



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

CC-09-18 / MoP-12-49

EU Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Program (SWIOP)

Delegation of the European Union (EUD) to the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles,
SIOFA Secretariat

Meeting	Compliance Committee ✓ Meeting of the Parties ✓
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Abstract

The objective of this note is to present a proposal for EU support to SIOFA under the new SWIOP programme, and to obtain the agreement of the Member of Parties meeting (scheduled in June 2025) for the signing of an MoU with Expertise France – the Implementing Partner of the component “Support to RFMOs (IOTC & SIOFA)” as part of OUTPUT 1.2 of the SWIO programme.

To allow SIOFA to benefit from the program, it should enter into a formal agreement through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the program's implementation partner, **Expertise France**. However, due to the project's timing, the MoU will be available to be signed in the intersession, tentatively by the end of 2025.

Recommendations (for proposals and working papers only)

- That the CC09 and the MoP12 **notes** the proposed EU Support.
- That the CC09 **recommends** the participation of SIOFA in the SWIOP Project
- That the MoP12 **agrees** to the participation of SIOFA in the SWIOP Project and **agrees** that the Secretariat signs the proposed MoU between SIOFA and Expertise France on its behalf

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Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Programme (SWIOP)

Proposed EU support to SIOFA

The objective of this note is to present a proposal for EU support to SIOFA under the new SWIOP programme, and to obtain the agreement of the Member of Parties meeting (scheduled in June 2025) for the signing of an MoU with Expertise France – the Implementing Partner of the component “*Support to RFMOs (IOTC & SIOFA)*” as part of OUTPUT 1.2 of the SWIO programme.

Background

The EU has been **supporting since 2007 ocean governance** and fisheries management in the Southwestern Indian Ocean, through Sectorial Supports of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements with Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros (via European Commission Directorate General MARE), but also through international cooperation programmes such as successive SMARTFISH and ECOFISH programmes, signed with the Indian Ocean Commission (via European Commission Directorate General INTPA).

The EU is now preparing a new programme of support “Sustainable Western Indian Ocean” (SWIOP), with a broad thematic scope, including fisheries management and the fight against IUU fishing. The RFMOs, and notably IOTC and SIOFA, have an important role to play in that objective. **SWIOP therefore proposes a specific component to strengthen SIOFA**, along the lines indicated in the section “Output 1.2” of the annex hereunder. The programme would last **4 years** (starting in the second semester of 2025), with a budget of **up to € 3 million**. After discussion with the Secretariat of the two RFMOs, the implementation modality tentatively envisaged is through a Contribution Agreement with Expertise France, tendered and managed by the EU Delegation in Mauritius, but under the active guidance of the two RFMOs. For that matter, it is proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed between Expertise France and the two respective RFMOs. The scope of works will include inputs from both IOTC and SIOFA Secretariat to ensure that this programme is in line with the objectives and priorities of the two organisations.

In terms of timeline, the Contribution Agreement between the EU Delegation and Expertise France must be signed by no later than 31 December 2025. The EU Delegation in Mauritius has started the negotiation process with Expertise France, and according to the latter’s internal validation process, the earliest the contract can be signed is October 2025. Expertise France will start bilateral discussions with the two RFMOs to define activities to be undertaken over the next four years. Therefore, the MoU between Expertise France and SIOFA must be signed once the Contribution Agreement is signed.

The project would include activities contributing to the general strengthening of SIOFA and designing capacity-building activities that would benefit the entire membership of SIOFA. The project will support SIOFA Cooperating Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNPC) (Collectively CCPs), specifically Mauritius, Seychelles and the Comoros.

Against the Specific Objective 1 (SO1) of the SWIO programme, “Strengthen regional and national capacities to coordinate and collaborate on shared ocean governance”, the Specific Objectives of this support would be:

OUTCOME No	Description of specific objectives
<u>OUTCOME 1</u>	RFMO coastal states capacity is built and improved for understating the work related to the stock assessment of managed species
<u>OUTCOME 2</u>	Provide technical assistance to RFMOs to design capacity building activities and training with the aim to improve beneficiaries’ capacity to comply with conservation and management measures adopted.
<u>OUTCOME 3</u>	Provide technical assistance to beneficiaries on data collection, analysis and reporting to improve their capacities to comply with obligations stemming from RFMO membership.
<u>OUTCOME 4</u>	Support beneficiaries for the organisation of meetings and other activities within the framework of RFMOs, notably the areas related to the conservation and management of shared resources.
<u>OUTCOME 5</u>	Improve RFMO visibility and documents access in the SWIO region, by way of participation to meetings/workshop, website development and SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and E-gazettes

The outcomes of the initiative, under SO1, are related to the improvement of the implementation of conservation and management measures for shared fisheries resources through RFMOs.

Under the fisheries management dimension of SWIOP, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the European Fisheries Control Agency will also have an important role to play. Coordination modalities will be established with these institutions, as well as more broadly with the other partners of SWIOP.



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

ANNEX

Extracts of the SWIOP project document most relevant for the proposed SIOFA component of the project.

“The action will be carried out in nine countries in the Western Indian Ocean (Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania).

The Overall Objective is to contribute to the sustainable, productive, climate-resilient governance and use of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO).

The Specific Objectives of this Action are:

- ✓ *SO1. Strengthen regional and national capacities to coordinate and collaborate on shared ocean governance;*
- ✓ *SO2. Facilitate investment in the sustainable blue economy; and*
- ✓ *SO3. Support regional initiatives to improve ocean and coastal ecosystem resilience and blue carbon capture*

Under SO1, the Action aims to support the development, implementation and enforcement of international and regional agreements and mechanisms, including on policy approaches in the WIO blue economy as well as regional fisheries management (e.g. RFMOs) and the fight against IUU fishing. This will be achieved notably through institutional and human capacity-building, improved regional coordination in shared resource management, and better compliance with international and RFMO agreements. [...]

Activities related to Output 1.2: Implementation of conservation and management measures for shared fisheries resources through RFMOs is improved:

- ***Support RFMO and coastal states for the stock assessment of shared species;***
- ***Provide technical assistance to RFMOs to design capacity building activities and training with the aim to improve beneficiaries' capacity to comply with conservation and management measures adopted;***
- ***Provide technical assistance to beneficiaries on data collection, analysis and reporting to improve their capacities to comply with obligations stemming from RFMO membership;***
- ***Support beneficiaries for the organisation of meetings and other activities within the framework of RFMOs, notably the areas related to the conservation and management of shared resources.”***