and responsibilities
  - i. Definition of terms
  - ii. SIOFA regulations (CMMs)
  - iii. Overview of roles and responsibilities
- c. Navigation: basic information on calculating distance, what is latitude and longitude, bearing, how distance and degrees of longitude are related, location determination, how to read a map, how speed in KT works, distances in miles etc.
- d. Meteorology and oceanography, current, depression, Coriolis
- e. Biology: basic information (fish, crustaceans, molluscs) on anatomy, biology, reproduction etc.
- f. Data confidentiality, archiving data, backups...
- g. General operational procedures
  - i. Units and formats (length, weight and explaining motion compensated scale, distance, speed in KT, bearing in degrees, time in hours).
  - ii. Standard measurements (LS, LT, LA, LF, mantal length, carapace width and length)
  - iii. Weights.
  - iv. Sexing and maturity stages (identification plates).
  - v. General chapter on different types of sampling: dry, in alcohol, frozen, how to do it and label them properly, including the importance of contamination for genetic sampling.
  - vi. Otolith collection and storage
    1. Removing otoliths.
    2. Otolith storage.
  - vii. Tissue sampling (flesh, rays, genetic punches) in alcohol or RNALater solution for genetic studies using sterile sampling techniques.
  - viii. Stomach and stomach content sampling.

- ix. Tagging and tag recaptures (toothfish and skates, crustaceans): different methods and gear, hygiene, structure of the fish bones and cartilage to explain anchoring of the tags, pictures of the recaptures along with otoliths and a colour template, renaming of the photos through the naming convention presented. See SC-10-71.
- x. Bird bands: observation and collection (if bird is dead). Some context on the different bird bands methods used and what information are provided in term of population study.
- xi. Photo-identification (comprehensive chapter provided by France OT) .
- xii. Conversion factor tests (background on studies, library of products with pictures, implementation).
- h. Target catch and bycatch species:
  - i. Primary species definitions and species identification.
  - ii. Secondary species definitions and species identification.
  - iii. Primary and secondary species sampling requirements.
- i. Observations of marine mammals and seabirds, identification guides, method to assess abundance, basic knowledge on their biology and conservation, self-training tool to learn species (same as on CCAMLR website).
- j. Fishing gear (not restricted to gear legally used within SIOFA but an overview of all possible gear, that would include pictures, figures and when available: videos).
- k. Interactions with fishing gear and vessel and mitigation methods associated: birds and vessel, birds and fishing gear (bafflers, tori line, Brickle curtain etc), mammals and fishing gear (exclusion devices...). This would include the use of tori line simulator (SC-10-71).
- l. Depredation: how it works, species involved, evidences of interaction, what are interaction rates and depredation rates, background on species implicated, solutions tried etc.
- m. Vulnerable marine ecosystems (a bit of historical context and link with CCAMLR's work, why some taxa were chosen, some biological basic information on the different phylum), identification guide for VME indicator taxa.
- n. ETP species list
- o. Marine debris. How it works, impact of entanglement, background on beach surveys, educational material and poster.
- p. Vessel requirements
- q. Observer data collection and data submission requirements
- r. Appendices
  - i. Appendix 1 – Identification guides.
  - ii. Appendix 2 – Maps of the SIOFA Areas, Sub-areas, and relevant seamounts/seamount complexes.

- iii. Appendix 3 – Functions and tasks of Scientific Observers.
- iv. Appendix 4 – SIOFA Scientific Observer resources.
- v. Appendix 5 – Recommended lists of Scientific Observer safety gear.
- vi. Appendix 6 – Recommended lists of Scientific Observer sampling gear and their maintenance.

The order for the different chapters and the structure can be discussed with the consultant.

*Budget: 15,000 Euro*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

1. *A summary report presenting the manual scope and objectives*
2. *A SIOFA scientific observer data collection manual and resources*

*Lead: FR-OT (Nicolas Gasco/Charlotte Chazeau)*

## 5.2 2026/27 projects

### 5.2.1 ALF-2026-01: Alfonsino stock assessment (2025-2026)

*Description:* Update the stock assessment of Alfonsino stocks in the SIOFA area. This should build on and improve the work of the previous assessment (Brandão et al. 2020). The outcomes of this assessment should be collated in a report and presented to SC11 in 2026.

In order to evaluate recent trends in the population of alfonsino and in the absence of a stock assessment a CPUE analysis will provide information on the recent population trends of alfonsino in the SIOFA area. In addition, length frequency trends can provide information on population trends. This analysis should follow on from previous investigations (Brouwer *et al.* 2023 SC-08-INFO-14) using the Cook Islands data but should be expanded to include all fleets.

The analysis should be stratified by fleet and area as a minimum and in addition, the series should be compared to that of Brandao et al. (2020) and Brouwer *et al.* (2023).

This project will also undertake an integrated stock assessment using the CPUE indices, length data (where appropriate), and age data from project ALF-2025-01.

*Objectives:*

1. Meet with the SIOFA Alfonsino assessment review pre-assessment review panel to discuss data input and potential assessment approaches.
2. Develop standardised CPUE indices for alfonsino for the Eastern and Western stocks, including for different gears, targeting behaviour and vessel flag.
3. Compare the indices to previously calculated CPUE indices. Provide comments on the recent trends in CPUE. Evaluate trends in length frequency and compare these to the CPUE trends.
4. Review the previous stock assessments, all new information (including updated growth, maturity and acoustic data), and other relevant information to undertake an age structured production model to estimate the stock status of Alfonsino.
5. The SIOFA interim reference points (Target =  $40\%B_0$  and Limit =  $20\%B_0$ ), and if SIOFA has not yet adopted final target and limit reference points, then a range of other reference points should be considered and estimates of stock status, fishing mortality and biomass should be provided in the terminal year of the assessment and over time including, at least but not limited to status in relationship to  $B_{40\%}$  and  $B_{20\%}$ ,  $MSY$ ,  $SB_{MSY}$ ,  $SB_0$ ,  $SBF=0$ ,  $SB/SB_{MSY}$ ,  $SB/SBF=0$ ,  $SB/SB_0$ ,  $F$ ,  $F_{MSY}$ ,  $F/F_{MSY}$ .
6. Estimates of 20-year projected status (in 5-year intervals) under a range of future catch scenarios and appropriate estimates of future productivity (i.e., year class strengths)

*Budget:* EUR 50,000

*Funding source:* MoP

*Project outputs:* Provide reports which describe the analyses to the SC12

*Lead:* JPN (Takehiro Okuda) / COK (Stephen Brouwer)

### 5.2.2 ALF-2026-02: Alfonsino acoustics

*Description:* Acoustic data are used as abundance indices in the SIOFA orange roughy stock assessments, but there are questions regarding their feasibility for use for alfonsino. SIOFA requires the existing acoustic data, that are collected by commercial vessels fishing for alfonsino, be collated, checked for quality control purposes and then assessed for their feasibility for use as an abundance estimate for use in the alfonsino stock assessments. The acoustic data (2023/2024) from one trawl vessel (Cook Islands) will be available. A series of test acoustic runs with associated trawl identification tows will be conducted by the Cook Island vessel these will be evaluated to determine their feasibility to assess biomass of alfonsino.

*Objectives:*

1. Evaluate the existing acoustic data from the Cook Island vessels.
2. Provide an analysis of the data quality for the data collated in ToR 1 using the same techniques applied in 2018, 2021 and 2024 orange roughy surveys assessing levels of uncertainty (e.g., acoustic signal vs catch, species identification, survey design, target strength, absorption, calibration, and other relevant factors). Make recommendations on the future feasibility of alfonsino acoustic surveys for assessing biomass trends for use in stock assessments.
3. Comment on the viability of using acoustic data to assess alfonsino biomass and if useful comment on the practicality of undertaking further surveys.

*Budget:* EUR 10,000 (+55,000)

*Funding source:* MoP (10,000) and Cook Islands (55,000)

*Workshop outputs:* Provide at least one report which will be presented to SC12 (2027)

*Lead:* COK (Stephen Brouwer) / JPN (Takehiro Okuda)

5.2.3 DWS-2026-01: Investigation of distribution of deepwater sharks for use in ecological risk assessments.

*Description:* Analysis of Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) of deepwater chondrichthyan species has shown there is a low degree of overlap between the FAO, IUCN and aquamaps mapping sources for many deepwater chondrichthyans. The analysis also showed that many species have been shown to be caught outside their known distributions by SIOFA fisheries. More precise distribution maps are required for future ERA analyses.

*Objectives:*

To refine the distribution maps of key Deepwater shark species in SIOFA for the following species: Portuguese dogfish (*Centroscymnus coelolepis*), Birdbeak dogfish (*Deania calcea*), Kitefin shark (*Dalatias licha*) and Lanternsharks nei (*Etmopterus* spp).

*Budget:* in kind

*Funding source:* Australia

*Project outputs:* A paper submitted to the 2027 SC meeting (SC12) outlining the results of the analysis.

*Lead:* AUS (Trent Timmiss)

- 5.2.4 SAI-2026-01: Development of management options for preventing SAIs on VMEs with a focus on the precautionary approach, spatial management measures, move-on rules, and identifying risks for determining appropriate measures.

*Description: Development of management options for preventing SAIs on VMEs with a focus on the precautionary approach, spatial management measures, move-on rules, and identifying risks for determining appropriate measures. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget: 25,000 € (preliminary)*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead:*

- 5.2.5 HSS-2026-01: Further development of Harvest Strategies including additional objectives such as bycatch, fisheries impacts, benthic impacts, etc., as part of harvest strategies

*Description: Further development of Harvest Strategies including additional objectives such as bycatch, fisheries impacts, benthic impacts, etc., as part of harvest strategies. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget: 20,000 - 40,000 € (preliminary)*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead:*

- 5.2.6 BFA-2026-01: Update to the SIOFA cumulative BFIA

Description: Conduct an update of the existing SIOFA cumulative BFIA which was presented and endorsed at SC7 and further endorsed by MoP9.

Objectives: TBD

Budget: TBD

Funding source: MoP

Project outputs: TBD

Lead: TBD

### 5.3 2027/28 projects

#### 5.3.1 ALF-2027-01: Development of harvest strategies for alfonsino and other primary SIOFA species including stock monitoring and the evaluation of performance indicators

*Description: Development of harvest strategies for alfonsino and other primary SIOFA species including stock monitoring and the evaluation of performance indicators. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget: 20,000 - 40,000 € (preliminary)*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: TBD*

#### 5.3.2 OIL-2027-01: Update on the oilfish/escolar CPUE

*Description: Develop an update on the oilfish/escolar CPUE. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget: In kind*

*Funding source: Chinese Taipei*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: TPE (TBD)*

#### 5.3.3 BPA-2027-01: Develop draft management, research and monitoring plan for BPAs

*Description: Develop draft management, research and monitoring plan for BPAs. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget: In kind*

*Funding source: COK / JPN / AUS national funding*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: COK / JPN / AUS*

#### 5.3.4 OBS-2027-01 Development of an accreditation process for SIOFA scientific observer programmes

*Description: Development of an accreditation process for SIOFA scientific observer programmes. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*



*Objectives:*

*Budget: 5,000 – 10,000 € (preliminary)*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: TBD*

5.3.5 OBS-2027-02 Documentation describing how the SIOFA scientific observer program is structured and run

*Description: Documentation describing how the SIOFA scientific observer program is structured and run. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget: 5,000 – 10,000 € (preliminary)*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: TBD*

## 5.4 2028/29 projects

### 5.4.1 BYC-2028-01: Bycatch definitions

*Description:* This project aims to develop a scientifically based categorisation of the different species, based on the agreed definitions in SC8 Annex I, in the catch according to the degree to which they are targeted by the SIOFA fisheries or fall into the categories of retained or discarded bycatch. This work should provide a mechanism which can be used to provide a quick categorisation of each species in each fishery.

*Objectives:*

1. Test the applicability of the definitions of primary and secondary species as well as target, retained and discarded bycatch.
2. The analysis should use reported catch data in the SIOFA database (including all observed and reported retained and discarded catch) at the finest possible scale (i.e. haul by haul data).
3. The analyses should group species based on their characteristics by fishery type.
4. The analysis should give further consideration to the value of the retained catch and provide recommendation on a revised definition based on catch value of each species.
5. Consider developing a matrix of factors that could provide better information for a species categorisation, to emphasize the most essential criteria and distinguish between categories. This could for example include using catch, management level, data availability, fishing areas, ecosystem areas.
6. Undertake a fishery characterisation for each group of species to describing the fisheries taking them, trends in catch and a CPUE standardisation for the top 5 species in each group.

*Budget:* EUR 15,000

*Funding source:* TBD

*Project outputs:* Provide a report and presentation to SC13

Once this work is completed an additional analysis could be considered that will evaluate the effect of established catch for target species on fishing mortalities of bycatch and give consideration to different management strategies to develop TACs for the target and bycatch species. Noting that some of this work could be encompassed into the harvest strategies for some species as they are developed.

*Lead:* TBD

#### 5.4.2 ORY-2028-01: Orange roughy acoustics

*Description: Orange roughy acoustics. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget:*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: COK (Stephen Brouwer)*

#### 5.4.3 ORY-2028-01: Orange roughy ageing

*Description: Orange roughy ageing. Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget:*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: COK (Stephen Brouwer)*

## 5.5 2029/30 projects

### 5.5.1 ORY-2029-01 Orange roughy stock assessment (2028-2029)

*Description: Orange roughy stock assessment (2028-2029). Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget:*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: COK (Stephen Brouwer)*

### 5.5.2 BPA-2029-01: BPA monitoring (evaluate the impact of the closures)

*Description: BPA monitoring (evaluate the impact of the closures). Full description and objectives to be updates at the next SC.*

*Objectives:*

*Budget:*

*Funding source: MoP*

*Project outputs:*

*Lead: TBD*

## 5.6 Background for the development of the 2025-2029 Workplan

The Meeting of the Parties endorsed the SC workplan and made a number of requests for future work. These include (numbering of paragraphs reflects the MoP11 report):

### 5.2.4: Observer harmonisation

92. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 353 of the SC9 report and NOTED that specific sampling mechanisms and requirements could be defined in an observer manual that is developed by the SC and that this approach would allow greater flexibility in setting and revising specific scientific sampling priorities.

93. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 366 of the SC9 report that the MoP consider mandatory and higher levels of observer coverage. The MoP TASKED SC10 to provide advice to MoP12 on observer coverage levels by unit of effort and data collection requirements for observers on all fisheries, as well as observer data submission requirements for SIOFA.

### 5.2.6 Framework for research cruises in SIOFA area

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.

114. The MoP NOTED that SIOFA currently does not have a measure addressing discards at sea and NOTED that consideration could be given to the establishment of such a measure in future if needed. The MoP NOTED that there would be value in the SC providing advice on the extent of discarding in SIOFA and the impacts of restrictions on this practice.

### 5.2.7.5 Other species

127. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 328 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC would consider the data submission forms for squid jigging vessel logbooks and observer logbooks at its next meeting.

### 5.2.9 Bycatch and Incidental captures

137. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 280 of the SC9 report and NOTED that significant catches of species that are managed by SIOFA but taken as bycatch by fisheries managed by other RFMOs, such as the IOTC, are not reported to SIOFA, as they are only reported to those RFMOs. The MoP TASKED the SC to discuss potential data-sharing and data-reporting mechanisms that would address this issue, while also avoiding the potential issue of double-counting the same information.

### 5.2.10 Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems

140. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 306 of the SC9 report and NOTED that the SC intends to hold discussions on options for recording of VME taxa by line or line segment at a focused session at SC10.

### 5.3.2 2nd Workshop on Harvest Strategy Development (WS2024-HSS)

145. 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.

77. The MoP recalled that during the CC, concerns were raised about the Secretariat submitting proposals arising from SC recommendations, noting that this was not the role of the Secretariat. The MoP AGREED that the SC can provide advice to the CC and MoP on new CMMs or CMM amendments and TASKED the SC to incorporate any recommendations relating to new CMMs or suggested changes to existing CMMs in an Annex to the SC report titled “SC recommendations on CMMs for consideration by the CC and MoP” to more clearly communicate these recommendations to the CC and MoP and enable the CC and MoP to act upon those recommendations at their respective meetings.

#### 10. New Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs)

228. The MoP TASKED the SC to review the information in Annex 1 of the new CMM [Conservation and Management Measure for New and Exploratory Fisheries in the Agreement Area (CMM 17(2024) (New and Exploratory Fisheries))] at SC10.

232. The MoP AGREED to forward MOP11-29 rev2 to SC10 to evaluate the voluntary and interim BPAs, outlined in the proposal, that are implemented within the Agreement Area for the SC’s advice on their application as effective spatial management tools and for providing advice to the MoP on their adoption as part of SIOFAs benthic management framework.

##### 12.1.2 Implementation of SIOFA Performance Review recommendations

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.

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.

#### 14.1 Renewal of CNCP status

288. Provided the BFIA for lobster trap fishing is received, the MoP AGREED on the following process regarding Comoros BFIA:

- a. The Secretariat will provide support to Comoros in the development of the BFIA .
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## Scientific Research Activities Account

In accordance with Financial Regulations of the Meeting of the Parties, regulation 14.1, the Sixth Meeting of the Parties established a Scientific Research Activities account, and to allow at the end of each financial year that the remaining funds are to be carried over to the next financial years for the purposes of future scientific research activities.

This Scientific Research Activities account has, as resources, the budget adopted each year by the MoP to cover the research activities, the voluntary contributions if any, and any external grant agreements in progress.

The expenses are constituted by the cost of the consultancies and to the bank charges linked to the payment of the scientific expenses.

Please find below (Table 1) the situation of the Scientific Research Account on **31/12/2024**.

*Table 11: Summary of the Scientific Research Account*

Movement	Date	Balance	Currency
Opening of SIOFA scientific Research account	2021-01-15	245 498 (1)	Euros
Expenses done from 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2021	2021-12-31	<b>-136 267</b>	Euros
Budget for Scientific Research validated by MoP7	2021-04-30	55 620	Euros
Voluntary Contribution from Australia	2021-06-09	34 143	Euros
SIOFA VME Mapping – final payment from EU	2022-12-04	22 312	Euros
SIOFA SEAs – EU Agreement 2023-2024	2022-07-02	69 987	Euros
Budget for Scientific Research validated by MoP8	2022-12-30	30 000	Euros
Expenses done from 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2022	2022-12-31	<b>-118 876</b>	Euros
Budget for Scientific Research validated by MoP9	2023-01-04	25 000	Euros
Expenses done from 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan to 31 Dec 2023	2023-12-31	<b>-162 917</b>	Euros
Budget for Scientific Research validated by MoP10	2024-02-08	77 000	Euros
Payment of balance SIOFA Agreement SI2.815850	2024-02-08	26 460	Euros
SIOFA PAM – EU Agreement 2024-2026	2024-05-31	<b>111613</b>	Euros
Expenses done from 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2024 <sup>(3)</sup>	2024-12-31	<b>-168442</b>	Euros
Budget for Scientific Research validated by MoP11	2025-01-03	65 000	Euros

<b>Situation of the Scientific research account</b>	<b>2024-03-08</b>	<b>176 109</b>	<b>Euros</b>
Funds committed on 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2025		157 400	Euros
Payment of additional Work Toothfish spatial structure		8 000	Euros
	Remained funds	10 731	Euros

<sup>(1)</sup> Including MoP6 a, and EU Grant Agreement (SI2.815850 and SI2 837681)

<sup>(2)</sup> Including the budget validated by MoP10 to be used current 2024

<sup>(3)</sup> Details of the expenses paid to consultants are detailed in the table below



Date d'opération	Bank reference	Amount	Project code	Beneficiary	Détail	Paid by
05-03-2024	9018913	-10000	SER 2022 - TOP2	COOOL	2nd Part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA SEAS
08-03-2024	9001416	-10000	ORY 2023-01	NIWA	2nd Part of payment	SC ACCOUNT - MOP 10
24-05-2024	1990352	-10000	ORY 2023-01	NIWA	3rd Part of payment	SC ACCOUNT - MOP 10
30-05-2024	1992375	-4500	ORY 2023-02	AQUALID LTD	2nd Part of payment	SC ACCOUNT - MOP 10
18-06-2024	1998094	-33600	SEC 2022 - OBS1	ROSS ANALYTICS PTY LTD	2nd and last part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA SEAS
24-07-2024	1909375	-6000	ORY 2023-02	AQUALID LTD	3rd Part of payment	SC ACCOUNT - MOP 10
05-08-2024	9003594	-7200	PAE2022-MPA1	RUBEN-ROA-URETTA	Last part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA SEAS
23-09-2024	1925974	-708.4	SER 2022 - TOP2 EXTRA WORK	CAPRICORN MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL	Transfer from South Africa	SC ACCOUNT
23-09-2024	9000655	-39.67	SER 2022 - TOP2 EXTRA WORK	ANNE-ELISE NIEBLAS SAS COMPANY	Post cost	SC ACCOUNT
23-09-2024	1926161	-15000	ORY 2024-01	SOFISH CONSULTING LTD	1st Part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA PAM
01-10-2024	1928956	-21000	PAM 2024-02 + PAM 2024-03	SOFISH CONSULTING LTD	1st Part of payment PAM-2024-02 1st Part of payment PAM-2024-03	EU GRANT SIOFA PAM
03-10-2024	9020678	-4500	PAM 2024-04A	ANNE-ELISE NIEBLAS - SAS COMPANY	1st Part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA PAM
04-10-2024	1930011	-4500	PAM 2024-04B	NATHAN WALKER	1st Part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA PAM
08-10-2024	9001841	-15000	PAM 2024-01	ADIRA CONSULTING	1st Part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA PAM
16-10-2024	1933313	-12230	ORY 2023-01	NIWA	Last part of payment 10000€ + Extrawork 2230€	MOP10 + SC ACCOUNT

Date d'opération	Bank reference	Amount	Project code	Beneficiary	Détail	Paid by
02-12-2024	9004535	-13600	SER 2022 - TOP2	COOOL	Last Part of payment	EU GRANT SIOFA SEAS
31-12-2024	N/A	-563.8	Bank Charges	BRED	Cost of transfer, change, interest	SC ACCOUNT
TOTAL EXPENSED IN 2024		€168,442				

## 6. Budget forecast study 2026-2028

### 6.1 Scientific budget Proposal 2025-2027

The Executive Secretary, as mandated by MoP8's paragraph 194, has developed an updated provisional three-year plan (2024-2026) for the Secretariat's expenses related to the Scientific Committee and its working groups. The proposed budget adheres to Regulation 3 of the Financial Regulations of the Meeting of the Parties and has been estimated in euros.

### 6.2 Item 3: Meeting Support – Scientific Committee and Working Groups

- In 2026, SC11 is planned to be hosted in La Réunion if there is no proposal to host the meeting.
- A break-down of the estimated costs can be found in Table 2.
- In 2027 and 2028, the location for the SC and WGs have yet to be determined, and may be held in any member country, or failing that, in Réunion.

*Table 2: Predicted Costs for Meeting Support – SC and WGs (Item 3)*

	2026	2027	2028
3.1 Venue, Catering	28 000 €	29 400 €	30 870 €
3.2 Secretariat travel and accommodation	20 000 €	21 000 €	22 050 €
3.3 Support staff	13 230 €	13 890 €	14 585 €
3.4 SCC Travel and Accommodation	15 000 €	15 750 €	16 540 €
3.5 Video & broadcasting	7 350 €	7 720 €	8 110 €
<b>Item 3 Total</b>	<b>83 580 €</b>	<b>87 760 €</b>	<b>92 155 €</b>

#### 6.2.1 Item 3.1 (Venue, catering)

- The price for 2026, 2027 and 2027 will vary depending on the location of the meetings, however based on the cost for previous years and preliminary scoping conducted by the Executive Secretary. It is estimated that the price will be approximately 28 000€ increasing each year of 5 % due to the inflation and the rate change.

#### 6.2.2 Item 3.2 (Secretariat travel and accommodation for meetings)

- For 2025, the price of economy travels and accommodation for three SIOFA staff members in Concarneau has been assessed to 17,500€ and has been completely expensed.

- For 2026 to 2027, the price will vary depending on the location of the meetings, however considering the upgrading of the flight costs, the Executive Secretary recommends a budget for 2025 of 17 500€.

#### 6.2.3 Item 3.3 (Support staff)

- Support staff include a rapporteur, and eventually, assistants. This is estimated to cost approximately of 13 230 € for 2026, based on previous years.

#### 6.2.4 Item 3.4 (SC Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson travel and accommodation)

- The cost of travel and accommodation for the SC Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson will be covered if they are from a developing country or if the SC Chairperson is under contract. These costs are estimated to 15 000 € for 2026. This could be paid, if the MoP agree, from the reserve fund.

#### 6.2.5 Item 3.5. (Video and broadcasting installation)

This item includes additional technical and hardware provision for the meeting room, where additional displays are usually required.

MOP10 decided to avoid hybrid meetings as far as possible, to encourage face-to-face meetings and limit the high cost of hybrid meetings. However, a video stream of the SC is provided for : (i)

Scientific consultants to present their work to the Scientific Committee without incurring travel costs to SIOFA and (ii) for allowing remote participants to observe and listen to the meeting. This provision requires the supply of technical equipment. The cost of the audio-video-broadcasting installation alone is estimated at € 7,350, based on previous years.

### 6.3 Item 9: Contracts for Specific Services

The Scientific project for 2025-2026 are following with the estimate costs associated.

Project code	Lead	Summary Title	Budget	Funding source	Project Status	Priority
ALF-2025-01	JPN	Alfonsino Age and Growth	25,000 €	MOP12	Planned	
CLI-2024-01	AUS	Assessment of SIOFA Species and Ecosystems for vulnerability to climate change impacts	25,000 €	MoP12	Planned	<u>3.50</u>
OBS-2025-01	FR (OT)	Development of SIOFA Scientific Observer data collection manual	15,000 €	MOP12	Planned	<u>6.60</u>

The estimates for costs listed under Item 9 are given below (Table 3).

*Table 3: Predicted Costs of Contracts for Specific Services (Item 9)*

	2026	2027 (indicative cost)	2028 <del>3</del> (indicative cost)
9.1 Research activities (6)	65,000 €	115,000 €	60 000 €
9.2 SC Chairperson	44,000 €	46.000 €	48 000 €
9.3 Consultant/ expert/ service outsourced <sup>(5)</sup>	10,000 €	10,000 €	10,000 €
<b>Item 9 Total</b>	<b>119,000€</b>	<b>156,000€</b>	<b>118,000€</b>

<sup>(5)</sup> Planned for the recruitment of short-term experts or outsourced to a specialised local company able to support the Secretariat, on specific issue that could scientific, but also lawyer or informatic

#### *Item 9.1 (Research activities)*

- The estimated cost of consultants for 2026 is 119,000€. The proposed budget funds the projects the projects- ALF-2025-01, CLI-2025-01 and OBS-2025-01
- For 2027, the proposed budget funds the projects ALF-2026-01, ALF-2026-02, SAI 2026-01, HSS 2026-01
- For 2028, the proposed budget funds the projects ALF-2027-01, OBS-2027-01, OBS-2027-02

#### *Item 9.2 (SC Chairperson)*

- The MoP 10 decided to renew the role of SC Chairperson for 2 years (i.e., until the MoP12 , July 2025)
- The Executive Secretary suggests considering an average inflation costs of 5% to be allocated for the SC Chairperson, if in 2025 any SC Chairperson is not nominated by a CCP and if the MoP agrees to renew the SC Chairperson contract for 2 years more.

#### *Item 9.3 (Consultant/Expert/Service Outsourced)*

- Costs for contracting services that are not mandatory scientific in nature were estimated at 10,000€ for each year. This budget line has not been validated by MoP 11 and thus, there is no budget for any service outsourced in 2025.

- The budget 2024 supported by a transfer = authorised by the Chairperson allowed the Secretariat to recruit a consultant to upgrade the SIOFA website, in order to respond positively to some request from CCP.

## Annex A: Project and workplan guidelines

### A.1 Guidelines for the development of the SIOFA SC workplan (reproduced from SC8 Report, Annex O)

To aid development and successful completion of projects for Scientific Committee (SC) work as part of its workplan, the SC noted that the following guidelines should be used:

1. Identify, for each project in its workplan:
  - a. The specific project objectives, e.g., 1-2 paragraph(s) describing the project title, objectives, and required outputs.
  - b. The Project Lead, e.g., the SC Chair, SC Vice-Chair, or SC delegation representative or scientific expert.
  - c. The timetable for implementation, the duration of the project, and the SC (or other appropriate meeting) where the outcomes should be reported.
  - d. The funding source and amount of funds requested (if required) for undertaking the project.
  - e. A Project Advisory Panel for each project where SIOFA employs external consultants, constituted of the SC Chair or Vice-Chair, Project Lead, and at least 1-2 relevant experts from SC delegations.
2. Each project should be prioritised to allow efforts to be directed towards those with the highest priority.
3. For SC Workshops, ensure that the Workshop convener(s), Workshop terms of reference, timetable, and any papers or reports required for the workshop are identified when Workshops are agreed by the Scientific Committee

Further, the Scientific Committee noted that it should:

1. Take account of potential delays when planning related and sequential projects.
2. Develop project timelines that are a minimum of 2 years between the time of proposal and the expected time of delivery. This is to allow the consideration of project proposals by MoP, and the subsequent development of terms of reference, contracting of consultants, and undertaking of the scientific work to meet the project objectives.
3. Request that the MoP note the guidelines above, and request that they take these into account when directing the Scientific Committee to undertake specific tasks.

### A.2 Science Project Advisory Panel (reproduced from SC-08-INFO-03)

For projects where external consultants are employed by SIOFA to undertake work for the Scientific Committee, the Scientific Committee Chairs suggest that the Scientific Committee consider the following process for Project Advisory Panels:

1. Once a project has been approved (i.e., by the MoP or otherwise as appropriate), a Project Advisory Panel will be established for any Scientific Committee projects that require external consultants, with a Project Lead as designated when the project was proposed (or, if none was designated at the time of the proposal, then by the Scientific Committee Chair).
2. The Project Lead will request nominations from Scientific Committee to be on the Project Advisory Panel. Ideally, the Project Advisory Panel should consist of the Project Lead and at least two representatives nominated by the SC HoDs.

3. The tasks of the Project Advisory Panel will be to:
  - a. Prepare, in consultation with the SIOFA Science Officer and the SC Chair and vice-Chair(s),
    - (i) the project ToRs, outputs, and reporting requirements and timetable for the project.
    - (ii) the timeline for project contracting process (i.e., the timetable for publication of ToRs, consideration of applicants, and subsequent contracting of the consultants).
  - b. Prepare a list of relevant data and report references so that the Secretariat can prepare (and obtain necessary permissions) a data/information package for the consultants that will be available once the consultants have been contracted.
  - c. Review applications received and recommend to the SIOFA Executive Secretary the candidates that should be contracted to undertake the project.
  - d. Provide guidance to the consultants when undertaking the project as appropriate, e.g., through periodic meetings, correspondence, or other appropriate approach that may assist the consultants to meet the project requirements.
  - e. Provide a review and evaluation of project outputs to the SIOFA Executive Secretary and Scientific Committee Chair prior to the work being submitted to the Scientific Committee for its consideration.
  - f. Provide recommendations to the SIOFA Executive Secretary on the acceptance of the project outputs described in the contract with the consultants.



## Annex B: Prioritisation of SIOFA Science Projects

In 2022 and 2023, the SC agreed that scores for each project on the workplan would be given using the scoring system adapted from the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**

*Table 12: SC workplan project priority scoring table. Colours represent priority rankings (6,9 = High; 3,4 = Medium; 1,2 = Low).*

		Importance to SIOFA Management Outcomes or to the functioning of the SC			
		Rank	Low	Moderate	High
Feasibility: Likelihood of Success	Low	1	2	3	
	Moderate	2	4	6	
	High	3	6	9	

**Importance criteria** evaluate the significance of the outcomes of the proposal in contributing to the successful management of the SIOFA stocks or the functioning of the SC (e.g., is the proposal aligned with the SIOFA research and/or management priorities; does the proposal contribute to the effective planning and functioning of the SC; are the intended outputs/benefits well-defined and relevant; what is the level of impact and likelihood that the proposal outputs will be adopted; is the proposal cost effective). High= Essential; Moderate=Important but not essential; Low=Not Important.

**Feasibility criteria** evaluate the proposal's potential for success i.e., how likely is the proposal to achieve its stated objectives (e.g., are the objectives clearly stated, is the methodology sound, are the project objectives realistic and likely to be achieved, does the research team [if identified] have the ability, capacity, and track record to deliver the outputs).