10th Meeting of the SIOFA Compliance Committee (CC10) and 13th Meeting of the Parties to SIOFA (MoP13)

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CC-10-29 Rev1 / MoP-13-29

A proposal for an alternate method to collect data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02 (2025) on Data Standards in order to exclude Mauritius semi-industrial fishery to embark observers on board

Delegation of Mauritius

Meeting	Compliance Committee ✔ Meeting of the Parties ✔
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Abstract

At the SC11 (para 127), Mauritius made a proposal for an alternate method to collect data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02 (2025) on Data Standards in order to exclude the Mauritius semi-industrial fishery to embark observers on board taking into consideration the working conditions and limited space available on board the vessels operating on the sub-area 8 (Saya de Malha bank).

The SC11 reviewed the proposal and recommended as follows (para 132):
Mauritius was requested to submit a proposal detailing the current data collection system and future data collection plan, including indicative timeframes, addressing the observer data collection requirement for handlines on Mauritian semi-industrial vessels, to MoP13 and SC12, for consideration. The SC noted that this plan should effectively collect data independently from vessel reporting from all fields currently required under paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) for this fishery

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[2] Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

Recommendations
• The MoP13 to **review** the proposal made by Mauritius • The MoP13 to **request** the SC12 to review the proposal and make any further recommendations

A proposal for an alternate method to collect data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02 (2025) on Data Standards in order to exclude Mauritius semi-industrial fishery to embark observers on board

Introduction

Mauritius presented at SC11, a proposal for an alternate method to collect the data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards), in order to exclude Mauritius semi-industrial fisheries to embark observers on board. The semi-industrial fisheries are characterised by fishing on the Saya de Malha Bank (SIOFA Sub Area 8), by vessels measuring 12 m to less that 24 m.

Mauritius considers that the requirement to embark scientific observers on semi-industrial vessels operating on the Saya de Malha Bank is challenging due to the following reasons:

Operational Constraints

The vessels operating in the semi-industrial shallow water and deepwater snapper/grouper fisheries are relatively small (12–23 m LOA) and are not designed to accommodate additional personnel beyond the required crew complement.

- All crew members sleep within a single shared cabin.
- Sleeping bunks are available for declared crew size only.
- No additional working or sampling space exists onboard.
- Deck space is limited and fully utilised for fishing operations and gear handling.
- There is no dedicated working desk space available for observers.

Figures 1-3 illustrate the limited space and conditions of semi-industrial fishing vessels.

Figure 1: Unloading activities of Mauritian semi-industrial fishing vessels

Figure 2: Deck area of Mauritian semi-industrial fishing vessel

Figure 3: Living area in Mauritian semi-industrial fishing vessels

Current Monitoring Measures and Data Collection

To ensure compliance with SIOFA Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs), the following monitoring and data collection measures are implemented by officers of the Port State Control Unit and the Albion Fisheries Research Centre:

- Full monitoring of all semi-industrial vessels landing their catch at port by Fisheries Protection Officers;
- Continuous monitoring of all vessels through the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS);
- Daily reporting of catch and operational data through the Electronic Reporting System (ERS)/Paper logbook, including catch details, fishing coordinates, and number of fishermen involved;
- Prohibition of all transhipment activities at sea and in port;
- Landing of all catches at a single authorised port (Port Louis);
- Sampling of catches conducted upon unloading of fishing vessels at port.

Conclusion

Given the selective nature of the fishing gear and the absence of complex interactions (e.g. seabed contact, high-risk bycatch species, or vulnerable marine ecosystems), the ecological and environmental impact of these fisheries is considered low.

Mauritius considers that port-based and logbook monitoring measures provide data of equivalent reliability to onboard observer coverage for this specific fishery.

As an alternate method to collect data (e.g incidental bycatch of marine mammals, seabirds, reptiles; VME interactions), Mauritius could implement the EMS to complement the observation and recording of information from fishing vessels while during fishing campaigns. However, prior to embark in an EMS Mauritius has to carry out a feasibility study in terms of cost implications. This project can be implemented on a pilot basis and may be applied to all the fishing vessels that are not capable to embark observers on-board, but taking into consideration the financial implications that will be needed to operate this system.

The SC11 noted that it is probably challenging to deploy human observers on these vessels in the short-term and recommended that Mauritius pursue alternative at-sea data collection methods to provide data on discards and potential ETP interactions.

The SC11 requested Mauritius to submit a proposal detailing the current data collection system and future data collection plan, including indicative timeframes, addressing the observer data collection requirement for handlines on Mauritian semi-industrial vessels, to MoP13 and SC12, for consideration. The SC noted that this plan should effectively collect data independently from vessel reporting from all fields currently required under paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) for this fishery.

With regard to the time frame for the implementation of the EMS, Mauritius proposes that this method of data collection may be put in place not in the near future and provisions could be made after a period of five years as it depends largely on the funding mechanisms, efficient planning, technical knowhow and legal framework.

Mauritius also affirms that all the obligations in particular the CMM 02(2025) will be fully observed.

Mauritius is therefore submitting the current data collection systems as well as future data collection plan, addressing the observer data requirements for handlines on Mauritian semi-industrial vessels for consideration by the MoP13.

Observer data requirements as per CMM 02 (2025) – Current data collection systems and future plans, Mauritius

Observer data requirement in accordance with CMM 02 (2025)	Data details	Currently being collected	Can be collected in the immediate future	Remarks from Mauritius
Vessel details and information	All vessel details (name, call sign, etc)	✓		Available. The Ministry Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries has details of all registered fishing vessels
Line details	Line type		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Usage period start		✓	Information can be collected from master of fishing vessels
	Usage period end		✓	Information can be collected from master of fishing vessels
	Main line material		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Main line diameter		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	main line integral weight		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Hook type		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Hook manufacturer		✓	Information may be collected from fishing operators (imported or locally made)
	Hook model name		✓	Information may be collected from fishing operators (imported or locally made)
	Hook size		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Hook total length		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Hook Shank		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Hook Gape		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Hook usual setting position		✓	Information can be collected from master of fishing vessels
	Hook off bottom		✓	Information can be collected from master of fishing vessels
Bycatch mitigation gear	Number of streamer lines regularly set			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer line position			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer line length			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer minimum length			To be advised by the SC12

	Streamer maximum length			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer line height above water			To be advised by the SC12
	Line distance between streamers			To be advised by the SC12
	Number of streamers			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer design			To be advised by the SC12
	Aerial extent of streamer line			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer line method used to assess extent			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer material			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer diameter			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer colours			To be advised by the SC12
	Streamer line position over bait entry point			To be advised by the SC12
	Distance from stern to bait entry point			To be advised by the SC12
	Towed object			To be advised by the SC12
	Horizontal distance from bait entry point to streamer line			To be advised by the SC12
Line operation	Set type	✓		Available (Commercial)
	Main line length		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	No of hooks per line			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	% hook baited			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	No of fishermen	✓		Collected prior to the issue departure clearance by the Port State Control Unit. The total number fishermen and crew complement on-board are verified the PSCU and other concerned authorities like customs and Mauritius Port Authority)
	No. of line lifts per fisherman			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Bait species	✓		Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Bait size			Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Bait proportion		✓	Information can be collected from fishing vessel prior to departure for fishing trips
	Bait entry position			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Deck light used during setting	**n/a**	**n/a**	n/a fishing is carried out during daytime only
	Start and end LAT	✓		Available in logbook (handline operational are daily). Vessel position are confirmed by VMS and ERS
	Start and end LONG	✓		Available in logbook (handline operational are daily). Vessel position are confirmed by VMS and ERS

	Depth	✓		Available from logbooks
	Operation observed for fish/invertebrate bycatch			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Estimated percentage of operation observed for fish/invertebrate bycatches			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Hooks lost Number			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Catch details	Species FAO Code	✓		Attributed
	Species Scientific Name	✓		Derived from logbook data. (Logbook data verified against landed catch upon unloading, by the Mauritius PSCU)
	Live weight retained	✓		Obtained from logbooks (Logbook data verified against landed catch upon unloading, by Mauritius PSCU)
	Number retained		✓	Number of fish is not recorded. However, through sampling observation, the total number retained can be estimated.
	Live weight discarded			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Number discarded			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Nb of fish lost at surface			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Nb of fish cut-off (if possible)			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Incidental bycatch (marine mammals, sea birds, reptiles or other species of concern)	Presence			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Species Scientific name			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Species FAO code			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Number caught			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Number released			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Released status			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	No. sampled			
	Nb female			No. of female cannot be identified visually in some species
	Nb male			No. of male cannot be identified visually in some species
	Nb unknown			
	Circumstances of bycatch			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
VME taxa and other benthos	Presence			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Taxa scientific name			May be deduced from EMS data
	Taxa FAO code			
	taxa is VME?			

	photo reference			
	Quantity estimate			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Quantity unit			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Sample taken for ID			
	Status (Live or dead for corals)			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Biological sampling	Species FAO code	✓		Derived from port sampling data
	Length	✓		Collected from port sampling. 50% of all the trips carried out in a year, around 175-200 will be sampled per sampling exercise.
	Length type	✓		Collected from port sampling.
	Weight	✓		Collected from port sampling. 50% of all the trips carried out in a year, around 175-200 will be sampled per sampling exercise. A 10% coverage of the total catch for sampling exercises will be undertaken
	Sex			Information may be obtained by performing biological sampling in the laboratory
	Maturity			Information may be obtained by performing biological sampling in the laboratory
	Otolith collected			Otolith collection may be carried out in the laboratory
	Seabird species			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	FAO code			
	Estimated No.			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Sea birds observation (abundance estimation)	Seabird species			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	FAO code			
	Estimated No.			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Marine mammals abundance observation	Presence			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Species			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	FAO Code			
	Estimated numbers			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Bird bands observation	Date and time of observation			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Latitude			
	Longitude			
	Species			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
Bird interaction with vessel and collisions	Date and time of observation			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Latitude			
	Longitude			

(Excluding fishing gear)	Species			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Number of birds			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Bird state			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Vessel activity			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Type of interaction			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Description of the interaction			Information may be obtained when EMS will be implemented
	Fog			
	Wind speed			
	Wind bearing			
	Sea state			
	Vessel lighting			
Tags recovery	Species			Given that the species is not migratory, tagging exercises are not recommended
	Tag Type			
	Tag Colour			
	Tag number			
	Tag wording			
	Length of animal			
	Length type			
	Sex			
Tags released	Species code			Given that the species is not migratory, tagging exercises are not recommended
	Length			
	Length type			
	Sex			
	Tag Type			
	Tag colour			
	Tag Number			
	Tag wording			
	Animal Status at release			
	Release date			
	Release time			
	Release Lat			
	Release Long			