

**2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the SIOFA VMS Working Group (VMSWG-02)**

*Online, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024*

**VMSWG-02-01**

# Report of the 1st Meeting of the Working Group to Support the Establishment of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement Vessel Monitoring System (VMSWG-01)

SIOFA Secretariat

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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>	
As agreed in the 1st Meeting of the Working Group to Support the Establishment of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement Vessel Monitoring System (VMSWG-01), the VMS WG shall adopt the report of the VMSWG-01 at its second meeting	

<b>Recommendations (for proposals and working papers only)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the VMS WG02 reviews and adopts the report of the VMS WG01</li> </ul>

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

Report of the 1st Meeting of  
the Working Group to  
Support the Establishment of the  
Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement  
Vessel Monitoring System  
(VMSWG-01)

Virtual

15 January 2024

<b>Agenda item 1 – Opening of Session .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Agenda item 2 – Administrative arrangements.....</b>	<b>4</b>
i. Nomination of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the SIOFA VMSWG .....	4
ii. Adoption of Agenda .....	4
iii. Meeting Documents .....	4
iv. Appointment of rapporteurs .....	4
<b>Agenda item 3 – Overview of SIOFA VMS Project, and EU Project Grant.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Agenda item 4 – Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs) for the SIOFA VMS ...</b>	<b>4</b>
i. Discussion on vessel UVI .....	6
<b>Agenda item 5 – Proposed work plan for the SIOFA VMS WG.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Agenda item 6 – Other Business .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Agenda item 7 – Close of Meeting .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Annex A – List of registered participants .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Annex B – Agenda.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Annex C – List of meeting documents .....</b>	<b>13</b>

## **List of Annexes**

Annex A List of registered participants

Annex B Agenda

Annex C List of meeting documents

## **Agenda item 1 – Opening of Session**

1. The Compliance Committee Chair, Mr Ichiro Nomura (Japan), opened the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Working Group (WG) to Support the Establishment of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement Vessel Monitoring System (SIOFA VMS; VMSWG01) and welcomed the participants.
2. The list of registered participants is included in Annex A.

## **Agenda item 2 – Administrative arrangements**

### **i. Nomination of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the SIOFA VMSWG**

3. The VMS WG nominated Ms Fiona Harford (European Union (EU)) to serve as its Chair.

### **ii. Adoption of Agenda**

4. The VMS WG reviewed the provisional agenda and agreed to change agenda item 3 from 'EU Grant for SIOFA VMS and Project Timelines' to 'Overview of SIOFA VMS Project, and EU Project Grant'. The VMS WG agreed to add a new sub-item, 'Discussion on vessel UVI', as agenda item 4i.
5. The agenda was adopted (Annex B).

### **iii. Meeting Documents**

6. The VMS WG Chair outlined the list of meeting documents as presented in VMSWG-01-ADM-02 Rev1 (Annex C).

### **iv. Appointment of rapporteurs**

7. The VMS WG agreed to appoint Mr Alexander Meyer (Urban Connections, Tokyo) as rapporteur.

## **Agenda item 3 – Overview of SIOFA VMS Project, and EU Project Grant**

8. The Compliance Officer, Mr Johnny Louys, provided an overview of the SIOFA VMS Project and the corresponding EU Project Grant (VMSWG-01-INFO-01). The overview included the project objectives, outcomes and milestones, the project methodologies, and tentative project timelines.
9. The VMS WG thanked the EU for providing funding to support the work to establish the SIOFA VMS.
10. The VMS WG noted the question raised by the Secretariat regarding the scope of the VMS WG and whether this is limited to defining SSPs for the SIOFA VMS, including further discussion on the term 'unique vessel identifier', and, if so, whether it would be necessary for the MoP to consider broadening the VMS WG's scope. The VMS WG agreed that the scope of its work includes support for the entirety of the intersessional processes that would lead to the establishment of the SIOFA VMS.
11. The VMS WG noted the significant workload that the establishment of the SIOFA VMS would entail, and agreed on the need to hold more meetings.

## **Agenda item 4 – Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs) for the SIOFA VMS**

12. The Compliance Officer presented a first draft of SSPs for the SIOFA VMS (VMSWG-01-01).
13. The VMS WG reviewed the draft, made technical and editorial revisions, and provided more substantive feedback that the Secretariat should consider when revising the draft.
14. The VMS WG noted that certain parts of the draft SSPs overlapped with the obligations in CMM 16 (2023) (Vessel Monitoring System). The VMS WG suggested that such duplicative parts should be removed from the SSPs wherever possible and that where it is necessary to include the obligations of CMM 16 (2023) also in the SSPs, the wording should be fully

- consistent with the wording in the CMM.
15. CCPs agreed that the SSPs should be easy to understand and implement, so as to enable the establishment of the SIOFA VMS as soon as possible, while maintaining a high level of rigour to ensure the integrity of the SIOFA VMS.
  16. One CCP suggested that the SIOFA SSPs should be similar to and consistent with the VMS rules adopted by the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), as some SIOFA vessels also operate in the CCAMLR area.
  17. Regarding the text relating to paragraph 6a of section 3 (general provisions), the VMS WG noted that if CCPs already provide the requisite ALC details when submitting a vessel to the SIOFA Record of Authorised Vessels (RAV), then they would already be compliant with this provision, but if that is not the case and there is ALC information that is needed for the implementation of the SIOFA VMS, then a transitional arrangement would be needed. The VMS WG suggested that, for example, paragraph 6a could be revised to require CCPs to provide at least the minimum ALC information for their vessels in addition to the requirements of CMM 07 (2022) (Vessel Authorisation) before the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS. The VMS WG also suggested that it may be more appropriate for the deadline to be based on the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS rather than the entry into force of CMM 16. The VMS WG requested the Secretariat to revise the paragraph to reflect these points.
  18. The VMS WG noted that paragraphs 6b and 7 of section 3 relate to paragraph 2r of CMM 07 but that the wording differs from that in CMM 07. The VMS WG requested the Secretariat to consider whether it would be beneficial to revise paragraph 2r of CMM 07 with the more technical terms used in paragraph 7 of the draft SSPs.
  19. Regarding paragraph 8 of section 3, the Secretariat reminded the VMS WG that it maintains a vessel database that can store the ALC details of vessels. The VMS WG noted the need to consider the handling of vessels' ALC details as part of the development of rules on data confidentiality and security.
  20. Some CCPs considered that there is no need for ALC type approval processes and audits as described in section 4 as CMM 16(2023) lays down minimum standards for ALC and CCPs are obliged to ensure the ALCs on board their vessels are operational at all times. One CCP suggested that, at a minimum, an annual audit should be conducted of the ALCs to ensure the integrity of the SIOFA VMS and that this is standard practice in other regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs).
  21. Some CCPs pointed out that the provisions of Section 5, which concern protocols for high seas boarding and inspections and for Port State inspections, are duplicating provisions in the related CMMs and do not need to be included in the SSPs.
  22. Regarding Scenario 2.1 under Section 6, the VMS WG requested CCPs and the Secretariat to review the legal implications, if any, of CCPs giving consent to another party, i.e., the Secretariat, to poll and program their ALCs. The VMS WG also noted the need to reflect the implications of having the Secretariat poll and program ALCs in the cost analysis of the different methodologies, noting in particular a potential situation where a CNCP, which does not contribute to the SIOFA budget, were to opt to have the Secretariat poll and program its ALC.
  23. The VMS WG agreed that obligations should be defined for CCPs and not fishing vessels and requested the Secretariat to revise Section 7 accordingly.
  24. The VMS WG noted that paragraph 41, which stipulates the minimum requirements for a Service Level Agreement (SLA), would become obsolete once the Secretariat has fulfilled the obligation in paragraph 40 of developing an SLA. The Secretariat suggested that paragraph 41 could be bracketed or deleted.
  25. The VMS WG requested the Secretariat to include the SLA as a work package with a

- delivery timeline in the next iteration of the proposed working arrangements.
26. The VMS WG recommended to use the North Atlantic Format (NAF) and the Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange (UN/FLUX) as the data formats for position reports. The VMS WG requested the Secretariat to prepare, in cooperation with the EU, an annex for the revised draft with a detailed description of UN/FLUX, similar to the annex for NAF format in the current draft.
  27. The WG noted that Section 9 could be deleted as it is a duplication of provisions in CMM 16 (2023). Due to time limitations, the VMS WG agreed to defer its review of Section 9 to a future meeting.
  28. Due to time limitations, the VMS WG requested CCPs to review Annexes 1 and 2 and provide any comments they may have in writing to the Secretariat by the deadline discussed under agenda item 5.
  29. The VMS WG agreed that CCPs could provide further comments on the current draft SSPs to the Secretariat in writing and that the Secretariat would circulate a revised draft based on the discussions at the meeting and CCPs' written comments according to the timelines discussed under agenda item 5.
  30. The VMS WG requested the Secretariat to also include draft provisions on data confidentiality and security for the SIOFA VMS in the revised draft SSPs.

#### **i. Discussion on vessel UVI**

31. . The VMS WG noted that the options for defining the term 'unique vessel identifier' (UVI) depended on the arrangement by which ALC data are shared with the Secretariat, i.e., if data are transmitted directly from vessels to the Secretariat there are limited UVIs that could be used and ALC serial number would probably be most appropriate, but if data are transmitted to the flag CCP and then from the flag CCP to the Secretariat, then a wider range of UVI options are available.
32. One CCP expressed its preference for the vessel's ALC serial number to be the UVI. Another CCP expressed its preference for the vessel's international radio call sign (IRCS) to be the UVI, as is the practice in CCAMLR and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. A third CCP expressed its preference for ALC data to be transmitted via the flag CCP and its preference for a UVI other than ALC serial number, such as International Maritime Organization number or IRCS.

#### **Agenda item 5 – Proposed work plan for the SIOFA VMS WG**

33. The Compliance Officer presented proposed working arrangements, including a proposed work plan, for the VMS WG (VMSWG-01-02).
34. The VMS WG reviewed the proposal and requested the Secretariat to update it based on the discussions at the meeting and to present the updated version at the next meeting.
35. The VMS WG agreed that CCPs could provide written comments on the draft SSPs by 29 January, that the Secretariat will circulate a revised draft based on the discussions at the meeting and CCPs' written comments by 14 February, and that the next meeting of the VMS WG will be held on 27 February in the same time slot as the first meeting.

#### **Agenda item 6 – Other Business**

36. There was no other business.

#### **Agenda item 7 – Close of Meeting**

37. The meeting was closed at 10:35 a.m. UTC, 15 January 2024.
38. The report was adopted at the [2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group to Support the Establishment of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement Vessel Monitoring System (VMSWG-02) on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2024].

## Annex A – List of registered participants

Delegation	First name	Last name	Title (e.g. Dr, Mr, Mrs)	Position (e.g. Designated Representative , Alternate, etc.)	Organisation	Email
Australia	Marguerite	Tarzia	Ms	Senior Policy Officer	Australian Fisheries Management Authority	<a href="mailto:marguerite.tarzia@afma.gov.au">marguerite.tarzia@afma.gov.au</a>
Australia	John	Watts	Mr	Senior Policy Officer	Australian Fisheries Management Authority	<a href="mailto:John.Watts@afma.gov.au">John.Watts@afma.gov.au</a>
Australia	Eric	Appleyard	Mr	Senior Manager	Australian Fisheries Management Authority	<a href="mailto:Eric.Appleyard@afma.gov.au">Eric.Appleyard@afma.gov.au</a>
Australia	Patrick	Sachs	Mr	Director	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	<a href="mailto:Patrick.Sachs@aff.gov.au">Patrick.Sachs@aff.gov.au</a>
Australia	Adam	Camilleri	Mr	Assistant Director	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	<a href="mailto:Adam.Camilleri@aff.gov.au">Adam.Camilleri@aff.gov.au</a>
China	Heng	Zhang	Dr.	HoD	East China Sea Fisheries Research Institute, China Academy of Fisheries Science	zhangziqian0601@163.com
China	Zhou	Fang	Dr.	Alternate	Shanghai Ocean University	<a href="mailto:zfang@shou.edu.cn">zfang@shou.edu.cn</a>
China	Xi	Chen	Mr.	Advisor	China Trancomm Technologies Co.,Ltd	chenxi@trancomm.com.cn
China	Chong	Sun	Mr.	Advisor	China Overseas Fisheries Association	<a href="mailto:sunchong@cofa.net.cn">sunchong@cofa.net.cn</a>
Comoros?						
Cook Islands	Andrew	Jones	Mr	Alternate	Ministry of Marine Resources	<a href="mailto:A.Jones@mmr.gov.ck">A.Jones@mmr.gov.ck</a>
Cook Islands	Sai	Sarau	Mr	Alternate	Ministry of Marine Resources	<a href="mailto:s.sarau@mmr.gov.ck">s.sarau@mmr.gov.ck</a>



Delegation	First name	Last name	Title (e.g. Dr, Mr, Mrs)	Position (e.g. Designated Representative, Alternate, etc.)	Organisation	Email
Cook Islands	Tiare	Nicholas	Ms	Alternate	Ministry of Marine Resources	<a href="mailto:t.nicholas@mmr.gov.ck">t.nicholas@mmr.gov.ck</a>
Cook Islands	Bermy	Ariihee	Ms	Alternate	Ministry of Marine Resources	<a href="mailto:b.ariiheer@mmr.gov.ck">b.ariiheer@mmr.gov.ck</a>
Cook Islands	Epeli	Maisema	Mr	Alternate	Ministry of Marine Resources	<a href="mailto:e.maisema@mmr.gov.ck">e.maisema@mmr.gov.ck</a>
European Union	Fiona	Harford	Ms	Head of Delegation	European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Unit B2	<a href="mailto:fiona.harford@ec.europa.eu">fiona.harford@ec.europa.eu</a>
European Union	Laura	Marot	Ms	Alternate representative	European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Unit B2	<a href="mailto:laura.marot@ec.europa.eu">laura.marot@ec.europa.eu</a>
European Union	Thierry	Remy	Mr	Advisor	European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Unit C4	<a href="mailto:thierry.remy@ec.europa.eu">thierry.remy@ec.europa.eu</a>
European Union	Cédric	Lathuy	Mr	Advisor	European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Unit C4	<a href="mailto:cedric.lathuy@ec.europa.eu">cedric.lathuy@ec.europa.eu</a>
European Union	Gabriel	Arevalillo Luengo	Mr	Advisor	S.G de Vigilancia Pesquera y Lucha contra la Pesca Ilegal, Secretaría General de Pesca, Spain	<a href="mailto:garevalillo@mapa.es">garevalillo@mapa.es</a>
European Union	Luis	Belmonte González	Mr	Advisor	S.G. Acuerdos y ORPs, Secretaría General de Pesca, Spain	<a href="mailto:lbelmonte@mapa.es">lbelmonte@mapa.es</a>
European Union	Elodie	Seznec	Ms	Advisor	Ministry of overseas territories, France	<a href="mailto:elodie.seznec@outre-mer.gouv.fr">elodie.seznec@outre-mer.gouv.fr</a>

Delegation	First name	Last name	Title (e.g. Dr, Mr, Mrs)	Position (e.g. Designated Representative , Alternate, etc.)	Organisation	Email
France	Mafal	Thiam	Mr	Head of Delegation	Direction Générale Des Affaires Maritimes, De La Pêche Et De L'Aquaculture	<a href="mailto:mafal.thiam@mer.gouv.fr">mafal.thiam@mer.gouv.fr</a>
India?						-
Japan	Ichiro	NOMURA	Mr	<b>Head of Delegation</b>	Fisheries Agency Government of Japan	<a href="mailto:inomura75@gmail.com">inomura75@gmail.com</a>
Japan	Masahiro	AKIYAMA	Mr	<b>Alternate</b>	Fisheries Agency Government of Japan	<a href="mailto:masahiro_akiyama170@maff.go.jp">masahiro_akiyama170@maff.go.jp</a>
Japan	Hiroto	NAKAMOTO	Mr	<b>Alternate</b>	Fisheries Agency Government of Japan	<a href="mailto:hiroto_nakamoto890@maff.go.jp">hiroto_nakamoto890@maff.go.jp</a>
Japan	Ryo	ONODERA	Mr	Advisor	Fisheries Agency Government of Japan	<a href="mailto:ryo_onodera380@maff.go.jp">ryo_onodera380@maff.go.jp</a>
Japan	Hiromi	Isa	Mr,	Adviser	Japan Overseas Fishing Association	<a href="mailto:isa@jdsta.or.jp">isa@jdsta.or.jp</a>
Japan	Hidefumi	Yatomi	Mr.	Adviser	Cubic-i Ltd.	<a href="mailto:yatomi@cubic-i.co.jp">yatomi@cubic-i.co.jp</a>
Japan	Shiho	Morimoto	Ms.	Adviser	Cubic-i Ltd.	<a href="mailto:morimoto@cubic-i.co.jp">morimoto@cubic-i.co.jp</a>
Korea?						-
Mauritius	Divambal	CANDASSAMY	Mrs	Participant	Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping	<a href="mailto:divambal_06@yahoo.com">divambal_06@yahoo.com</a>
Mauritius	Luvna	CAUSSY	Ms.	Participant	Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping	<a href="mailto:luvna_caussy@yahoo.com">luvna_caussy@yahoo.com</a>
Mauritius	Doorvanan	KAWOL	Mr.	Participant	Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping	<a href="mailto:dokawol@govmu.org">dokawol@govmu.org</a>
Seychelles	Roddy	Allisop	Mr	HoD	<a href="#">Seychelles Fishing Authority</a>	<a href="mailto:rallisop@sfa.sc">rallisop@sfa.sc</a>

Delegation	First name	Last name	Title (e.g. Dr, Mr, Mrs)	Position (e.g. Designated Representative , Alternate, etc.)	Organisation	Email
Seychelles	Julie	Bibi	Ms	Expert	Seychelles Fishing Authority	<a href="mailto:jjean@sfa.sc">jjean@sfa.sc</a>
Seychelles	Loreen	Esther	Ms	Expert	Seychelles Fishing Authority	<a href="mailto:llesther@sfa.sc">llesther@sfa.sc</a>
Seychelles	Alex	Sophola	Mr	Expert	Seychelles Fishing Authority	<a href="mailto:asophola@sfa.sc">asophola@sfa.sc</a>
Chinese Taipei	Tsu-Kang	Wen	Mr	Head of Delegation	Chinese Taipei	<a href="mailto:tsukang1008@ms1.fa.gov.tw">tsukang1008@ms1.fa.gov.tw</a>
Chinese Taipei	Chia-Chun	Wu	Mr	Alternate	Chinese Taipei	<a href="mailto:jiachun@ms1.fa.gov.tw">jiachun@ms1.fa.gov.tw</a>
Chinese Taipei	Chia-Chi	Fu	Mr	Delegate	Chinese Taipei	<a href="mailto:joseph@ofdc.org.tw">joseph@ofdc.org.tw</a>
Chinese Taipei	Chia-Ti	Li	Ms	Delegate	Chinese Taipei	<a href="mailto:JODIE@OFDC.ORG.TW">JODIE@OFDC.ORG.TW</a>
Chinese Taipei	Chia-Jung	Wang	Ms	Delegate	Chinese Taipei	<a href="mailto:chiajung1002@ms1.fa.gov.tw">chiajung1002@ms1.fa.gov.tw</a>
Thailand	Aekkarat	Wongkeaw	Mr.	Head of Delegation	Fishing and Fleets Management Division Department of Fisheries, Thailand	aekfish@hotmail.com
Thailand	Tirabhorn	Yothakong	Ms.	Alternate	Fishing and Fleets Management Division Department of Fisheries, Thailand	tirabhorn@gmail.com
Thailand	Kanyarat	Woraprayoth	Ms.	Alternate	Fishing and Fleets Management Division Department of Fisheries, Thailand	kookky0053@gmail.com

Delegation	First name	Last name	Title (e.g. Dr, Mr, Mrs)	Position (e.g. Designated Representative , Alternate, etc.)	Organisation	Email
Thailand	Prasit	Luesrithawornsin	Mr.	Alternate	Fishing and Fleets Management Division Department of Fisheries, Thailand	prasit_kim@hotmail.com
Thailand	Praphayapath	Thonroshrapee	Ms.	Alternate	Fishing and Fleets Management Division Department of Fisheries, Thailand	cake.thonrapee@gmail.com
Observer	Charles	Heaphy	Mr	HoD	SIODFA	<a href="mailto:charles.heaphy@sealord.co.nz">charles.heaphy@sealord.co.nz</a>
SIOFA Secretariat	Johnny	Louys	Mr	Compliance Officer	SIOFA Secretariat	<a href="mailto:johnny.louys@siofa.org">johnny.louys@siofa.org</a>
SIOFA Secretariat	Pierre	Peries	Mr	Data Officer	SIOFA Secretariat	<a href="mailto:pierre.peries@siofa.org">pierre.peries@siofa.org</a>
SIOFA Secretariat	Marco	Milardi	Dr	Science Officer	SIOFA Secretariat	<a href="mailto:marco.milardi@siofa.org">marco.milardi@siofa.org</a>
SIOFA Secretariat	Alexander	Meyer	Mr	Rapporteur	Urban Connections	<a href="mailto:meyer@urbanconnections.jp">meyer@urbanconnections.jp</a>

## **Annex B – Agenda**

### **Provisional Agenda for 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the SIOFA Vessels Monitoring Systems Working Group - SIOFA VMSWG01**

1. Opening of Session
2. Administrative Arrangements
  - i. Nomination of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the SIOFA VMSWG
  - ii. Adoption of Agenda
  - iii. Meeting Documents
  - iv. Appointment of rapporteurs
- 1.
3. Overview of SIOFA VMS Project, and EU Project Grant
4. Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs) for the SIOFA VMS
  4. i) Discussion on vessel UVI
5. Proposed work plan for the SIOFA VMSWG
6. Other Business
7. Close of Meeting

## Annex C – List of meeting documents

Code	Document Title	Agenda Item	Note
<i>Administration and Meeting organisation</i>			
VMSWG-01-ADM-01	Provisional Agenda	2. ii.	
VMSWG-01-ADM-02_Rev1	List of Meeting Documents (This)	2. iii.	
VMSWG-01-ADM-03	Registration Template - VMSWG-01	N/A	
VMSWG-01-ADM-04	List of Registered Participants - VMSWG-01	N/A	
<i>Working Papers</i>			
VMSWG-01-01	Proposed Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs) for the SIOFA VMS	4	
VMSWG-01-02	Proposed Working Arrangements for the SIOFA VMSWG	5	
<i>Information papers</i>			
VMSWG-01-INFO-01	Overview of SIOFA VMS Project, and EU Project Grant	3	