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Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
Accord relatif aux Pêches dans le Sud de l'Océan Indien

9th Meeting of the Compliance Committee (CC9) and 12th Meeting of the Parties (MoP12)

Ebene, Mauritius, 25–27 June 2025 and 30 June – 04 July 2025

MoP-12-36

Proposal to amend CMM 15 (2024), Management of Demersal Stocks

Proposed by the delegation of Australia

Meeting	Compliance Committee ✓ Meeting of the Parties ✓
Document type	working paper ✓ information paper <input type="checkbox"/>
Distribution	Public ✓ Restricted ¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Closed session document ² <input type="checkbox"/>
Abstract	
<p>Australia's proposed amendments aim to implement the recommendations from the 10th Annual Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC).</p> <p>The proposed amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Establishes the South Indian Ridge (SIR) management area and the SC recommended catch limit- Includes an interim catch sharing arrangement similar to current practice in Del Cano- Includes a new paragraph to recognise the ability to transfer catch limits as is currently practiced for Del Cano- Updates the catch limit for Del Cano- Updates the requirement to report catch from Del Cano and SIR to weekly instead of monthly,- Moves the VMS requirement in Del Cano to the 'general provisions' for toothfish, and- Makes minor changes to the toothfish reporting forms in the relevant Annexes.	

¹ Restricted documents may contain confidential information. Please do not distribute restricted documents in any form without the explicit permission of the SIOFA Secretariat and the data owner(s)/provider(s).

² Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

We have also tried to reduce the operational burden in Williams Ridge on the vessel operators and Secretariat in providing notifications and to trigger daily notifications only when two or more vessels have notified their intent to fishing in Williams Ridge.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For CC9 to review the proposal and propose it for adoption to MoP12.• For MoP12 to review and adopt the proposal.

CMM 15(~~2024~~2025)³

Conservation and Management Measure for the Management of Demersal Stocks in the Agreement Area (Management of Demersal Stocks)

The Meeting of the Parties to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement;

RECOGNISING that Article 4(a) of the *Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement* (the Agreement) calls on the Contracting Parties, in giving effect to the duty to cooperate, to adopt measures on the basis of the best scientific evidence available to ensure the long-term conservation of fishery resources, taking into account the sustainable use of such resources and implementing an ecosystem approach to their management;

FURTHER RECOGNISING Articles 4(c), (e) and (f) of the Agreement which call on the Contracting Parties to apply the precautionary approach and the principles that fishing practices and management measures shall take due account of the need to minimise the harmful impact that fishing activities may have on the marine environment and that biodiversity in the marine environment shall be protected;

FURTHER RECOGNISING Articles 6(1)(d) and (e) of the Agreement which provide that the Meeting of the Parties shall adopt conservation and management measures (CMMs) necessary for ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishery resources, taking into account the need to protect marine biodiversity, based on the best scientific evidence available and adopt generally recommended international minimum standards for the responsible conduct of fishing operations;

MINDFUL of Article 16 of the Agreement that calls on Contracting Parties, acting jointly under the Agreement, to cooperate closely with other international fisheries and related organisations in matters of mutual interest;

COMMITTED to ensuring that bottom fishing undertaken in the SIOFA Area of Application (the Agreement Area) is consistent with the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks and the protection of the marine environment;

***ADOPTS* the following CMM in accordance with Article 6 of the Agreement:**

Objective

1. The objective of this CMM is to promote the sustainable management of deep-sea fisheries resources in the Agreement Area, including target fish stocks and non-target species.

General provisions

2. This CMM applies to all fishing vessels flying the flag of a Contracting Party, cooperating non-Contracting Party, participating fishing entity or cooperating non-participating fishing entity (collectively CCPs) to the Agreement engaging or intending to engage in bottom fishing in the Agreement Area.

³ CMM 15(2024) (Management of Demersal Stocks) supersedes CMM 15(2023) (Management of Demersal Stocks).

Status of Stocks

3. The Scientific Committee shall provide annual reports, based on the best available science, on the status of the demersal fisheries resources targeted in the Agreement Area, relative to available and/or relevant reference points. The reports shall include, where possible, projections of stock status over a period no less than 20 years, with 5 years steps, relative to a range of fishing mortality. In addition to the annual report on stock status, the Scientific Committee will provide management advice relative to available and/or relevant reference points.

Orange Roughy:

Fishing season

4. For the purposes of this CMM, the fishing season for *Hoplostethus atlanticus* in the Agreement area shall be defined as the period from 1st January to 31 December both dates inclusive.

Stock assessment

5. The orange roughy stocks shall be the subject of a full stock assessment to be assessed every three to five years. In the interim period available information on ORY stocks shall be presented annually.
6. The SC shall provide a summary of future data needs to improve assessment accuracy, as well as provide a summary to MoP-7 on progress against the ORY workplan.

Toothfish:

7. For the purpose of this fishery, the target species are *Dissostichus mawsoni* and *Dissostichus eleginoides*, defined as *Dissostichus* spp. The Toothfish management areas are defined in Annex VIII.

The objectives of this section are to:

- a. ensure collaborative and complementary arrangements are in place for *Dissostichus* spp. between SIOFA and the Commission for the Conservation of the Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR); and
 - b. ensure that fishing mortality of *Dissostichus* spp. on William's Ridge in the Agreement Area⁴, ~~and~~ Del Cano Rise and South Indian Ridge do not cause biologically sustainable catch levels to be exceeded, taking into account population links.
8. The catch limit for *Dissostichus* spp. on Del Cano Rise and South Indian Ridge, and the research catch limit for *Dissostichus* spp. on William's Ridge as specified in paragraphs 16, 16bis and 33 shall apply until:
 - a. the Meeting of the Parties has adopted a biologically appropriate catch limit for the populations of *Dissostichus* spp. occurring in the SIOFA portion of Williams Ridge, South Indian Ridge and Del Cano Rise and other appropriate management measures which are comparable in effectiveness to those in force in CCAMLR taking into account the advice and recommendations of the SIOFA Scientific Committee and

⁴ The portion of Williams Ridge in the Agreement Area is bounded by the area 80E to 85E and 52S to 55S.

- b. the Meeting of the Parties has adopted appropriate bycatch mitigation measures, including measures to minimize the incidental catch of seabirds which are comparable in effectiveness to those in force in CCAMLR consistent with the advice provided by the Scientific Committee.
9. The Scientific Committee shall ~~by no later than the close of its 7th ordinary meeting in 2022,~~ continue providing advice and recommendations on:
- a. ~~a~~ biologically appropriate catch limits for the populations of *Dissostichus* spp. occurring in the SIOFA Portion of Williams Ridge, South Indian Ridge and Del Cano Rise.
 - b. appropriate bycatch mitigation measures, including for benthic bycatch and seabirds; and
 - c. any other matter that the Scientific Committee determines as relevant or necessary for the substantial management of the *Dissostichus* spp. populations.
10. In formulating its advice and recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties in respect of this CMM, the SIOFA Scientific Committee shall take full account of relevant CCAMLR Scientific Committee material.
11. CCPs with an interest in this stock shall cooperate to ensure scientific collaboration between CCAMLR and SIOFA to ensure long-term sustainable management for *Dissostichus* spp. stocks which takes due account of relevant rights and responsibilities under international law, and which does not undermine the conservation status of the stock.

General Provisions

12. Fishing with demersal longlines shall be prohibited in depths shallower than 500m. in order to protect benthic communities and juvenile *Dissostichus* spp.
13. Each vessel participating in the fishery shall have at least one scientific observer on board throughout all fishing activities within the fishing period. The observer shall have a target of observing 25% of hooks hauled per line over the duration of the fishing deployment.
14. CCPs shall require their flagged vessels to tag and release *Dissostichus* spp. specimens at a rate of at least 5 fish per tonne of green weight caught. A minimum overlap statistic of at least 60% shall apply for tag release, once 30 or more *Dissostichus* spp. specimens have been caught.
- 14bis. CCPs shall require their flagged vessels fishing for *Dissostichus* spp. to report VMS data automatically to their FMC at least every hour.
15. For toothfish fisheries, the season is defined as the period from 1 December to 30 November (both dates inclusive).

Management measures for toothfish in the Del Cano Area and the South Indian Ridge Area

Effort/catch and operational limits

16. CCPs shall ensure that the total annual catches of *Dissostichus* spp. in the Del Cano Rise area do not exceed 52.8 44 tonnes. Without prejudice to any future sharing arrangement of the catch opportunities, this catch shall be equally shared between those CCPs which have historical catches declared to SIOFA up to 2016 in the Del Cano Rise area. Any overcatch~~excess~~ by a given CCP in a given year shall be deducted from its following year catch share.

16bis. CCPs shall ensure that the total annual catches of *Dissostichus* spp. in the South Indian Ridge area do not exceed 83.4 tonnes. Without prejudice to any future sharing arrangement of the catch opportunities, this catch shall be equally shared between CCPs which have reported catch from this area prior to June 2025. Any overcatch by a given CCP in a given year shall be deducted from its following year catch share.

16ter. A CCP may transfer to another CCP all or part of its annual catch limit established under paragraphs 16 and 16bis, provided that the total catch of the two CCPs concerned does not exceed their combined limits. All such transfers shall be notified to the Secretariat within one week and communicated by the Secretariat to all CCPs.

17. CCPs shall send ~~monthly~~ weekly reports of their *Dissostichus* spp. catches to the Secretariat, using the template at Annex I. As soon as 90% of the catch limit is reached, the Secretariat shall notify the CCPs of the closure of the fishery.
18. CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels inform the Secretariat daily on start and end points of set longlines, using the template at Annex II.
19. Longlines shall not exceed 3000 hooks per line and shall be set at minimum 3 nautical miles from each other⁵.

By-catch limits

20. Toothfish caught by vessels not targeting *Dissostichus* spp. may not exceed 0.5 t per season of *Dissostichus* spp.
21. Should a vessel fishing for species other than *Dissostichus* spp. reach the *Dissostichus* spp. limit of 0.5 tonnes, the ~~Del Cano~~ area concerned shall be closed for this vessel for that season.

Mitigation of depredation

22. To reduce likelihood of depredation, vessels are encouraged to not haul longlines in the presence of killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) and are discouraged from hauling longlines in presence of any odontocete (toothed) whales.
23. Should killer whales arrive during hauling operations, the vessels are encouraged to cease hauling, tie off the longline with a buoy, and move on. The vessel may only retrieve the tiedoff line once the killer whales are no longer near the line.
24. To further reduce potential for depredation, vessels are encouraged to set lines at depths exceeding 1000 m.

VMS polling

25. ~~CCPs shall require their flagged vessels fishing for *Dissostichus* spp. in this area to report VMS data automatically to their FMC at least every hour when they are present in the Del Cano and South Indian Ridge areas.~~

Scientific committee

26. In 2020 the SC shall make recommendations in order to build an area wide habitat model, a spatial and temporal CPUE analysis, an estimate and map of local abundancies and a local

⁵ For the purpose of this measure lines by the same vessel on the same trip must be 3nm from each other.

population assessment. It shall further advise on any necessary improvements to data collection in order to reduce future assessment uncertainty.

27. The SC shall also address the issues related to depredation.

28. At its ordinary meeting in 2024 the Scientific Committee will recommend an appropriate catch limit for the extended Del Cano Rise area.

Review

29. The provisions above shall be reviewed annually until a collaborative approach involving SIOFA and CCAMLR is established. This shall include sharing of relevant data, undertaking collaboratively the stock assessments and agreeing in coherent, fair and scientifically sound conservation and management measures for the *Dissostichus* spp. that are shared by the two organisations.

Management & research measures for toothfish in Williams Ridge [FAO Subarea 57.4]

Area and purpose

30. For the purpose of this fishery, Williams Ridge is defined as the area set out in Annex VIII, and divided into a 15'x15' grid for spatial management. This grid is in place to address the risk of localised depletion and ensure representative data collection throughout the SIOFA part of Williams Ridge.

Data collection for fisheries research

31. Representative data and samples of length, weight, sex, maturity stage, gonad weight and otoliths shall be collected to contribute to the work of the 5th meeting of the Scientific Committee, and in particular to contribute to assessing the risk to localised depletion.

Effort/catch and operational limits

32. Total annual research catches in this area shall not exceed 140 tonnes. Any excess in a given year shall be deducted from that CCP from the following year.

33. CCPs shall ensure their vessels send daily reports of their *Dissostichus* spp. catches to the Secretariat using the template at Annex III and inform the Secretariat daily on start and end points of set longlines, using the template at Annex IV. As soon as 90% of the catch limit is reached, the Secretariat shall notify all CCPs and CCPs shall ensure there is no further fishing effort by their fishing vessels for the remainder of the season.

34. Only one fishing vessel at a time can fish for *Dissostichus* spp. in a given grid cell. A grid cell shall be closed to fishing by other vessels while a line is being set or hauled by a vessel, and while a line has been set by a vessel and has not been hauled⁶

34bis. CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels inform the Secretariat at least 72hrs prior to entering the Williams Ridge area with information on the intended grid cells the vessel intends to fish using the entry notification at Annex V. The Secretariat will inform the vessel

⁶ For the avoidance of doubt, a vessel that ceases hauling a line in a grid cell in order to mitigate depredation in accordance with paragraphs 45 and 46 is still fishing in that grid cell until it hauls the line.

within 60 hours of the notification whether the nominated grid cells have already been fished.

34ter. CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels shall not fish in a grid cell before having received confirmation from the Secretariat that two lines have not already been set in that grid cell during that season.

34quart. Where two or more fishing vessels notify that they are entering Williams Ridge, the Secretariat shall immediately notify these fishing vessels that daily reporting requirements in paragraphs 35 and 36 apply.

35. CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels inform the Secretariat as soon as they enter a grid cell to fish for *Dissostichus* spp., using the entry notification template at Annex V. Outside Secretariat business hours, an advance notification process will apply. The Secretariat shall inform the vessel as soon as possible⁷ of the number of lines that have been set in that grid cell during that season and whether it is currently being fished by another vessel, using the template at Annex VI. Where the Secretariat receives notifications from multiple fishing vessels for a given grid cell, the Secretariat will respond to the notifications in the order that they were received.
36. CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels shall not fish in a grid cell before having received confirmation from the Secretariat that two lines have not already been set in that grid cell during that season and that it is not currently being fished by another fishing vessel, however a fishing vessel entering a grid cell to haul a line and to set a second line may haul the first line (but not set the second line) before receiving the confirmation.
37. CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels inform the Secretariat as soon as they exit the grid cell specified in paragraph 34bis or 36 and that they inform the Secretariat of the number of lines they have set and/or hauled in that grid cell, if any, using the exit notification template at Annex VII.
38. Longlines shall not exceed 6250 hooks per line and shall not be set across grid cells.
39. CCPs shall ensure that no more than two lines in total are set per grid for the duration of the fishing season of *Dissostichus* spp.
40. Once two lines have been set in a given grid cell, it shall be closed to fishing for the remainder of that fishing season.
41. CCPs shall require their flagged vessels fishing for *Dissostichus* spp. in Williams Ridge to apply a break of a minimum of 30 days between consecutive fishing trips to Williams Ridge.

By-catch limits

42. Toothfish caught by vessels not targeting *Dissostichus* spp. may not exceed 0.5 tonnes per season.
43. Should a vessel fishing for species other than *Dissostichus* spp. reach the *Dissostichus* spp. limit of 0.5 tonnes, the Williams Ridge area shall be closed for this vessel for that season.

⁷ In accordance with any arrangements agreed ahead of each fishing season between the CCPs with fishing vessels fishing for *Dissostichus* spp. in Williams Ridge and the Chair of the MoP in consultation with the Secretariat. The arrangements could include procedures and expected timeframes for the Secretariat's response to prevent unreasonable operational disruption to fishing outside Secretariat business hours. Once agreed, the Secretariat should circulate the arrangements to all CCPs before the beginning of the season.

Mitigation of depredation

44. To reduce likelihood of depredation, vessels are encouraged not to haul longlines in the presence of sperm whales (*Physetes catodon*) and are discouraged from hauling longlines in presence of any odontocete (toothed) whales.
45. Should sperm whales arrive during hauling operations, the vessels are encouraged to cease hauling, tie off the longline with a buoy, and move on. The vessel may only retrieve the tiedoff line once the sperm whales are no longer near the line.

Review

46. The level of fishing on Williams Ridge shall be reviewed annually. This CMM may be reviewed annually until a collaborative approach involving SIOFA and CCAMLR is established. This shall include sharing of relevant data, undertaking collaboratively the stock assessments and agreeing in coherent, fair and scientifically sound conservation and management measures for the *Dissostichus* spp. that are shared by the two organisations.

Management plan for Alfonsino:

Season

47. For the purpose of fishery for *Beryx splendens* in SIOFA area the season is defined as the period from 1 January to 31 December both dates inclusive.

Stock assessment

48. The MoP requests that the SC assess the *Beryx splendens* stocks in 2022 at the ordinary meeting of the Scientific Committee (if the SC, in 2021, determines that suitable data exist to undertake that assessment). In addition, the SC is requested to provide advice on a regular assessment schedule for future years.
49. The Scientific Committee shall provide clear advice and guidance on any necessary changes to data collection in order to reduce future assessment uncertainty.

Application

50. The catch limit provided for in paragraph 16 and 16bis of this CMM shall apply from 1 December 2024.

Annex I - Template for CCPs to use for monthly-weekly catch reports to the Secretariat when fishing on the Del Cano Rise and South Indian Ridge areas (paragraph 17).

CCPs shall send monthly-weekly reports of their *Dissostichus* spp. catches to the Secretariat. This report shall be sent to SIOFA Secretariat (mcs@siofa.org).

Vessel name

Vessel flag

Area
(circle or underline correct area)

DEL CANO RISE

WILLIAMS RIDGE

SOUTH
INDIAN
RIDGE
OTHER

Year

Month/Week

Catch live weight (Kg)

Catch Pieces

Annex II - Template for CCPs to use for daily longline reporting to the Secretariat when fishing on the Del Cano Rise and South Indian Ridge areas (paragraph 18).

CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels inform the Secretariat (mcs@siofa.org) daily on start and end point of set longlines, and shall use the following template:

Vessel name

Vessel flag

Set Start Date

Set Start Time

Set Start Longitude

Set Start Latitude

Set Start Depth

Set End Date

Set End Time

Set End Longitude

Set End Latitude

Set End Depth

Number of hooks set

Annex III - Template for CCPs to use for daily catch reports to the Secretariat when fishing on the Williams Ridge area (paragraph 33).

CCPs shall send daily catch reports of their *Dissostichus* spp. catches to the Secretariat (mcs@siofa.org).

Vessel name

Vessel flag

Area
(circle or underline correct area)

DEL CANO RISE	WILLIAMS RIDGE	OTHER SOUTH INDIAN RIDGE
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Month

Day

Catch live weight (Kg)

Catch Pieces

Annex IV - Template for CCPs to use for daily longline reporting to the Secretariat when fishing on the Williams Ridge area (paragraph 33).

CCPs shall ensure that their fishing vessels inform the Secretariat (mcs@siofa.org) daily on start and end point of set longlines, and shall use the following template:

Vessel name	<input type="text"/>	Vessel flag	<input type="text"/>
Set Start Date	<input type="text"/>	Set Start Time	<input type="text"/>
Set Start Longitude	<input type="text"/>	Set Start Latitude	<input type="text"/>
Set Start Depth	<input type="text"/>		
Set End Date	<input type="text"/>	Set End Time	<input type="text"/>
Set End Longitude	<input type="text"/>	Set End Latitude	<input type="text"/>
Set End Depth	<input type="text"/>		
Grid Cell* (e.g. C8)	<input type="text"/>		
Number of hooks set	<input type="text"/>		

*Williams Ridge Area grid cells:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	lat.
1																					
2																					
3																					53 S
4																					
5																					
6																					
7																					54 S
8																					
9																					
10																					
																					55 S
																					long. 80 E
	81 E																				82 E
	84 E	85 E																			83 E

Annex V – Template for vessel entry notification when fishing on the Williams Ridge area (paragraph 35).

[Vessel name] hereby notifies its entry into grid cell [Number] at [Date: Time (UTC)] to fish for toothfish.

I [Name of Captain] confirm that the [vessel name] will not commence fishing until receipt of confirmation from the Secretariat that two lines have not already been set in this cell during this fishing season and that the cell is not currently being fished by another vessel.

Annex VI – Template for Secretariat confirmation in response to vessel entry notifications when fishing on the Williams Ridge area (paragraph 35).

The Secretariat acknowledges receipt of your notification of entry into [grid cell number] to fish for toothfish and advises that:

1. [number of lines] have been set in this cell during this fishing season, and
2. this cell [is/is not] currently being fished by another vessel.

Annex VII – Template for vessel exit notification when fishing on the Williams Ridge area (paragraph 37).

[Vessel name] hereby notifies its exit from grid cell [Number] at [Date:Time (UTC)]. I [Name of Captain] inform you that the [vessel name] has (choose 1 option from the list below):

1. set 1 line
2. set 2 lines
3. hauled 1 line
4. hauled 2 lines
5. hauled 1 line and set 1 line

Annex VIII – Toothfish Management Areas

The Management areas for Toothfish are defined as follow;

Del Cano Rise

The Del Cano area is;

- (i) north of 45°00' S, and
- (ii) south of 44°00' S when west of 44°09' E, and
- (iii) south of 43°30' S when east of 44°09' E, and
- (iv) between the adjacent EEZs to the east and west

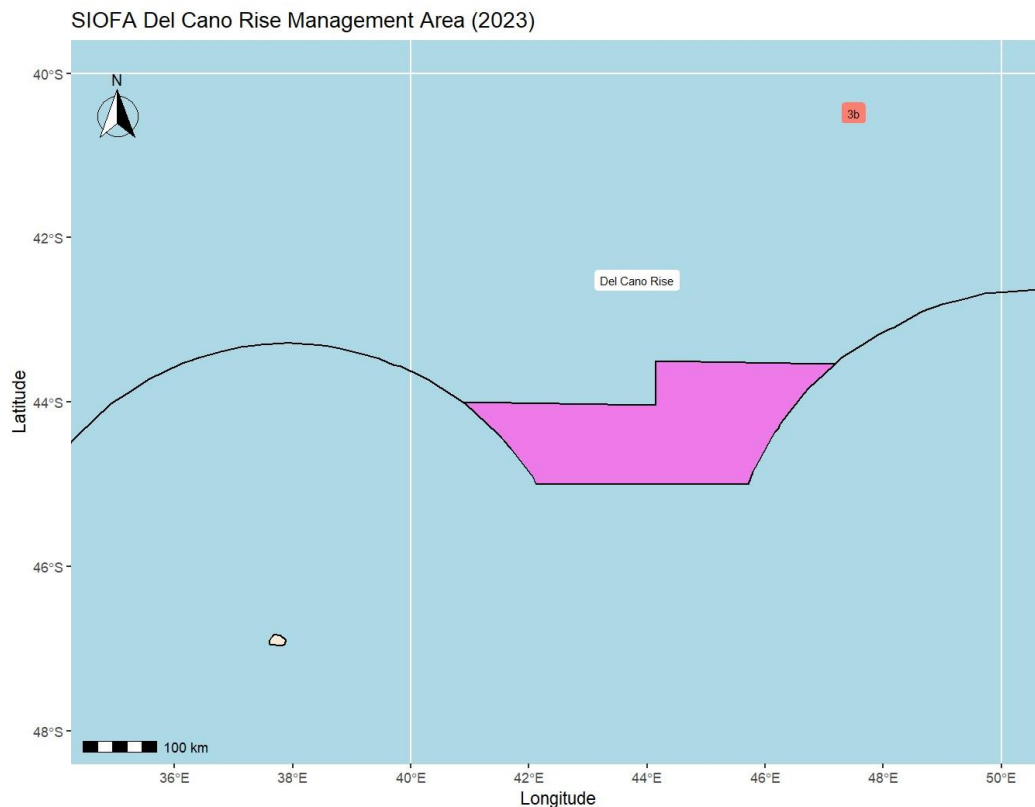


Figure A: Boundaries of the extended Del Cano Rise management area .-

South Indian Ridge

The South Indian Ridge is defined as within the box bounded by the following points:

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
<u>40°00' S</u>	<u>43°30' E</u>
<u>44°00' S</u>	<u>43°30' E</u>
<u>44°00' S</u>	<u>40°55' E</u>
<u>43°47.2' S</u>	<u>40°30' E</u>
<u>40°00' S</u>	<u>40°30' E</u>

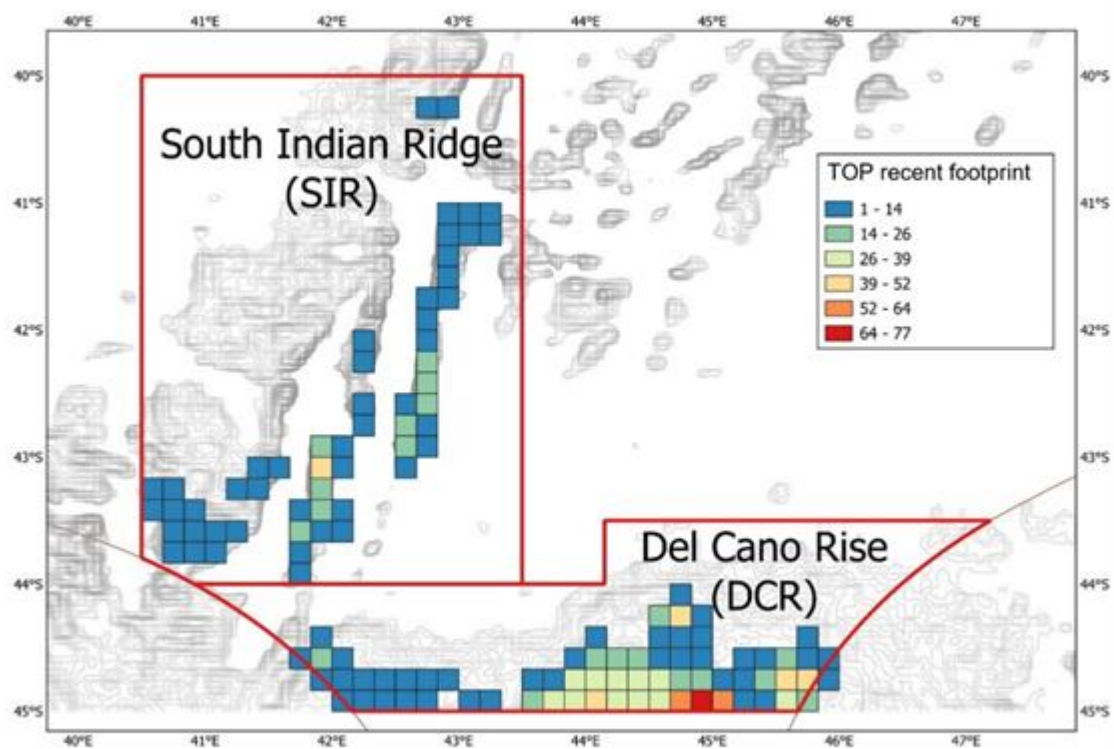


Figure A: Boundaries of the Del Cano Rise and the South Indian Ridge -areas (2024).

Williams Ridge

The Williams Ridge is defined as within the box bounded by the following points:

Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	-52.5	80.0
2	-55	80.0
3	-55	85.0
4	-52.5	85.0

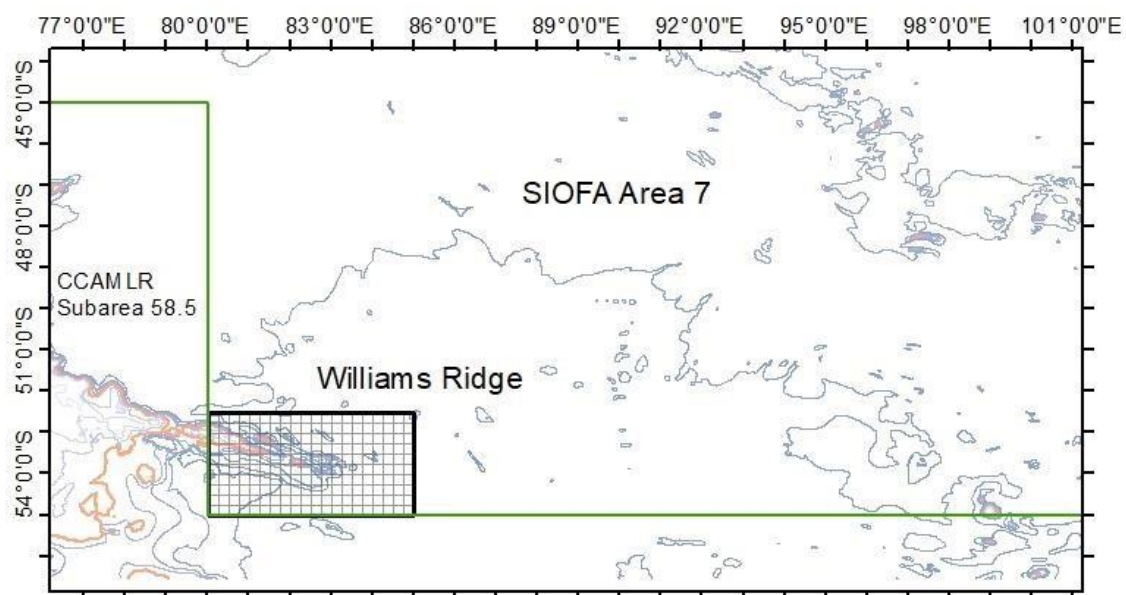


Figure B The boundary of Williams ridge and the 15' cells.