



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

Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles, 1–3 July and 6–10 July 2026

MoP-13-INFO-17

Identification of Seamount Ecosystems as a Contribution to building a SIOFA VME Register

The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC)

Meeting	Compliance Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting of the Parties <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Document type	working paper <input type="checkbox"/> information paper <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Distribution	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted ¹ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed session document ² <input type="checkbox"/>
Abstract	<p>The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) provides a map book of seamount ecosystems occurring within the SIOFA's fishing footprint, based on the seamount inventory developed by Yesson et al. (2019, 2021). Seamounts are widely recognised as vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and are specifically referenced in United Nations General Assembly resolutions and the FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas as features requiring protection from significant adverse impacts.</p> <p>The map book provides the first comprehensive spatial overview of seamounts and seamount-like features within the SIOFA Area, including features that overlap with current and historical bottom fishing footprints. Although mapping of VME indicator taxa within SIOFA remains limited, available information demonstrates that VME indicator taxa occur on seamounts within the SIOFA fishing footprint.</p> <p>DSCC submits this information as a contribution to the development of a SIOFA VME Register and to support future consideration of area-based conservation and management measures. DSCC encourages the Meeting of the Parties to request that the Scientific Committee incorporate these data into its ongoing work on VME identification, the development of a VME Register, and the assessment of areas that may warrant additional protection.</p>

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