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

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-10

SIOFA participation in the FAO Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP)

The SIOFA Secretariat

Meeting	Compliance Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting of the Parties <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Document type	Administrative Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Proposal or Working Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Information Paper <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Distribution	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted ¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Closed session document ² <input type="checkbox"/>
Abstract	
<p>At its 11th annual meeting, the SIOFA Scientific Committee tasked the Secretariat with coordinating with FAO to establish a new code and fishery gear definition for benthopelagic trawls. To achieve this, SIOFA needed to join the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), an FAO working group that coordinates fishery statistics programs among regional fishery bodies and other intergovernmental organizations. Membership in the CWP carries no direct costs, and meetings are held in a hybrid format approximately every three years, with most work conducted through written exchanges or short online meetings. Consequently, joining the CWP is unlikely to impact SIOFA's limited financial or human resources.</p> <p>On 10 May 2026, the SIOFA Executive Secretary submitted a formal membership request to the CWP Secretary, with the approval of the SIOFA Chairs. The request is now being circulated to CWP Members for endorsement within three months. FAO is expected to formally acknowledge SIOFA's membership in September 2026 in Rome, during the COFI and RSN meetings.</p>	

¹ Restricted documents may contain confidential information. Please do not distribute restricted documents in any form without the explicit permission of the SIOFA Secretariat and the data owner(s)/provider(s).

² Documents available only to members invited to closed sessions.

SIOFA participation in the FAO Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP)

Background

During its 11th annual meeting, the SIOFA Scientific Committee tasked the Secretariat with coordinating with FAO on the establishment of a new code and fishery gear definition for benthopelagic trawls (SC11 Report para 215).

To accomplish that task, SIOFA needed to be part of a dedicated FAO working party (of which most of the RFMOs and CCAMLR are already members).

The Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP)

Active since 1960, the CWP is an FAO working group that provides a mechanism to coordinate the statistical programmes conducted by regional fishery bodies and other intergovernmental organizations with a remit for fishery statistics. Similarly to FAO-FIRMS, of which SIOFA is already a contributor, this working group is relevant for the coordination of the collection of fisheries information that is used in periodical processes like the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) and State of Stocks Index (SoSI), which are considered by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI).

Further background information on the FAO CWP is available here: <https://www.fao.org/cwp-on-fishery-statistics/background/en/>

The latest report of the FAO CWP 28th Session is available at <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd9184en>

Resources commitment from SIOFA

There are no direct costs associated with FAO CWP membership.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, FAO CWP meetings are held in a hybrid format and this meeting format is expected to continue in the future.

The CWP meets in full session approximately every three years, with intersessional and ad hoc meetings organized as required. In recent years, only one intersessional meeting has been held, with most coordination and work conducted through written exchanges or short online meetings of the different Task Groups.

Therefore, joining FAO CWP is not likely to impact the financial or human resources at SIOFA, which are already engaged in coordinating with FAO.

Process required to become a member of the group

As outlined in the FAO CWP [Rules of Procedure](#), in particular Chapter 18, SIOFA may become a participating organization through a formal request submitted by the SIOFA Executive Secretary to the CWP Secretary.

This request was sent, with the approval of the SIOFA Chairs, on Wednesday 10 May 2026.

Once such a request is received, it is circulated to all FAO CWP Members, who are invited to provide their endorsement within three months. Following endorsement, a brief introduction and formal acknowledgement of the new member can be arranged at the next CWP meeting.

FAO is likely to formally acknowledge SIOFA's CWP membership in September in Rome, on the occasion of the COFI and RSN meetings.