



SIOFA | APSOI

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

Scientific Committee

La Réunion, Wednesday 21st of September 2022

SC- CIRCULAR n° 2022/20

SUBJECT: Intersessional Workshop on the development of VME management (WS2022-VME1)

Dear Heads of Delegation of the Scientific Committee,

Dear Colleagues,

During the 7th SIOFA Scientific Committee the SC recommended to the MoP (para 193 of the meeting report):

193. With regard to VME encounter thresholds, the SC RECOMMENDED that the MoP NOTE:

- that the PAEWG had not been able to conduct an intersessional review of the VME encounter thresholds adopted by other RFMOs as requested by the MoP (para 100, MoP8 Report).
- that this work is included in the PAEWG workplan and will be discussed at the next PAEWG and SC meetings.

It is to be further noted that the process to agree VME thresholds was not addressed either at SC7 or PAEWG4.

Paragraph 193 of the SC7 report was noted by MoP9, and a corresponding SC workplan item was endorsed by MoP9 for the SC to work on in 2022/23.

To progress the arrangements for the Intersessional Workshop on the development of VME management (WS2022-VME1), 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 SC8 in March 2023.

Discussion on the future development of VME management in the SIOFA Agreement area will be carried out in a focused workshop held over four days, held between Monday 12th of December 2022 to Monday 16 of January 2023.

We invite all Scientific Committee HoDs to provide any suggestions or comments on the proposed meeting objectives, agenda, or timetable for the workshop to the SIOFA Science Officer (marco.milardi@siofa.org) on behalf of the Scientific Committee Chair with any comments by 28 October 2022.

Sincerely yours,

Alistair Dunn – SIOFA Scientific Committee Chair

SIOFA WORKSHOP on the development of VME management (WS2022-VME1)

Proposed Agenda and Working Arrangements

1. Objectives

To develop scientific strategies that will provide an answer to the following three questions:

- What are the management options for VME protection in the SIOFA Agreement area?
- How can SIOFA develop scientifically informed VME indicator species thresholds?
- What would potential SIOFA VME indicator species thresholds look like?

These objectives will be considered in a series of four separate workshops. The first two workshops will address the first two questions, while the last question will be addressed in two separate workshops.

2. Agenda for the Workshop

1. Opening of the workshop (WS2022-VME1)
2. Administrative arrangements
 - a. Adoption of the meeting objectives and agenda
 - b. Appointment of rapporteurs
3. Determination of the workshop objectives and agenda
4. Management options for VME protection
 - a. Considerations of the workshop
 - b. Recommendations on further development
5. Scientifically informed VME indicator species thresholds
 - a. Considerations of the workshop
 - b. Recommendations on further development
6. Potential SIOFA VME indicator species thresholds
 - a. Considerations of the workshop
 - b. Recommendations on further development
7. Items for consideration at the following meeting of the series

SC HoDs are invited to submit specific agenda items for the workshop to the convener of the workshop by the 21st of November

3. Working arrangements

We propose that:

1. The meetings be open to Members (SC HoDs, Alternates and Experts) of the SIOFA Scientific Committee.
2. That the intersessional workshop be convened by the Chair of the PAEWG, unless an alternative convener is nominated by SC HoDs.

3. That the intersessional workshop meets via online video conference for a total of four days, with each day being a 4-hour video conference session to address the agenda items.
4. A draft containing a background/guide for discussion be circulated to SC HoDs prior to the meeting.
5. Participants are invited to submit documents for consideration of the workshop at least two weeks in advance of each meeting.
6. Discussions will be held under Chatham House rules (i.e., presentations, papers, and individual comments would not be attributed). Informal meeting notes are to be distributed after each meeting.
7. At the end of each meeting the workshop will identify items for consideration at the following meeting of the series
8. The Convener provide a brief report of the workshop discussion, and any recommendations, as a working paper to SC8 for its further consideration.

4. Timetable

1. Friday 28 October 2022

Deadline to provide any suggestions or comments on the proposed meeting objectives, agenda, or timetable for the workshop to the SIOFA Science Officer (marco.milardi@siofa.org)

2. Monday 28 November 2022

Deadline for registration of participants to the workshop (via mail to the SIOFA Secretariat, Science Officer, marco.milardi@siofa.org)

Deadline for submission of documents for consideration of the workshop.

3. Monday 31 November 2022

In preparation for the workshop, the SIOFA Secretariat will provide a background document describing the state of play of VME management in SIOFA and other RFMOs, as well as other documents submitted for consideration by the workshop.

4. 0700–1100 UTC on Monday 12 December 2022

First meeting of the workshop via videoconference (Zoom), on the topic of VME management options

5. 0700–1100 UTC on Wednesday 14 December 2022

Second meeting of the workshop via videoconference (Zoom), on the topic of scientifically informed VME indicator species thresholds development

6. 0700–1100 UTC on Monday 9 January 2023

Third meeting of the workshop via videoconference (Zoom), on the topic of potential SIOFA VME indicator species thresholds

7. 0700–1100 UTC on Monday 16 January 2023

Fourth meeting of the workshop via videoconference (Zoom), on developing recommendations of potential SIOFA VME indicator species thresholds and management options for VME protection

8. Monday 23 January 2023

Distribution of draft convener's report for review and finalisation for submission to SC8

9. 6 February 2023

Deadline for the submission of participant comments