

Ref.: 2021-08-10-3/SIOFA- SCC

Wellington, Tuesday 10th August 2021

SC-CIRCULAR n° 2021-06

Subject: Intersessional Workshop on the Harmonisation of Scientific Observers' Programmes

Dear Heads of Delegation of the Scientific Committee,

Dear Colleagues

In order to receive high-quality data from scientific observers, it is important that observers working in SIOFA fisheries operate using a consistent set of standards for observation and measurement. To achieve this, the Scientific Committee recommended an intersessional workshop to initiate discussions on the harmonisation of standards and an evaluation process for CCPs scientific observer programmes (para 70, Scientific Committee of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) 2021). In addition, the Scientific Committee recommended an intersessional workshop be held hold further discussions on e-monitoring schemes (para 66, Scientific Committee of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) 2021).

To progress the arrangements for the intersessional workshop, the Chair and vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee have proposed an agenda and timetable. Outcomes from the workshop would be a report to be considered by the Scientific Committee at SC7 in March 2022.

I also propose to include discussions on the further use of e-monitoring as a part of this workshop, to avoid duplication of discussions across multiple meetings.

I invite all Scientific Committee HoDs to provide any suggestions or comments on the proposed meeting objectives, agenda, or timetable for the workshop as detailed below.

I would appreciate your suggestions and comments on the objectives, agenda, and timetable of this workshop by 31 August 2021.

Sincerely yours,

Alistair Dunn



Chairperson of the Scientific Committee

SIOFA WORKSHOP ON THE HARMONISATION OF SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS' PROGRAMMES

Proposed Agenda and Working Arrangements

Project Codes: SEC2021-01 & SEC2021-04

1. Proposed Objective

To provide to the SIOFA Scientific Committee meeting¹ (SC7)

1. recommendations on the means to achieve harmonisation of CCPs scientific observer programmes,
2. recommendations on an evaluation process for scientific observer programmes to improve data quality, and
3. advice on the introduction of e-monitoring schemes to support scientific observation.

2. Proposed Agenda

1. Opening of the workshop on the Harmonisation of Scientific Observers' Programmes
2. Administrative arrangements
 - a. Adoption of the meeting objectives and agenda
 - b. Appointment of rapporteurs
3. Determination of the workshop objectives and agenda
4. Harmonising CCPs scientific observer programmes
 - a. Documentation supplied to observers by CCPs for their respective Observer Programmes
 - b. Training procedures used by CCPs for their respective Observer Programmes
 - c. Post-trip evaluation, data submission, and review
5. Development of an evaluation process for scientific observer programmes to improve data quality
 - a. CCP observer programme infrastructure
 - b. Training of observers
 - c. Post trip evaluation, data submission, and review
6. Developments on the use of e-monitoring to support scientific observation
 - a. E-monitoring standards
 - b. Data collection, storage, and security
 - c. E-monitoring review requirements
7. Recommendations to the Scientific Committee on
 - a. the means to achieve harmonisation of CCPs scientific observer programmes,

¹ Scientific Committee (SC7) from 21 to 25 March 2022

- b. an evaluation process for scientific observer programmes to improve data quality, and
- c. the introduction of e-monitoring schemes to support scientific observation

3. Working arrangements

We propose that

1. the meeting be open to all Members of the Scientific Committee, including Observers to the Scientific Committee.
2. That the intersessional workshop be conveyed by the vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee according to the timetable below.
3. That the intersessional workshop meet via the Scientific Observer Programme forum on the SIOFA website and online video conference with
 - a. two 4-hour video conference sessions to address the agenda items, and
 - b. a single 4-hour plenary session to review and finalise advice to the Scientific Committee
4. That a report be prepared by the Conveyor for comment by participating delegates that lists any papers presented, summarises the key outcomes of discussions, and records the intersessional working group recommendations to the Scientific Committee
5. The report from the intersessional workshop shall be presented by the Convener as an SC7 Working Paper in accordance with SIOFA reporting requirements for Scientific Committee meetings.
6. Discussions will be held under Chatham House rules (i.e., presentations, papers, and individual comments would not be attributed), with only the outcomes of key discussions and final recommendations summarised in the workshop report.

4. Timetable

1. August-October 2021

In preparation for the workshop, CCPs collate and summarise: the documentation supplied to observers by CCPs for their respective Observer Programmes; the training procedures used by CCPs for their respective Observer Programmes; and procedures for post-trip evaluation, data submission, and review

2. 13 October 2021

Deadline for registration of participants to the workshop

3. 20 October 2021

Deadline for submission of any information papers to the workshop

4. 0600–1000 UTC on 27 October 2021 and 3 November 2021

Meeting of the workshop via videoconference

5. 0600–1000 UTC on 10 November 2021

Meeting of the workshop via videoconference to review and finalise advice to the Scientific Committee

6. 1 December 2021

Distribution of draft convener's report to participants for review

7. 15 December 2021

Deadline for the submission of participant comments on the draft conveners report

8. 19 February 2022

Deadline for the workshop report to SC7

5. References

Scientific Committee of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) (2021). Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA). SC6. Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA), Online Forum and Zoom Videoconferences, 86 p.

Appendix

Potential items for consideration in an evaluation process for scientific observer programmes to improve data quality:

1. CCP observer programme infrastructure
 - a. Co-ordination and record keeping
 - b. Information security
 - c. Provision of gear and equipment
 - d. Schedules for the review of observer documentation, training, and equipment
2. Training of observers
 - a. Duties and responsibilities of observers and the vessel's crew
 - b. Provision of regulatory requirements (e.g., CMMs)
 - c. Code of conduct requirements
 - d. Conflict avoidance and dispute resolution
 - e. On-vessel tasks and scientific priorities
 - f. Identification of fishing methods, fishing gear, and gear components
 - g. Location determination
 - h. Mitigation methods and gear
 - i. Health and safety at sea
 - j. Waste disposal
 - k. Identification of target species and bycatch species
 - l. Monitoring effort
 - m. Monitoring catch and determining species catch composition
 - n. Monitoring discards
 - o. Observations of seabirds and marine mammals
 - p. Marine mammal and seabird identification and behaviour
 - q. Sampling methods and types of measurements, including: random and systematic sampling; length; sex; maturity stage; and otoliths
 - r. Obtaining and preserving samples, including: biological samples; and otoliths
 - s. Determination of conversion factors
 - t. Tagging and tag retrieval
 - u. Recording meteorological and oceanographic data
3. Post trip evaluation, data submission, and review
 - a. Post-trip requirements for scientific observers
 - b. Observer data submission
 - c. CCP review of data
 - d. SIOFA secretariat review of data